

# MEDSTAR HEALTH

## MedStar Health Selects Iridium® to Equip Hospitals, Personnel and Helicopters with State-of-the-Art Communications Technology



MedStar Health

### THE CHALLENGE

Being able to communicate during an emergency is critical, as healthcare institutions are looking beyond the conventional approaches when reevaluating their communication sources.

MedStar Health, the largest healthcare system in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C. area, determined a need for new communications tools in two critical areas. First, MedStar Health wanted to be able to communicate in emergency situations if landlines were not available. Secondly, it wanted to be able to communicate and track its helicopter fleet as it provides emergency services to patients. Recognizing the unique quality of reliability and coverage that satellite communications provide, MedStar Health turned to Iridium for its solution.

### THE SOLUTION

Iridium is the world's only truly global mobile communications company, with coverage of the entire Earth, including oceans, airways and Polar Regions. Iridium delivers essential communications services when

### The Iridium Advantage

Iridium is committed to providing reliable and affordable communications solutions. The Iridium constellation of 66 low-earth orbiting satellites enables voice and data communications to and from remote areas. The advantage to the emergency services industry is complete coverage of the earth in any and all conditions or events.

and where no other form of communication is available and worked closely with one of its service providers to develop solutions for MedStar Health that not only met, but exceeded expectations.

To ensure communications if land lines go out, Iridium provided MedStar Health with one hundred and sixty-five satellite phones and airtime to administrators and to all of the MedStar facilities around the Baltimore-Washington, D.C. metro region.

A key component to the Iridium emergency communications service with MedStar Health is that the service is interfaced with the buildings' existing phone system. MedStar Health installed a MXU (Multi Exchange Unit) in all of their facilities. The MXU integrates the Iridium L-Band Transceiver(s) and directly ties into the building's PBX, enabling each building's existing phone system to be used, even when traditional phone service is unavailable during an emergency. As part of the MXU installation, Iridium antennas are mounted on the roof of the building for direct connection with Iridium's satellite system. Because the MXU is tied into the building's PBX, this enables every phone in the building to have access to a communications link even when the public switch telephone network is unavailable. MXUs provide either two or four Iridium lines, depending on configuration. This innovative approach means that not only will the people with the satellite handsets be able to communicate, but every person with access to the fixed land-line phones within MedStar's MXU-enabled facilities will be able to as well.

Iridium representatives have been training the contacts at MedStar Health on using their satellite phones, including the pre-populated phone directory that has been installed on every phone. This training ensures that in an emergency MedStar personnel will not lose valuable time trying to figure out how their phones work.

Iridium tracking and communication services were installed in the MedSTAR transport helicopter fleet, which provides automated tracking and voice communications with the aircraft through the Iridium network. The system enables MedStar Health to view the location and status of its fleet anywhere and virtually under any conditions. Additionally, the communication system allows helicopters to communicate with hospitals, enabling crew and medical staff to save time and, most importantly, convey critical patient information.

## THE RESULTS

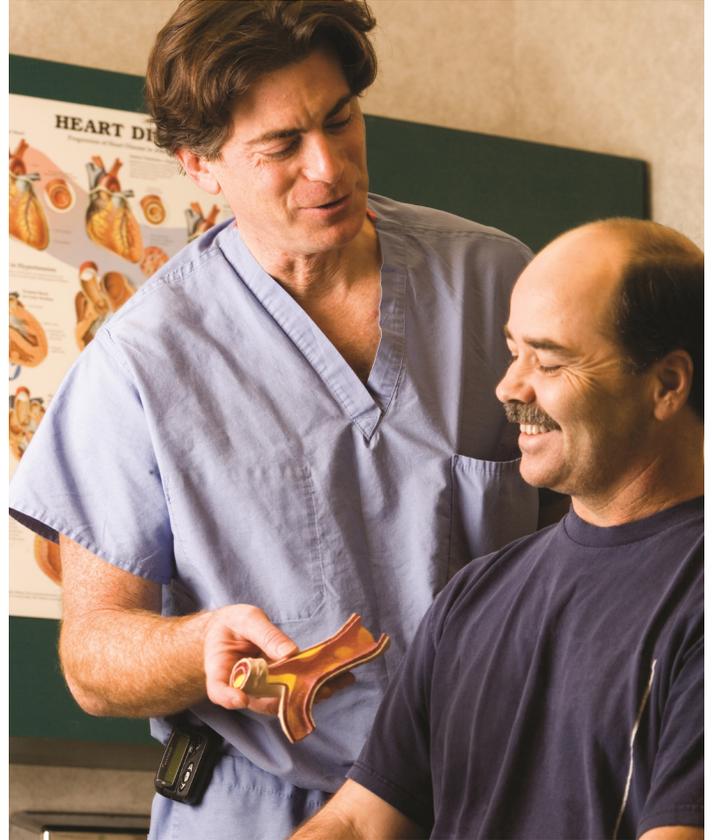
MedStar Health has formed three committees including the Emergency Preparedness Committee, the Safety Committee and the Emergency Operations Committee – all working together to provide significant enhancements to the hospital's preparedness plans. Iridium and its partners play a vital role in this initiative.

“As a vital community medical services provider, it is critically important that we have redundant layers of backup communications,” said Dr. Christopher Wuerker, M.D., Medical Director for MedSTAR Transport and Co-Chair of Emergency Preparedness for Washington Hospital Center, Washington, D.C. “The Iridium in-building systems and portable handsets will ensure uninterrupted communications if conventional systems are disrupted by a natural disaster or terrorist attack.”



Iridium 9555

Fortunately for MedStar Health, many of the Iridium emergency communication systems have not been utilized at this point, but knowing they are there and that their staff is trained to use it is priceless. Every organization needs to have a back-up, fail-proof communication system for emergency situations and it is leaders such as MedStar Health that are demonstrating just how vital this is for public safety.



Doctor and Patient

**Service Provider:** Iridium  
**Enabling Product:** Iridium 9555  
**Enabling Service:** Iridium Postpaid & Prepaid Calling

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