

Case Studies

Williamson Medical Center (WMC) Chooses NEXEDGE® Radios for Increased Coverage and Security.

Williamson Medical Center (WMC) is a not-for-profit community-focused hospital offering diagnostic care, pioneering wellness programs and credentialed physicians in 53 specialties and sub-specialties to more than 180,000 residents in Williamson County, Tennessee. Named one of the top 10 places to start a company by Business Week/ Bloomberg and home to many Fortune 500 companies, county seat Franklin prides itself on its “unique sense of place, not compromised by future growth or development.” Williamson Medical Center, or WMC, is frequently acknowledged for its innovative health care programs as well as its commitment to prudent financial management, with CEO Dennis Miller named twice as an industry leader by the Nashville Post, most recently for leading WMC through an \$83 million expansion and construction project designed to provide better care for the local community.

Williamson Medical Center Security Director Al Segal has a lot of experience with radio communications, as he came from a career in public safety. When he took his post at Williamson Medical Center, he found that the coverage and other features of the existing radio system were inadequate and knew he needed to make a move to a new system that provided better coverage, features and a graceful narrow-band path. He remembered the reliability and value of the Kenwood radios that he had used as a police officer. Segal contacted the local Kenwood authorized dealer, CommTech, and started the process to move the entire WMC security team to Kenwood digital NEXEDGE® portables.

“Once we changed to Kenwood radios, we had no more dead spots,” Segal observed. “With our previous radio



system, we had dead spots. These new radios work everywhere, from the basement to other areas on the campus.”

Along with coverage, Segal wanted to make sure that communications were assured in emergencies. *“One of the worst things that could happen would be an inability to communicate in a critical situation.”*

Security Administrator Mike Grupe remembers one critical situation: *“We had a major gas leak at WMC and it knocked off a gas main. We had people all over the facility and we had to keep people back from the leak. We needed to maintain order until the gas company could come in and shut down the main gas line.”*

“This is so much quicker than a telephone,” Grupe continued. “You just push a button and talk. Even with our simplest wireless phones, you still would have to go through steps. And in an emergency, you don’t have time for that.”



Segal agreed, pointing out that the radios provide a valuable service in an incident command situation, because each WMC department has a Kenwood radio available to use in case of emergency. *"We do have wireless products from Avaya and Cisco on campus, but those things can go down,"* said Segal, *"So, when we have power failures and when we're on generator, the radios are indispensable. We can still talk to everyone, and everyone can talk to us."*

The digital radios also offer complete privacy, which is imperative in a hospital setting with the new HIPAA standards. Segal explains that the NEXEDGE® radios allow the security staff to *"talk about a patient and have total privacy. We can have that privacy from both hospital personnel and visitors who should not overhear these conversations."* WMC uses a telephone patch so that an operator can call the security department and, in the past, those conversations could be heard. Now, NEXEDGE® affords them complete privacy and with talk-around, the security department can set up their own special channels for further security.

Segal sums up his feelings about the new NEXEDGE® digital system with, *"I wouldn't ever go back. This is definitely a top notch product."*