

Use of Mobile Application to Improve Nursing Department Communication



Paula Wolski MSN, RN-BC, Courtney Green BSN, RN Diane Pessa MSN, RN-BC, Anh Le Nguyen BSN, RN, Ellen O'Connor BSN, RN

Purpose

To find an effective means of communication for the Department of Nursing allowing staff the opportunity to give feedback and ask questions related to changes within the department.

Background

- Nursing leadership has struggled with the use of staff meetings as a means to share information.
- Staff meetings should ideally be used for higher-level nursing communication and to review unit-specific items.
- Literature searches using OVID and CINAHL databases revealed very little on the effectiveness of various types of communication tools for intradepartmental communication.
- A subgroup of our Nursing Informatics Committee (NIC) reviewed potential electronic applications as solutions.
- The application Workspace was chosen to pilot based on familiarity with user interface and cost.



Methods

After the application was chosen a mixed method survey was developed for the application's ease of use and impact on the end user. Members of the Nursing Practice Committee as well as the NIC were asked to volunteer to be part of a pilot group to validate this form of communication. All participants were asked to download the application onto their mobile device or desktop. A pre-implementation survey was sent to all participants. The application was used to communicate several practice changes or updates on new functionality within the Electronic Health Record (EHR). Surveys were then sent out at two weeks and four weeks post pilot start.

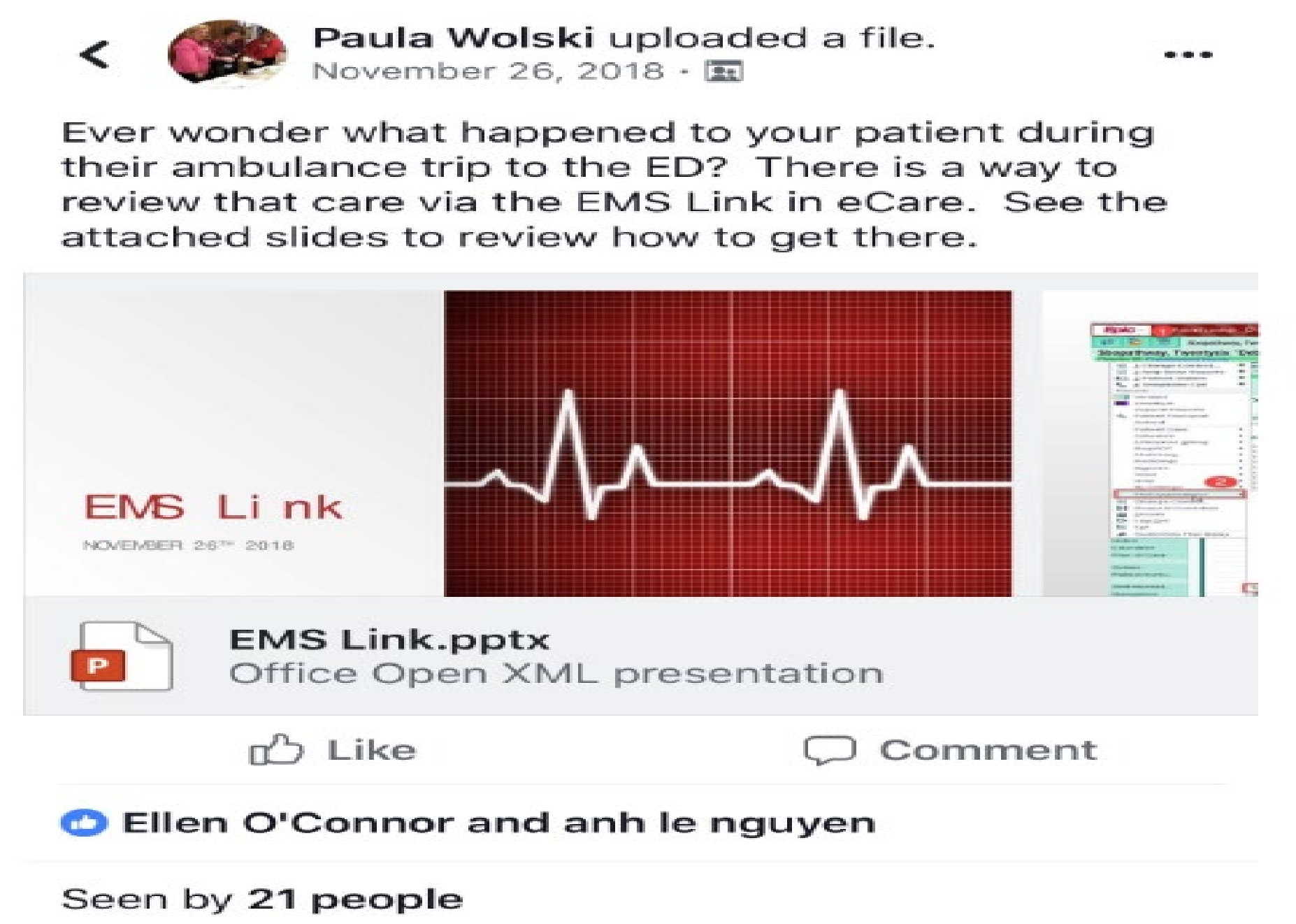
Results

Demographics

Demographics (n-13)		% of Response
Age	20-30	23%
	31-40	11%
	51-60	38%
	61+	31%
Years as RN	1-5	15%
	6-10	15%
	11-15	15%
	16+	54%
Highest Degree	Associates	8%
	Diploma	8%
	Bachelors	69%
	Masters	15%
Unit Type	Med-Surg	38%
	Peri-op	38%
	Prof Dev	8%
	Manager	8%
	Radiology	8%
Has Smart Phone	Yes	100%
	No	0%
Uses Social Media	Yes	77%
	No	23%
Preferred communication method	Text	69%
	Email	62%
	Social media	15%
	No answer	8%

Themes

Post-Survey (n-11)	Yes	No	Blank	Comments
Did you like the App?	10	0	1	Easy to use, like that you are notified with new content
Was it easy to install?	9	1	1	have not installed yet, icon did not load initially
Bothered by having work related app on personal device?	1	9	1	Usually yes but this app is educational and keeps me up to date. I understand it is my responsibility to balance work and personal time. Speaking with coworkers few have work related items on their personal devices.
What did you find easy to use with this application?	10		1	Accessibility. Similar to Facebook™
What did you find difficult in using this application?	10		1	Nothing
Was it more convenient than email?	9	1	1	Can't take the place of email. Concerned about saving items for future reference. Concerned that with more users the site may get too busy.
Do you feel more informed using the application?	9	1	1	I see updates as soon they are posted. Feel that email is preferred. More apt to review this than email.
Would you prefer to get committee updates via the application rather than staff meetings or email?	10	1	0	



Conclusion

- The use of a mobile application to send updates on nursing practice and committee communication was found to be beneficial.
- The pilot was considered a success even with a small data set.
- A small subset of staff prefers their communication via email, which points to the need for continued use of email.

Next Steps

- Next steps would include operationalizing the use of the application.
- All nursing staff will have the option to use email and not download the application.
- Standardization of email address format would allow all staff access to application.

Reference

Bautista, J. R., & Lin, T. T. C. (2017). Nurses' use of mobile instant messaging applications: A uses and gratifications perspective. *International Journal of Nursing Practice*, 23(5), n/a – N.P.A.G. <https://doi.org.ezproxy.ned.edu/10.1111/ijn.12577>