

**CASE STUDY**

**Change Management | Physician Adoption  
Information Technology (Cerner/Siemens)**

**Mountain States Health Alliance (MSHA)** is the region's largest healthcare system with fourteen (14) hospitals, eighty (80) clinics, serving twenty-nine (29) counties in Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky, and North Carolina. MSHA's integrated healthcare delivery system includes twenty-one (21) primary/preventive care centers and numerous outpatient care sites. MSHA is committed to "Bringing Loving Care to Health Care." They passionately pursue healing of the mind, body, and spirit as they create a world-class healthcare system. The health system has 9,000 team members; a 1,220 physician medical staff; 3,500 volunteers; and 1,000 students.



“JTS Health Partners' expertise within physician adoption and program management leadership for our POE initiatives were critical success factors for MSHA to achieve our enterprise information technology objectives. Their organization has consistently performed at a very high level for our organization.”

*Mr. Paul Merrywell  
Vice President and Chief Information Officer*

**THE CHALLENGE**

Ask most information technology (IT) executives what it takes to implement thirteen (13) acute hospitals and eighty (80) ambulatory sites on computer provider order entry - in 18 months? A good majority would likely focus on the technical infrastructure, software, or resource requirements. Providing technology vision and leadership for MSHA, Mr. Paul Merrywell, Vice President and Chief Information Officer, explained that it was changing the culture and influencing leadership that "mattered most" in such a significant transformation.

## COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

“A key to changing culture when you’re rocking folks’ worlds is basic communication; you practically have to be relentless with it,” said Mr. Merrywell. MSHA’s transformation was successful using hardwired, customer-focused and consistent communications. Efforts included engaging senior leadership early and working through virtually every level of leadership. “We marketed directly to team members and providers,” Mr. Merrywell explained.

Changing culture isn’t a theoretical concept for Mr. Merrywell and Ms. Austin - this senior team believes that culture change begins at home. Mr. Merrywell and Ms. Austin engaged JTS Health Partners (JTS) for the following:

1. Assessment, design, development, and implementation; and
2. Evaluation of quarterly IT Technology Leadership Development day-long retreats.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

While not every team member embraced change wholeheartedly, the culture dial has moved significantly given that nearly 2,300 acute and ambulatory providers are now live on enhanced clinical technologies. “In the middle of all of this, we were designated as a Siemens Reference site for our ADOPT IT Adoption Center, and we achieved ‘Most Wired’ status through the American Hospital Association,” Ms. Austin explained.

Ms. Austin described the retreats, which were held for their fifteen-person IT Director, Management, and Supervisory team, “The retreats were not just ‘fluff’; they had real learning objectives, based on our IT strategic vision. The sessions were designed to work on actual IT issues we needed to resolve. JTS executive advisors were experienced and listened to our needs to ensure the time was efficient and effective. Not only did they design the program—they delivered with quality too. Leaders walked away with action items for next time, knowing this was a good investment in time and in colleagues.”

Dick Clark, the former CEO of Merck, was quoted as saying: “Culture eats strategy for lunch.” MSHA’s strategy of driving change by influencing leadership through hardwired messaging has given this line of thinking a run for its money!

“JTS Health Partners executive advisors played a key role in serving as thought leaders in strategy and messaging.”

## ABOUT JTS HEALTH PARTNERS

### Enterprise Planning Services

- Change Management
- Physician Adoption
- Information Technology (Cerner/Siemens)

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JTS Health Partners is a national healthcare and advisory professional services firm. The firm’s consulting portfolio is focused on enterprise planning, clinical optimization, revenue cycle management (inclusive of health information management and back-office functions), information technology, as well as financial and operational performance improvement initiatives for hospitals and physicians. Other professional services include staff augmentation for the acute setting.

JTS remains very focused on providing our clients with tremendous value and service level. Our trademark is client satisfaction; every client to date is 100% referenceable.

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