



CTG Optimizes Hospital for Special Surgery’s Epic Service Desk, Resulting in Improved Patient Portal Experience

The Client

Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS), founded in 1863 and located in New York City, is the world’s leading academic medical center focused on musculoskeletal health. HSS is nationally ranked No. 1 in orthopedics and No. 3 in rheumatology by U.S. News & World Report (2018-19), and performs more hip surgeries and knee replacements than any other hospital. More than 32,000 surgical procedures are performed annually at HSS, and their surgeons perform an average of 365 surgeries per year. With a main campus in New York City, HSS has facilities in New Jersey, Connecticut, and in the Long Island and Westchester County regions of New York State.

The Business Challenge

To keep up with its high volume of surgeries performed each year and the resulting patient information, as well as to improve the overall user experience, HSS conducted a two-year project to replace its existing core clinical and patient financial systems with Epic. CTG had successfully provided application management services to HSS in the past, so they turned to CTG again as a trusted partner to provide an accelerated solution for their Epic patient portal support needs. CTG met the key characteristics of reliability and proven performance that they sought in a successful partner.

A key part of the Epic MyChart release, branded as MyHSS, was ensuring sufficient patient support. HSS established the MyHSS Service Desk to address the support needs of their Epic MyChart patient portal users. The MyHSS Service Desk serves a critical role in providing consistent, high-level service for the organization’s patient portal users and contributes to the success of the organization’s overall IT performance.

To ensure success of their overall support program, HSS defined MyHSS Service Desk program requirements, including:

Timely Access: Patients wanted access to information on their own timetable, including nights and weekends, making after-hours support an important capability.

Defined Service Plan: HSS wanted a plan with mutually agreed-upon service level agreements (SLAs) to make sure that service levels and objectives were being met on a consistent basis.

In Their Words



“CTG’s support of the MyHSS Service Desk helped us meet our ultimate goal of providing patients with a better overall portal experience. Their support and commitment to excellence and to our success was evident from the first day of the engagement. We continue to be impressed by the high resolution rate, over 99% of in-scope issues.”

Karen Cohen, Assistant Vice President, Department of Information Technology

The Solution

To meet their needs, HSS leveraged CTG's 30 years' experience delivering reliable, customer-focused application management services to the healthcare market through our Application and IT Support Solutions. To create a customized solution for HSS, our experts leveraged CTG's Patient Portal Support offering, designed to maximize the value, efficiency, and cost effectiveness of application support.

CTG worked closely with HSS to implement the MyHSS Service Desk solution—a scalable, best-practice-based managed service delivered as part of a defined services plan with SLAs.

The MyHSS Service Desk solution was designed to help HSS meet their organization's specific goals and requirements, and to supplement current HSS teams, activities, methods, and tools by providing the following on a 24x7 basis:

- First-level support of Epic MyChart issues from the patient community
- Accurate and effective documentation of each issue in the ticketing system to improve communication between departments
- Adherence to mutually agreed-upon workflows for issue escalation between support desks (i.e., ticket assignments and major incident escalation procedures)

CTG's approach was designed to minimize disruption and maximize productivity during the MyHSS Service Desk transition, and to build a foundation to bring discipline and continuous improvement to the overall environment. We worked closely with the HSS staff as partners, making sure to meet the patient user, business, and technical requirements necessary to ensure overall success. Through the entire project, the goal remained clear—to increase patient adoption and satisfaction, and enhance the overall experience of the MyHSS portal through successful and timely resolution of issues. CTG's three-phase approach included:

1. Engagement Initiation: CTG worked closely with HSS management to understand goals, objectives, and timelines and to identify resources for knowledge transfer.
2. Transition: CTG collaborated with HSS to develop processes, workflows, and monthly metrics goals for key performance measures, including call abandonment rate, time to answer call, and first call resolution (Tier 1).
3. Delivery: CTG's delivery of MyHSS Service Desk operations coincided with the HSS go-live of the patient portal. CTG staffed the Service Desk with sufficient personnel to meet the stated SLAs. Services are delivered as agreed upon in the Services Plan and continuous improvement efforts are in place.

The CTG MyHSS Service Desk team used a variety of tools, including CTG's call management system, the HSS ticketing system, and other HSS tools, to develop a customized solution.

The Results

After implementing the MyHSS Service Desk, the monthly metrics achieved met or exceeded HSS's stated goals and demonstrated many positive trends, as evidenced in these performance indicators:

- Robust First Call Resolution: >97% of all incidents resolved on the first call
- Faster Average Speed to Answer Calls: Average speed to answer was 23 seconds
- Efficient handling of the issues being reported: Average talk times were under four minutes per call
- Improved identification and remediation of common user issues: >99% resolution of in-scope issues

CTG's top-quality Epic MyHSS Service Desk services at HSS led to increased patient adoption of the MyHSS Portal, empowering patients to be more proactive in their healthcare decisions and allowing HSS staff to focus their time on what they do best—surgeries, research, and medical innovation.

