

# Hospice Pharmacia,

a division of excelleRx, Inc.

HEALTHCARE

CASE  
STUDY

VHT Product:



Concierge™

## In 2 years

- **2 Million Minutes** of Hold Time Avoided
- **54% Boost** in Service Level During Peaks
- **58% Reduction** in Abandons During Peaks



**“Virtual Hold is a great product that has gotten us through a difficult time. A nurse’s time is very valuable, and we could be losing more than business when they’re on hold.”**

– Steve Lemak,  
excelleRx Vice President of IT

Established in 1996, excelleRx provides expert medication counseling and pharmaceutical distribution services for 70,000 hospice and chronic care patients throughout the United States. To support its 800 client hospice organizations, excelleRx employs more than 645 team members including 250 pharmaceutical care representatives who are highly trained pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

Hospice Pharmacia, the primary business unit of excelleRx, aims to change the way medication is deployed, so that patients receive medications based on objective information instead of just habit or personal preference. More than just empty words, this dedication drives excelleRx to combine technology and clinical expertise to ensure that patients receive the appropriate medication for their unique situations.

## Challenge

The mission to provide the best care and support to the nurses who use Hospice Pharmacia customer service involves making sure that nurses speak to the right representative at the right time. Many call centers have seasonal spikes, which can be easier to staff for, but Hospice Pharmacia experiences spikes in call volume differently.

“Because our nurses are mobile, we see call spikes in the morning, at noon, and at the end day,” said excelleRx Vice President of IT Steve Lemak. “When our nurses call, it’s vital that they speak to an expert, not just a warm body. Our pharmaceutical care representatives are highly specialized, technical experts, so it isn’t easy to find temporary help – especially without overstaffing for the rest of the day.”

For a mobile workforce of nurses and other caregivers providing care to patients, being tied to a phone for even 5 minutes is unacceptable, so how do you optimize operations without sacrificing quality of service?

## Solution

The Hospice Pharmacia contact center operates around its Nortel Symposium system, a common integration for Virtual Hold Technology (VHT). Armed with years of experience with Nortel, the VHT project team designed a custom integration for Hospice Pharmacia’s in-house and work-at-home agents, screen-pop and readerboard applications, and mobile workforce of nurses and caregivers.

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The Virtual Hold solution for Hospice Pharmacia virtually eliminates hold time through the Concierge™ software product. If there's hold time when a nurse calls Hospice Pharmacia, Concierge informs the nurse of the estimated wait time and offers the nurse a choice: wait on hold or receive a callback when a pharmaceutical care representative is available.

Concierge keeps the nurse's place in line, while the nurse hangs up and can move on with a busy day, secure in the knowledge that Hospice Pharmacia will call back when it said it would.

## Results

High-tech, high-touch applications like the Virtual Hold solution enable Hospice Pharmacia to provide quality medical management services to its mobile workforce of nurses and caregivers. With Virtual Hold, Hospice Pharmacia can ensure that nurses speak to the right person, the first time, within the time promised. And even though it can be difficult to estimate how long nurses will have to wait, Virtual Hold's patented estimated wait time calculations result in Virtual Hold callbacks that are on time 99% of the time.

As nurses become more familiar in the Virtual Hold callback, utilization of the system continues to improve. In 2007, the Virtual Hold system treated 44% of callers and more than half of those opted for a Virtual Hold callback. In 2008, nearly 72% of callers offered a Virtual Hold callback accepted, which is no surprise given how busy Hospice Pharmacia's nurses are.

"Virtual Hold is a great product that's really helped us out," Lemak said. "A nurse's time is very valuable, and we could be losing more than business when they're on hold." **VHT**

### COMPANY SYSTEM PROFILE:

**Nortel Symposium**

**Nortel MPS 500 IVR**

**Nortel IPML CTI**

**2 Locations**

**2 Queues**

**250 Representatives  
for 17,000 Callers**

To learn more about opening new channels of communication into your contact center, contact your Sales Director.



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