

## St. Rita's first in country to pilot tablet technology

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LIMA — This prescription for a more informed patient is just one tablet. No, not a pill. A tablet.

St. Rita's Medical Center is the first hospital in the country to pilot a new piece of electronic medical record technology, what its maker calls MyChart Bedside.

Congestive heart failure and pneumonia patients at the hospital are using the new technology in a pilot program using either a patient or hospital-provided tablet that includes information tied to a patient's medical record, test results, medicine, procedures, educational information, information about the medical staff and a way to message with those providers.

Epic, which makes St. Rita's overall electronic medical records system, worked with Catholic Health Partners to try out the Bedside program in Lima.

"We saw this as an exciting opportunity to bring new technology and involve the patient in their care," said Dr. Stephen Beck, chief medical information officer for Catholic Health Partners, St. Rita's parent company. "We know an informed patient is more involved in their own care."

Sisters Lisa Bresson and Laura Foust were two of the early users of Bedside when their father, Bill Clark, was a patient at St. Rita's. They know two things about their father: He's not going to touch a computer, and he wouldn't bother a nurse for anything. Bresson and Foust used Bedside to message nurses when their dad needed something and to check in on his care — both when they were in the hospital and when they couldn't be there.

Beck said the Android tablet and program is easy to use, even for people without masterful technology skills. Christine Aab agreed with the assessment. Aab was a patient and then elected to borrow the tablet and take it home, which is an option for those with ongoing health issues in the pilot program.

"It was very user friendly, and it helped me continue my care," Aab said.

Kayla Miller, a current patient at the hospital gave a demonstration of how she is using the application. She was able to view her vital signs, labwork from earlier in the day and check information about her surgery that was scheduled for later in the day. Patients are also able to use their own tablets.

Miller's nurse Michell Burtchin has lead the project for the nursing staff. The program doesn't replace the old call button, but goes way beyond it, she said.

"The patient can use the program to communicate with the health care staff, and it gets patients more involved with their plan of care here. Communication and patient satisfaction are things we strive for here and I believe it has really helped," Burtchin said. "I think it can really help patients understand what is going on with them while they're in the hospital."

The trial is helping medical information staff understand who the application works best for, and for what treatments, Beck said. They used congestive

heart failure, for example, because patients' monitoring of their own health plays a large role in outcomes.

The program doesn't yet have a full rollout date, Beck said.

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