



» Limmattal Hospital

Limmattal Hospital is responsible for primary health care in the Swiss regions of Limmattal and Furtal near Zürich. Thanks to permanent innovation and future orientated investment in new technologies and building infrastructure, the hospital fulfills the requirements made of a modern specialist hospital. It is known as "Zurich West Healthcare Centre". The 95,000 residents in the surrounding area are cared for and attended to according to the latest standards, both in terms of medical treatment and during their stay. This is also due to the close working relationship with GPs in the region. Limmattal Hospital employs about 1000 employees on around 700 workstations. Around 7900 inpatients and well over 25,000 outpatients are treated here each year. The services include: a surgical clinic, a medical clinic, radiology and nuclear medicine, a gynecological clinic, a urology clinic and a care center. As a result of new medical and economic requirements, new challenges are arising which the hospital is actively working to accommodate. With the introduction of a Wireless Local Area Network (WLAN) doctors and nurses can now call up and immediately update online diagnoses, medical histories, lab results, orders and reports on treatment progress, during their rounds directly at the hospital bed.

The Task. Limmattal Hospital commissioned Siemens Switzerland to install WLAN as part of a pilot project. To begin with access points were installed on just one floor. This was in order to gather experience and to provide the doctors and nurses with a first impression of the new technology in a working environment. The workflows affected were correspondingly adapted and the employees taking part in the pilot were soon convinced of the immense advantages of WLAN. Following the first positive experience the expansion of the system to further floors was the next logical step. The entire hospital will now be kitted out during the course of 2006. The patients still have no access to the Web from the hospital bed, however this facility will be the central theme of a future extension.

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The Solution. In the phase prior to the project Siemens Switzerland carried out a network analysis and site survey together with the hospitals' IT system technicians. The entire building was measured in order to define the number and exact position of the access points. Only after all information was plotted on the building plans was the exact requirement clear. Before the first installations took place the compatibility of the network components used up until now had to be checked against the new ones. In addition the appearance of the aerials received special attention: They should not be visible by patients and should as far as possible match the overall style of the hospital. The type chosen are inconspicuous and comparable to a fire detector or a power distributor cover. Together with the actual WLAN installation, Siemens Switzerland also completed the necessary disassembling of the existing universal communication wiring. Siemens were also responsible for the implementation of network monitoring. This included the installation of a Wireless Controller, Network Management Systems and a Radius Server, which were connected to the existing Active Directory. All components of strategic importance for the operation of the system were redundantly designed. With these measures SW updates or configuration adjustments can be planned and carried out at any time. The completion of the project as an entire solution contributed significantly to its success. The motto: a network from one provider rather than a multitude of partners and interfaces.

The Benefits. Limmattal Hospital sees the biggest benefit of WLAN as the newly achieved mobility and flexibility of its staff. It allows nurses for example to complete their administrative tasks, independent of time and location, directly into the hospital information system. This newly found flexibility contributes considerably to increased efficiency. The new technology also has clear advantages for assistant doctors. Up until now bottle-necks often formed during peak times at available work stations fitted out with fixed PCs. Today notebooks are available, enabling work to be completed without the need for fixed work stations. Limmattal Hospital is based in a concrete building that is over 30 years old. Additional cabling to extend the existing cable bound communication technologies would have meant a substantial amount of structural work and financial costs, and in connection with the ever greater demands for mobility, without creating any additional value.

Our Offer

- Workshop
- Concept planning and realization
- Site Survey
- Integration into the existing network
- Security-Check
- Site-wide WLAN without interruptions with central Key Management which ensures smooth hand overs (<50ms)
- Integration of the entire network infrastructure into the Management System
- Redundant connection of the Radius Server to the existing Active Directory, so that only one central user databank must be maintained

“More efficient processes through mobility – made possible with WLAN“

Andreas Lengen,
Head of IT, Limmattal Hospital



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