

New App to Improve Communication Between First Responders and ED

Twiage b-roll 1:56

Time can mean the difference between life and death in many medical emergencies such as trauma sustained from a car accident, heart attack and stroke. However, many of these situations take place nowhere near a hospital. It's the responsibility of paramedics to do what they can to stabilize a patient wherever they are and communicate with emergency department personnel on what's coming. OSF HealthCare is hoping the mobile application, Twiage introduced through OSF Innovation, can both accelerate patient care in the field and improve outcomes for critical emergencies.

The health care organization is testing the software at OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center in partnership with area emergency medical service providers. The hope is to replace the current system of communicating through radio or cell phone call.

Twiage-Matthew Jackson 1 :23 ...connection occur."

"In our situation, if a specific order is needed for an in-bound unit then those individuals have to contact a physician, the physician would then answer the telephone and then have to talk to the unit in that fashion," said Matthew Jackson, M.D. Emergency Medical Services Medical Director for Peoria EMS and emergency physician with OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center. "It's like playing the telephone game; you have to have hand off after hand-off to make that connection occur."

Twiage streamlines the process by allowing first responders to pull up the application on a tablet or their mobile phones to not only contact and have two-way communication with the emergency department at OSF Saint Francis, but to plug in vital information about the patient they are treating. This includes patient identification, the type of emergency the patient is facing and what medical interventions are taking place.

Twiage-Randy Wolfe 2 :29 ...situation wise."

"There are other features with it where if I am responding to a motor vehicle accident and we have someone who is entrapped, we can take a couple of quick snapshots to show the damage, show how badly the patient is entrapped and its securely sent directly to the emergency department so those physicians and nurses can actually see where we are situation-wise," said Randy Wolfe, EMS Chief with Eureka-Goodfield Fire Protection District.

Wolfe says it may seem out of the norm to witness first responders texting, taking pictures or collecting video of emergency situations.

Twiage-Randy Wolfe 1 :16 ...this patient in."

"If you see our medical personnel on their cell phones, they are not playing games or texting their friends," said Randy Wolfe, EMS Chief with Eureka-Goodfield Fire Protection District. "They are actually notifying the emergency department that we are, in fact, bringing this patient in."

The app is expected to improve patient data coming into the emergency department. Both physicians and nurses have access to Twiage on their area computers.

Twiage-Kristen Briney 1 :26 ...to go."

“At this point, we can’t ask the medics any questions,” said Kristen Briney, a Charge Nurse in the OSF Saint Francis ED. “So, it’s just kind of...we get what we get. Now we can get the right information. We know exactly when they are going to be here because that GPS tells us exactly how many minutes out (the EMS providers are). So, (for) stroke (and) MI (myocardial infarction) patients—we can tell those doctors, ‘they are exactly this far away, this is what we have going on,’ and we’ll have all of rooms ready to go.”

Dr. Matthew Jackson says timelier notification and the ability to have direct communication with emergency responders means better care for patients who need it most.

Twiage-Mathew Jackson 2 :14 ...the case.

“This will improve turnaround times, get the units back out on the street quicker and also allow us to notify some specialty services (trauma, cardiology, neurology) as needed depending on the case.”

OSF HealthCare is first piloting Twiage with EMS providers covering Eureka, Goodfield and Germantown, East Peoria, Metamora, Fulton County, Northern Tazewell County and the Peoria Fire Department. It’s the hospital organization’s goal to add more districts over the course of the year-long trial.

Twiage-Rob Jennetten 1 :26 ...operation standpoint.

“We’re looking to see how those interactions between the ambulance companies and ER clinicians really work, trying to figure out some of the workflows and then looking at how does that impact some of our metrics from an efficiency and clinical operations standpoint,” said Rob Jennetten, Director of OSF Innovation Partnerships.