

# Jackson-Madison County General Hospital

## Case Study

### At a glance

#### Key Feature

Supervisors can pull historical reports that display how many messages were sent during a given time period, who sent the messages, and when they were sent.



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### CHALLENGES

1

Update paging messaging system with an easy-to-use, HIPAA-compliant secure messaging system.

2

Improve communication gaps to enhance patient safety.

### SOLUTIONS

- Replace pagers with a HIPAA-compliant secure messaging app that sends and receives encrypted text messages, photos, videos, and audio files.
- The secure messaging app seamlessly integrates with existing tech to instantly send alarms and notifications to the correct staff and keeps detailed reporting.

### CUSTOMER QUOTE

"From a patient safety standpoint, Amtelco Secure Messages has been a very positive change. It plugs a hole in a common communication gap because you have documentation that they did indeed receive your message."

**Beth Wells**

**Executive Director of Patient Access and Information  
for Jackson-Madison County General Hospital**

# Utilizing Secure Messaging for Efficient HIPAA-Compliant Communications

Jackson-Madison County General Hospital is in Jackson, Tennessee, and is part of the West Tennessee Healthcare System. The 123-bed hospital opened on August 11, 1950, with 166 employees. The system now employs more than 7,000 people and serves 500,000 area residents throughout 19 counties in West Tennessee and Southeast Missouri. It is one of the top 10 largest public, not-for-profit healthcare systems in the United States.

## Selecting a Secure Messaging Solution

Pager-like systems have been used since the 1960s, quickly becoming the industry standard for sending messages. Over the last few decades, the way hospitals communicate sensitive information has evolved, and their technology needs have changed to secure Protected Health Information (PHI) following HIPAA rules. In light of this, hospitals are now searching for secure communication systems that are also more robust.


Needing an easy-to-use pager replacement system that would adapt to their unique needs, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital began to search for a solution that was also HIPAA compliant. "Being in compliance is always a priority for our organization," said Beth Wells, Executive Director of Patient Access and Information at Jackson-Madison County General Hospital.

After evaluating and reviewing many products with clinical and IS staff members, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital selected Amtelco Secure Messages as their secure messaging solution. "What we saw was the ease of use," commented Beth. "That was a very positive thing, and also the functionality that we thought we could utilize as a basis and grow on. We liked what we saw."

## How Jackson-Madison County General Hospital Uses Amtelco Secure Messages

The administrative staff, physicians, nurses, clinical staff, case managers, social workers, and physical therapy staff at Jackson-Madison County General Hospital transitioned from pagers to using Amtelco's secure messaging app. Many use personal devices, freeing employees from having to carry multiple phones or a phone plus a bulky pager.





Amtelco Secure Messages can be used with iPhone®, iPad®, Apple Watch® and Android® mobile devices, desktops, and tablets. Users can send and receive secure encrypted text messages, photos, videos, and audio files. Jackson-Madison County General Hospital uses the app to send messages from clinical users to physicians, nurses to physicians, and physician-to-physician communications.

Since many staff communicate using their personal devices, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital provides both Android and Apple apps for their staff. Mobile users can send and receive messages using the hospital's Wi-Fi network while at the hospital or their cellular data, enabling them to access their Amtelco Secure Messages Inbox from virtually anywhere.

In addition, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital also uses desktop access. "All of our nursing staff use Amtelco's secure messaging app on the secure desktop log-in," according to Beth. Nurses can communicate with any app user, quickly sending and receiving encrypted messages.

## Simple, Streamlined, Secure Communications

Like every hospital, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital has diverse communication needs. Amtelco Secure Messages speeds communication by allowing users to quickly select recipients – by choosing one person, members of a single department, or an entire group of members from a particular practice. They can send a complete, pre-populated reply with just a couple of taps, allowing users to acknowledge receipt of messages and even provide simple instructions while on the move.

There are many different departments and tasks within a healthcare setting. A comprehensive and secure messaging app can improve workflow processes related to patient admissions, lab results, patient transport, care team communication, and more.

Each employee's secure messages are stored separately from standard text messages and e-mails, allowing a nurse or physician to efficiently find, send, and respond to important messages without sifting through dozens of other lower-priority messages.



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## Meeting Patient Safety Needs

With patient safety in mind, Beth acknowledged how pleased she has been with the changes she's seen relating to nurse-to-physician and physician-to-physician communication. "From a patient safety standpoint," said Beth, "Amtelco Secure Messages has been a very positive change. It plugs a hole in a common communication gap because you have documentation that they did indeed receive your message."

Healthcare is mobile, and message security is paramount for texts that include electronic patient health information (ePHI). A secure mobile messaging app helps to keep a healthcare organization compliant when sharing information on mobile devices. Benefits include:

- End-to-end message encryption ensures all communications are secure and protected.
- Ability to send massive amounts of data quickly and accurately while keeping users firmly connected through Wi-Fi and cellular networks.
- A message log keeps track of messaging histories, and administrators have access to a full reporting function.

## Handling Code Calls and Reporting with Amtelco Secure Messages

Jackson-Madison County General Hospital is a stroke-certified facility, and they are using the app for their Neuro alerts. Beth commented, "It goes out to every member of that team, including the CT staff and the Radiologists, any time we have a Neuro alert."

Jackson-Madison County General Hospital also takes full advantage of the app's reporting features. "We run reports fairly frequently," she continued, "especially if somebody has a concern or expresses a need. For instance, someone collecting data for our stroke program might need information about the Neuro alerts we've had in a particular month. We can run a report with that data, so it's very helpful."

With older paging technology, no data is easily accessible, but with Amtelco Secure Messages, Beth can pull historical reports that display how many messages were sent during a given time period, who sent the messages, and when they were sent.

## Getting Started with Secure Messaging

Integrating new technology in a hospital can be a daunting task, but because of the app's simplistic design and intuitive interface, Jackson-Madison County General Hospital was confident the transition would be a smooth one.

Beth clearly saw the challenge of training such a large number of physicians, nurses, and other hospital staff at Jackson-Madison County General Hospital on a new system, but the customer-friendly usability of the app helped with the transition. "As far as efficiencies, we've got some physicians that will not use anything else. They are adamant that they don't want to receive a message in any other way," commented Beth.

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with questions.



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