

# CUSTOMER Success Story

Willis-Knighton Health System, Shreveport, LA

## Willis-Knighton unifies four emergency departments and eliminates manual processes by interfacing MEDHOST with MEDITECH



**Background:** Willis-Knighton Health System, located in Shreveport, La., is North Louisiana's largest healthcare organization with more than 120,000 combined annual ED visits. The four-hospital system is recognized among Solucient's Top 100 Hospitals in America and was recently listed in the 2007 Best Hospitals edition of U.S. News & World Report. Willis-Knighton's desire to serve its community with the best possible care led them to evaluate technology solutions that would increase patient safety and satisfaction while unifying all four EDs.

**The Challenge:** Willis-Knighton wanted to automate several manual processes to eliminate inefficiencies in clinical workflow, communication and ED operations while decreasing patient wait times. Willis-Knighton also sought a solution that would support data collection needed to manage the ED efficiently because the manual process was too labor intensive and did not provide a real-time view of ED operations. Willis-Knighton physicians relied on dictation 100 percent of the time, which cost the hospital time and money. In addition, the manual charge capture process was subjective, labor intensive and error prone. Willis-Knighton wanted to implement an emergency department information system (EDIS) to unify the four EDs across its Integrated Delivery Network (IDN) and automate processes, but seamless interfacing with its system-wide MEDITECH HIS was required.

**The Solution:** Willis-Knighton knew they needed to take a collaborative approach for all EDIS deployments to ensure that ED operations would be consistent across the system. The IDN also put a heavy focus on ensuring patient information flowed into its MEDITECH HIS to ensure easy and reliable access to data. After a thorough vendor search, Willis-Knighton chose MEDHOST, which has a successful history of interfacing with MEDITECH. Once the deployment decision was made, MEDHOST and Willis-Knighton designed an aggressive implementation plan to ensure that all four hospitals would go live within a five-week period.

### Objective

Implement an EDIS that would interface with the existing MEDITECH HIS, eliminate manual processes and standardize operations across four EDs.

### Highlights

Successfully integrated MEDHOST with MEDITECH, enabling IDN-wide data sharing.

Standardized operations across four hospitals within 12 months of go live.

Saved **\$500,000** in one year by eliminating dictation.

Experienced **100% physician compliance**.

Decreased turnaround times.

Improved charting helped the system **increase per-patient charges by 25%** and essentially experience ROI in approximately one year.

At one ED, the number of patients who left without being seen **dropped from 10% to 3%**.





“MEDHOST empowered each ED to improve its processes, address the underlying needs of the network and help further enhance the level of care that patients receive from Willis-Knighton hospitals.”

It was important to Willis-Knighton that all hospitals operate the same, so the hospitals and patients experience the same benefits, no matter the location.

“Automating the ER process allows us to provide service to patients faster and better. Our goal is to provide quality care for our patients, and we believe the MEDHOST solution is an important tool to help us achieve this goal,” said James Elrod, CEO of Willis-Knighton. “Our IDN wanted an EDIS that had the mindset of always putting the patient first, while also integrating with MEDITECH.”

Upon go live, Willis-Knighton quickly eliminated inefficient processes, and benefits were soon apparent. Willis-Knighton experienced 100 percent physician compliance with MEDHOST’s

electronic charting, and dictation was eliminated, which saved \$500,000 within the first year. Seamless integration with MEDITECH ensured information, including orders and results, moved electronically between the EDs and ancillary departments, further improving workflow.

MEDHOST’s intuitive design and easy-to-use touchscreen technology ensures more accurate documentation. Because of the automatic, behind-the-scenes Charge Capture, everything charted is charged, so intense manual audits were eliminated and ED levels were accurately assigned. This heightened accuracy helped the IDN increase per-patient charges by 25 percent and essentially experience ROI in approximately one year.

Willis-Knighton utilized MEDHOST’s robust reports to identify inefficient processes and pinpoint bottlenecks. Hospital managers now review general operations, justify staffing and reengineer processes, which has resulted in lower turnaround times and higher patient satisfaction scores. At one ED, the number of patients who left without being seen dropped from 10 percent to 3 percent.

“Shreveport has come to expect the best from Willis-Knighton, and MEDHOST ensures that our patients are receiving timely and quality care,” said Susan Cash, ED director at Willis-Knighton. “MEDHOST empowered each ED to improve its processes, address the underlying needs of the network and help further enhance the level of care that patients receive from Willis-Knighton hospitals.”