

CASE STUDY: Large Hospital Network Uses Sound Masking To Help Patients Sleep



The University of Vermont Medical Center

Challenge

Creating a Comfortable Environment for Patients and Caregivers

The University of Vermont Medical Center is a 447 bed tertiary care regional referral center providing advanced care to approximately 1 million residents in Vermont and northern New York. Patient satisfaction is paramount to the hospital's mission.

Providing an acoustically comfortable environment for patients isn't just good customer service – it also benefits a hospital's bottom line. HIPAA mandates that healthcare providers take precautions to ensure confidential medical information is protected, and this includes conversations between caregivers and patients. Additionally, the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems Survey (HCAHPS) provides scores to hospitals based on a variety of criteria, including "quietness of patient environment." Hospitals with low HCAHPS scores risk loss of government funding and damaged reputations.

At a healthcare tradeshow, Wes Pooler, director of Facilities Management at UVM Medical Center and Tim Hooper, co-owner of technology integrator Connectivity Point discussed the value of adding a sound masking system to UVM Medical Center's inpatient facilities to make them more acoustically comfortable. Sound masking is the process of adding a low level, unobtrusive background sound to an environment to cover up excess speech noise, making the affected environment more comfortable, private, and free of excess noise distractions.

“We installed the QtPro in an inpatient area, along with other noise-reducing measures. We've experienced positive results from the measures taken. **”**

Wes Pooler
Director of Facilities Management
University of Vermont Medical Center

Solution

QtPro™ Sound Masking System

The University of Vermont Medical Center installed Cambridge Sound Management's cost effective QtPro sound masking system in an inpatient wing of the hospital. Small, barely visible Qt® Emitters (speakers) were installed in the ceiling tiles throughout the entire space including nurse stations, patient rooms, and corridors. The emitters were connected via cables to a control module in one of the hospital's server rooms. Cambridge Sound Management staff provided additional commissioning support to ensure the system was running optimally.



Result

A Noticeable Improvement in Acoustical Comfort for Patients and Staff

The hospital has seen a marked increase in the number of patients that reported that their room was always quiet a night in their HCAHPS surveys. As an added bonus, QtPro is the most energy efficient sound masking system available, allowing UVM Medical Center to adhere to its commitment to sustainability. "We installed QtPro in an inpatient area, along with other noise-reducing measures," says Pooler. "We've experienced positive results from the measures taken." UVM Medical Center is having the system installed in all of its patient wings.

About The University of Vermont Medical Center

The University of Vermont Medical Center (formerly Fletcher Allen Health Care), is a 447 bed tertiary care regional referral center serving approximately 1 million residents in Vermont and northern New York. Together with their partners at the University of Vermont College of Medicine and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, they are Vermont's academic medical center. The University of Vermont Medical Center also serves as a community hospital for residents in Chittenden and Grand Isle counties.

The University of Vermont Medical Center is a member of The University of Vermont Health Network, a four-hospital system established to deliver high quality academic medicine to every community they serve. Their partners are:

- The University of Vermont Health Network – Central Vermont Medical Center
- The University of Vermont Health Network – Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital
- The University of Vermont Health Network – Elizabethtown Community Hospital

For more information visit UVMHealth.org/MedCenter or visit their Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and blog sites at UVMHealth.org/MedCenterSocialMedia.

About Connectivity Point

Connectivity Point specializes in integrated technology solutions for voice, data, video and security applications. They have specific expertise in structured cabling and wireless connectivity, security systems, audio visual equipment, VOIP telephone systems and sound masking solutions. Connectivity Point services the New England area with their own technicians, and nationally and globally through a network of pre-qualified partners, enabling Connectivity Point to be their clients' One Point of contact.

About Cambridge Sound Management

Cambridge Sound Management, Inc. manufactures QtPro sound masking systems to help organizations across multiple industries protect speech privacy, reduce noise distractions, and fuel workplace productivity. Powered by direct-field Quiet Technology, QtPro works by emitting a uniform, barely perceptible background sound at the frequencies of human speech. Cost effective and easy to install, QtPro is deployed in hundreds of millions of square feet of space throughout the world including commercial organizations, healthcare facilities, financial services, government agencies, and educational institutions.

Case Study Overview

SPACE

Approximately 24,000 square feet in of patient rooms, hallway corridors, nurse stations, and office space.

CHALLENGE

Controlling noise distractions in an area where hospital staff is working while patients are sleeping and recuperating.

SOLUTION

QtPro™ Sound Masking System



RESULT

A noticeable improvement in acoustical comfort for both patients and staff and a measurable positive impact on HCAHPS scores.