

## HEALTHCARE SECURITY

# Multi-Campus Hospital Upgrades With Cost Effective, Flexible Access Control

For more than 100 years, Agnesian HealthCare has been providing medical services and support to the residents of Fond du Lac County in eastern Wisconsin. Its healthcare coverage has grown from a single hospital in the city of Fond du Lac to more than 40 facilities throughout the county, including an additional two hospitals, several clinics,

surgery centers, hospice facilities, retail pharmacies and more, making it easy and convenient for patients to receive care close to home.

Agnesian HealthCare is the recipient of several outstanding achievement awards for excellence in healthcare and boasts nine accreditations for national quality standards., all while maintaining

adherence to the many applicable state and federal regulations. For example, Agnesian meets the standards set by The Joint Commission, which oversees the industry's accreditation process to ensure patient/personnel safety and standards compliance. Among other stipulations, accreditation requires that Agnesian HealthCare facilities identify sensitive security locations within the hospital (i.e., birthing units, pharmacy, emergency, etc.) that may have controlled access to sensitive areas. Without this, Agnesian HealthCare is at risk of losing accreditation, along with funding.

To help ensure ongoing accreditation approvals and improved operational efficiencies, Agnesian HealthCare recently upgraded their access control system to a more comprehensive, centrally-controlled solution using Walkersville, Md.-based Galaxy Control Systems' popular System Galaxy software. According to John Gormican, director of safety, risk and accreditation for Agnesian HealthCare, the change has provided true system control.

"System Galaxy allows us to have all of our facilities connected instead of each facility operating as a stand-alone center, giving us complete control from one central location," Gormican said. "The result is improved security. At any time we can quickly and easily determine who is in any building or enact an emergency shutdown if necessary. Centralized control also improves our efficiencies in on/off-boarding of personnel, as well as saving time in performing routine procedures such as reconfiguring a door or putting a new schedule on it."

Gormican initially thought they would have to substantially upgrade or entirely replace the existing system; Agnesian was pleased to learn this would not be necessary with the System Galaxy solution. The deployment required only a new head end to accommodate the



PHOTO COURTESY OF GALAXY CONTROL SYSTEMS

*With more than 40 healthcare facilities throughout Fond du Lac County, Wis., Agnesian HealthCare recently upgraded its access control system to a more comprehensive, centrally-controlled solution to help ensure ongoing accreditation approvals and improved operational efficiencies.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF GALAXY CONTROL SYSTEMS

*John Gormican, director of safety, risk and accreditation for Agnesian HealthCare, was pleased that the access control system could be upgraded using just a new head end, allowing the facility to keep their recently installed readers in place and saving thousands of dollars.*

requirement for a centralized control and recording system. With the system's open architecture framework, the card readers that had been installed only a year earlier could be utilized, saving the organization several thousand dollars.

Programmed reports available from System Galaxy have also added to Agnesian HealthCare's operational management oversight, Gormican said. For example, he receives a "cards not used" report, which helps him to maintain the integrity of the system and facility security. His department also receives traffic reports on specific doors and uses this data to better plan security staffing.

The reports allow his department to perform more precise investigations in the event of irregularities in high security areas, such as pharmacy departments or infant units.

The design and build was performed by Galaxy Partner Shea Electric & Communications LLC of nearby Oshkosh, Wis. According to Dan Shea, COO of the company, System Galaxy was the first and only solution they considered for Agnesian HealthCare.

"We have built our reputation on best-in-class service and product and the Galaxy solution allowed us to deliver both," he said. "Its open architecture meant that

Agnesian HealthCare could continue using their existing system and they did not need to be concerned about what brand of card readers they wanted. Building the System Galaxy into the design really helped everything fall neatly into place."

Gormican also attributes the installation success to good communication between Shea Electric & Communications and his department. At all times they knew which facilities were being upgraded and how long it would take, enabling personnel to make plans for the interim. Design features of System Galaxy made it easy to incorporate Agnesian HealthCare's HR database into the programming software, saving time and money and reducing the potential for input errors.

One facility was installed at a time, running parallel to the old system, to ensure system reliability and functionality. Gormican added, "We chose to run the systems in parallel in the beginning because we couldn't risk a situation where a surgeon was denied access to an operating room. Fortunately that never happened."

For the future, Gormican said they are discussing plans with Shea Electric & Communications to integrate the access control system with other security systems such as Avigilon video surveillance and will also look at mobile or remote VPN access.

"The open architecture of System Galaxy really gives us a lot of options for adding to or upgrading the system," he said. "And even better is the fact that overall it cost us about 30 percent less than it would have to upgrade our previous system." ■