The smart hospital is our vision for the hospital of the future where everything — people, systems and processes — is connected and integrated to work seamlessly together.

Modern hospitals use some of the most sophisticated technologies in the world. In addition to advanced equipment for patient diagnostics and procedures, they have state-of-the-art systems for managing images, tracking medications, storing patient records and more. Most hospitals also have sophisticated and secure data and communications networks that deliver internet, telephony and IP connectivity everywhere.

Unfortunately, most of this technology lives in very distinct and disparate silos throughout the facility, and as a result, most workflow processes require a significant amount of manual coordination. Even with an electronic medical records (EMR) system in place, critical information is usually only available in a limited number of places such as a nurse’s station or administrative office instead of everywhere the clinician or patient is. Given the amount of technology in a hospital, it is ironic that the pencil and paper are still the primary way that many staff members record information and communicate.

Healthcare organizations are beginning to realize that there are nearly endless possibilities when everything is connected; when people, processes and systems all work together seamlessly. That’s the vision of the smart hospital. By using communications technologies to make the right connections, hospitals and healthcare organizations can improve:

- Quality of patient care
- Cost of services
- Staffing shortages
- Facility capacity constraints
- Security and privacy

The existing networking investments in a smart hospital create opportunities to drive better and more effective care, create efficiencies and find new ways to succeed without increasing costs. The key is making those connections without having to reinvent the hospital as we know it.

For healthcare professionals, technology offers many promises for better care, more efficient processes and more productive staff. The problem is that over the past decade technology has also created challenges for IT departments and clinicians alike due to the lack of integration among clinical systems, the
demands of government regulations for security and privacy, and the sheer number of different vendors’ systems that are in a modern hospital.

Advanced Unified Communications (UC) help eliminate many of these issues by using the voice and data networks that already exist in a hospital to connect the disparate systems, people and processes in order to maximize return on investment in clinical systems and infrastructure.

With UC, hospitals can find new ways to improve processes and practices, reducing the need for expensive new systems or comprehensive staff training initiatives. And since nearly every system adheres to set standards, it is possible to use the network to connect them together in ways that were never before possible.

FlexITy’s Healthcare Solutions take a comprehensive approach to effectively integrating communication technologies into a modern hospital environment in order to accelerate the pace of business. It is not just about adding a few features to voice systems or making data products more secure; it is about finding ways to leverage infrastructure technologies to make hospitals better.

By developing solutions that communications-enable disparate systems, FlexITy is helping hospitals refine what they do best without changing much of what they already do. Enabling a smart hospital can result in:

- Increased staff productivity, resulting in lower operating costs
- Accelerated patient throughput, which increases top-line revenue
- A more secure healthcare environment, protecting patients, staff and sensitive data

FlexITy’s Unified Communications solutions empower hospitals to take full advantage of their integrated voice and data networks to help make clinicians more productive and workflows more efficient. Solutions consist of four categories: Clinical Collaboration, Healthcare Mobility, Healthcare Workflow and Patient Contact.

Clinical Collaboration solutions meet the challenges that require collaboration among essential caregivers in treatment pathways. FlexITy’s Clinical Collaboration solutions improve the business and clinical workflows that deliver the most powerful impacts – those that rely on people, information and expertise.

In concert with Cisco’s TelePresence technology, FlexITy creates immersive, in-person meeting experiences among geographically dispersed users over the network. Integrated visual, audio and video components deliver the characteristics of a face-to-face meeting, creating a lifelike collaboration experience with:

- An apparent eye-to-eye viewpoint
- Superb and accurate sound rendering, synchronized with the images presented
- Hours of interaction without user fatigue
- Life-sized user representation

By enabling executives, physicians, specialists, patients, and suppliers to meet, discuss, and make decisions in real time, regardless of their locations, we mitigate the inefficiencies of traditional collaboration tools.

Healthcare Mobility solutions are fundamental technology solutions that give hospital staff greater mobility without compromising accessibility. FlexITy’s Mobility solutions include:

- Asset Tracking and Management — Identifies and reports the location and status of critical resources in a hospital via RFID tags and wireless LAN technologies, helping reduce equipment searches and wait times while lowering equipment inventory requirements
- Mobile Device Checkout — Allows nurses and clinicians to “checkout” a mobile handset while maintaining a personalized contact number at all times
- Nurse Communications — A set of advanced communications tools that are uniquely tuned to support the collaborative work demands of the nursing staff, enabling increased nursing productivity and enhanced patient care

Healthcare Workflow solutions use integrated communications technologies to accelerate workflows involving human-to-application or human-to-human interaction. When a clinical process uses these accelerated workflows, it can result in improved staff productivity and operational efficiency. These solutions include:

- Patient Discharge — Streamlines the patient discharge process via automation of internal and external approvals and notifications, helping increase patient throughput and boosting nursing productivity
- Patient Admission — Streamlines the admission process from the Emergency Department (ED) through process automation and communication enablement of clinical business processes

Patient Contact solutions provides an interactive patient, clinician and hospital experience. These solutions automate routine processes in an efficient manner to allow improved clinical productivity and expanded patient interaction outside of the hospital.

- Patient Appointment Reminder — Automates a process normally performed with considerable human interaction. The solution can not only maximize resources but also drastically reduce no-shows, helping to recover lost
- Patient Follow-up — Helps assure patients are recovering properly after they leave the hospital. This effective automated process helps reduce re-admittances, clinical workload, and improves patient satisfaction.

To learn more about FlexITy’s Healthcare Solutions contact your FlexITy Account Manager or visit us online at healthcare.flexity.ca.