

Children's Hospital Boston Relies on IDenticard TEMPbadge to Manage Visitors

Self-expiring TEMPbadges add security and streamline visitor management for one of the nation's largest pediatric medical centers

Children's Hospital Boston (Children's) is one of the nation's largest pediatric medical centers. The primary pediatric teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School, Children's has consistently been ranked as one of the nation's top pediatric hospitals. Annually, Children's logs more than 25,000 inpatient admissions, its 228 specialized clinical programs schedule more than 543,100 visits, and the hospital performs 25,800 surgical procedures and 200,000 radiological examinations. This volume of visitor traffic requires careful management to ensure patient privacy and security.

As Security Manager for Children's, Scott Glynn runs the hospital's security, main desk and operations center functions with a staff nearly 100 full-time employees. For many years, Children's badged visitors manually. Using a handwritten log was a labor-intensive process that required noting the visitor's name, date and time of arrival, the patient's name, and then creating a handwritten badge with the date and the patient's floor. Reviewing visitor data required physically scrutinizing every log to locate a specific visitor.

The handwritten badges had also presented unexpected costs for the hospital. "We found that our parking lot was full of stick-on badges. People would slap them on the wall, or on the elevator. We were paying a lot of money to clean and power wash these stickers off. And we discovered that the stickers could damage suede and leather, so we've had to replace damaged jackets and other garments."

When implementing a visitor management system for the hospital, Glynn evaluated badging options and selected the 2-part TEMPbadge® ID Self-Expiring Badge from IDenticard Systems. These patented badges can be printed from the visitor management system and visually expire, with prominent red lines appearing across the badge to indicate the end of an approved visit.

Glynn also opted to use IDenticard's color-coded badge headers to indicate visitor status (parent, relative, non-relative), giving hospital staff an important visual cue to help maintain patient privacy and comply with HIPPA and other guidelines. Once printed from the visitor management system,

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IDenticard's expiring, stick-on badge is easily applied to the color-coded clip-on backing, eliminating Glynn's old problems of damage and clean-up costs associated with discarded stickers.

Now, arriving visitors present their driver's license to be scanned, capturing first and last names in the visitor management system which is connected Children's patient database. The officer checks a dropdown box to match the visitor with the inpatient, selects the nursing unit to be visited, confirms the visitor's relation to the patient, then takes a webcam photo and prints the visitor badge with the correct background color for their relationship to the patient (parent, relative, or friend).

Using badges with different background colors helps hospital staff quickly tell between a general visitor and a parent. This is critical not only in emergency situations, but also in protecting patient information to comply with strict HIPPA guidelines.

"IDenticard's self-expiring TEMPbadges had a lot of really positive advantages," notes Glynn. "So a year later, we expanded the TEMPbadge system to our research buildings. We created a similar visitor registration process, but linked it to a separate database connected to our employee database. The officer goes through the same visitor registration process, using a specific color background to signify a research visitor versus a regular visitor."

Glynn adds, "We loved how the TEMPbadge system was working out for us. Next, we created a TEMPbadge for the Emergency Department so that staff could easily identify authorized visitors."

Color-coded TEMPbadges provide an added layer of security throughout the hospital. If a visitor were to check into the Emergency Room and then be found wandering in some other part of the hospital, it's immediately clear to security staff that they are out of place.

"The benefits we've gained in converting from hand written badges to IDenticard's TEMPbadge system are huge," says Glynn. "The challenge with any kind of badge system is keeping track of them – getting them back when the person leaves or is no longer authorized to be there. And as long as they have that badge, people essentially have access to your facility for an indefinite period of time. Because it has the self expiring feature, TEMPbadge puts everyone's mind at ease. We use the color-coded backing and the 2-part TEMPbadge product which gives us added layers of security."

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"No longer is our parking facility full of cast-off stickers that could be reused for unauthorized entry. We don't have to power wash to remove old sticker remnants. And the convenient badge clip is kind to clothes so we don't have to worry about replacing damaged garments."

Glynn initially thought that issuing TEMPbadges was going to be a slow process. But he was pleasantly surprised to learn that it actually took less time to check visitors in and issue color-coded photo badges than processing visitor badges manually.

"Using IDenticard's TEMPbadge system is much faster and far more secure than processing visitor badges by hand," says Glynn. "We can process a visitor in under a minute. Because we scan the driver's license, and we've created dropdown lists, there is no room for user error."

Speed and accuracy is important. Children's hospital badges visitors to its research facilities round the clock, and patient visitors between 6 pm and 6 am, issuing approximately 12,000 TEMPbadges monthly.

He had also anticipated some pushback from visitors not wanting to produce a license, but that hasn't been a problem, and the reaction from the parents is nothing but positive. The hospital serves a diverse patient base including children of heads of state, dignitaries, and celebrities from around the world. "Everyone is really very happy about this system," says Glynn.

"An additional benefit of the TEMPbadge system is that by taking pictures of visitors with the webcam, we have a record of them in the clothes that they were wearing on the day they visited," Glynn adds. "We've found this helpful with investigations. With hundreds of CC TV cameras throughout the facility, it's very easy to spot and identify out-of-place visitors."

Glynn's next step is adding barcodes in response to parent feedback so every TEMPbadge visitor pass will contain a barcode with the location of patient that the person is visiting. "All of our elevators are already equipped with barcode readers. Now badged visitors will swipe their TEMPbadge which will only activate the elevator to the designated floor, providing an additional layer of security."

Another benefit of using IDenticard's TEMPbadge system is working with IDenticard. "They're great. I've been working with IDenticard for 12 years and I would never consider changing. It's very nice to be able to pick up phone and have someone you know will call you back. Over the

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years, their sales and support team has gone out of their way to keep us running smoothly. Our patients and staff rely on us for security, and we rely on IDenticard.”