Infectious disease containment becomes a high priority

Every year, the alarming spread of infectious disease across the world demonstrates just how much of a global village we live in. Cholera, smallpox and AIDS are a few examples of the infections that have swept the globe and devastated entire populations because of our relative inability to contain them.

In 2014, the Ebola virus reappeared in western Africa before being carried across the Atlantic, spreading fear across the world.

A fatal pandemic infection calls for instant response and coordination

With the Ebola virus disease mortality rate averaging about 50% worldwide, responsible healthcare institutions know that treating the disease is not enough; they must be prepared to contain the virus and stop it from propagating. A detailed plan of action — integrating elements of treatment, patient isolation, staff preparedness, and facilities and personnel management — must be carefully formulated and made ready for activation at a moment’s notice.

“**The same system that can flawlessly manage an infectious disease crisis also helps solve routine staffing callouts and can handle just about every situation in between. I am the biggest fan of LiveProcess you’ll find.**”

Amanda Freeman
Emergency Management Coordinator

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**Virtual collaboration: Prepare for pandemics**

**Infectious disease containment becomes a high priority**

**Goals and Needs**

- Proactively treat and contain high-mortality infections
- Create detailed plans of action for pandemics and other emergencies
- Communicate, share knowledge, designate tasks, and track activities and outcomes in real-time across the hospital and into the community

**Florida Hospital**

- 26 hospitals providing urgent care, sports medicine & rehabilitation, diagnostic imaging and specialty facilities
- More than 18,000 employees serving the greater Orlando, Tampa and Daytona Beach areas
- Recognized by US News & World Report for its proactive approach toward pandemics and infectious disease
In the event of a disease outbreak such as Ebola, hospital administrators, clinicians and staff must be equipped to respond instantly. All personnel must execute their responsibilities in a series of well-choreographed maneuvers that will simultaneously ensure the welfare of the patient and mitigate the risk of viral proliferation. A methodical and repeatable response can only be achieved if all parties — inside the hospital and in the broader community — can communicate, share knowledge, designate tasks, and track activities and outcomes in real-time.

“Because it's a highly contagious virus, Ebola poses a unique threat to a healthcare facility and the population it serves,” said Amanda Freeman, Florida Hospital's emergency management coordinator. “Time is of the essence. Efficient and accurate information sharing is critical in order for the patient to receive the best care possible and for virus containment.”

The expanding role of emergency management in healthcare today

Freeman came to Florida Hospital in 2010 with a bachelor’s degree in emergency management. She has served in the military and remains an active member of the National Guard, with certification as a hazmat officer. Such a specialized background, becoming more common in healthcare, is indicative of the growing need for personnel who can manage crises, train others to do likewise, and deploy the tools necessary to facilitate their agendas.

“When Ebola became an urgent threat in the US, everything changed overnight for healthcare institutions in this country,” Freeman said. “The hospitals that had created emergency management positions were able to immediately focus on the prospect of Ebola and other highly infectious pathogens appearing on the premises.”

Today, Freeman manages emergency response programming for a seven-hospital division of Florida Hospital that spans three counties. She is constantly traveling among the seven facilities, regularly meeting with top executives, management, key staff members and other stakeholders at the hospital, division and corporate levels. She has created response groups and detailed notification procedures for a range of situations, none more complex and meticulous than her Ebola management plan.

“When Ebola became an urgent threat in the US, everything changed overnight for healthcare institutions in this country.”
LiveProcess: Robust enough for Ebola case management

In preparing for an infectious disease event, Freeman knew she would need the power of an emergency management platform that could bridge facilities — with each other and with community institutions — and connect personnel who held varying responsibilities and work schedules. Florida Hospital had implemented LiveProcess in 2009, so when the time came to develop a response program for the most heightened situation imaginable — the presentation of a contagion like Ebola — she already had the solution in place.

“I was confident that it would enable the intricate series of decisions and actions that must occur to effectively manage an emergency like the presentation of an Ebola case,” said Freeman. “Time management and composure are of the essence in urgent situations, and LiveProcess can help anyone charged with duties around such a circumstance to act quickly, decisively and with confidence.”

In addressing concerns like Ebola containment, Freeman observed that Florida Hospital was consistently taking action about 10 days ahead of the Center for Disease Control. That level of diligence was evident in the Ebola event exercise she created, in which she used LiveProcess to simulate 12 Ebola incidents over a two-week period as a means for defining processes and training staff. She also coordinated the creation of an Ebola lockdown facility, fashioned from a retired 11-bed intensive care unit at Florida Hospital East Orlando, where patients could be safely and securely transported in the event of a live Ebola case.

Simple enough for everyday use

Freeman reported that, even after introducing LiveProcess years ago, the hospital continued to use a notification tool that permitted only page and text notification. The messaging, which often took as long as 45 minutes to be transmitted to some target recipients, flowed only in one direction and responses could not be returned to the command center. And most importantly, there was no ability to track who had received or opened a message.

“The antiquated application was no longer meeting our needs in preparing for a potential crisis,” Freeman said. “Replacing it with LiveProcess immediately moves our organization forward and provides us with the power to do precisely what LiveProcess promises: plan, mobilize, coordinate and track.”

Florida Hospital was consistently taking action about 10 days ahead of the Center for Disease Control.
“It took me very little time to learn LiveProcess, which is important because ease-of-use is critical to the efficacy of a tool like this,” Freeman noted. “If people have an excuse not to use a new piece of technology, the organization obviously won’t achieve their benefits. Because of its simple set-up and every-day use, LiveProcess will be adopted and will have the chance to revolutionize our emergency and general event management protocols.”

In fact, Freeman noted, the revolution has already begun. She had grasped the capability of LiveProcess in the management of crises. Now she took a broader look at the platform and considered how it might apply to a wide range of situations requiring staff notification and mobilization.

“Even while Ebola exercises are continuing, we have begun to deploy LiveProcess in hazmat spills, emergency department over-capacity notification and resource allocation, and several other aspects of hospital operations,” Freeman said. “Given how versatile and configurable the system is, I can say with confidence that this is the year of LiveProcess at Florida Hospital.”

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Born in the crisis-oriented world of emergency management, LiveProcess has more than a decade of success enabling large and complex networks to plan for and respond to critical, catastrophic and time-sensitive incidents. We now bring our proven logistics and coordination expertise across healthcare settings, within and beyond hospital walls. Our healthcare mobile apps enable personnel to take control of situations and collaborate to resolve operational disruptions, urgent health needs and routine transitions in patient care.

Headquartered in Chelmsford, MA, more than 600 healthcare organizations and public agencies rely on LiveProcess’ unmatched mobile, SaaS apps to effectively manage, analyze and respond to changing conditions.

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