



# Hospice Provider Uses Secure Communication to Connect Teams Anytime, Anywhere

## Centric Home Health and Hospice

Patient-centric technology

Located in Greenville, Texas

### Key Impacts

Entire clinical and support staff can communicate across all their locations

Used as a recruiting tool to emphasize Centric's focus on technology

Enhanced communication allowed Centric to expand its business into Oklahoma

## Centric Home Health and Hospice Implements Backline to Facilitate Secure Communication of Patient Health Information and Ensure HIPAA Compliance

### The Problem

Secure, efficient communication between healthcare workers is the key to collaborative patient care. For Centric Home Health and Hospice, every situation involving patients needs a rapid response; this poses a particular challenge, as a majority of their staff work in the field. They turned to DrFirst's secure communication solution, Backline®, to keep care teams connected no matter where they are during their day.

The nature of Centric's business requires that employees are mobile to properly care for their patients across the region. With a hyper-mobile workforce, effective, efficient, and secure collaboration is essential. Security is especially important for Centric, as they need to send Protected Health Information (PHI), which cannot be sent through traditional communications such as email or text messages.

Field staff can miss crucial information about a patient's condition if they are not kept in the loop. Being forced to rely on phone calls or finding an internet connection for their laptop is detrimental to optimal patient care.

### The Solution

Backline, DrFirst's healthcare coordination software application, is an easy to use mobile solution that supports HIPAA and Joint Commission compliance for secure texting. Backline allows Centric's staff to communicate on the web or via their own smart devices. Team members can set up patient-specific work groups, see status showing who from the team is currently available to chat, and transfer patient-related audio, video and photo files.



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The Backline rollout was very straightforward with its intuitive user interface, employees adopted its use quickly and easily. "It didn't require any training; you don't have to train anyone on it," said Jim Holloman, Administrator at Centric. The first step was for Holloman to create the appropriate groups for his employees.

*"Backline significantly decreases the 'I didn't know' responses regarding our patients. Now, our providers are always up-to-date on changing conditions or transitions of care"*  
*- Jim Holloman, Administrator at Centric*

This ability to create different groups within Backline has been an essential feature. They have created a company-wide group to notify staff about new or departing employees, personal information like a death in an employee's family or even weather issues. Also, they created groups for non-clinical areas such as marketing and new referrals.

Additionally, Centric creates care groups for every patient with the appropriate team members, including the physicians. "For example, a CNA saw a patient recently. She sent a Backline message saying the patient seemed depressed. The assigned social worker saw the message, responded and made an unscheduled visit that day to check on the patient," Holloman explained.

### **The Impact**

Centric's adoption of Backline has yielded tremendous results. Now, the entire clinical and support staff can communicate across all their locations and staff, regardless of whether they are in the office or not. Backline meets the needs of the entire team with the desktop application for office-based staff and the mobile app for remote employees. This fosters ease-of-use, accessibility and better collaboration.

"Backline significantly decreases the 'I didn't know' responses regarding our patients. Now, our providers are always up-to-date on changing conditions or transitions of care," said Holloman.

The overall impact on the business is profound. "Backline is the backbone of our company. I don't

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know how we would do business without it. It changed how we communicate entirely,” said Holloman. In fact, Holloman mentioned he uses it as a recruiting tool for new doctors and nurses to emphasize Centric’s focus on technology.

Additionally, this enhanced communication allowed Centric to expand its business into Oklahoma as Holloman no longer feels the need to visit every physical location daily.

Centric’s successful implementation of Backline has streamlined communication, virtually ended inefficient phone calls, and improved workflow for more informed clinical decisions and even better patient care. Increased staff productivity has reduced the amount of time clinicians spend on administrative tasks and created more time to focus on patients.

