

# CDI'S Mix of Technology, Expertise and Heart Helps Transform St. Mary's Hospital into One of NJ's "Best Wired" Healthcare Providers.



## Success Stories St. Mary's Hospital

**"We chose CDI based not only on the quality of the technology and implementation they were providing us, but also based on their commitment to a long-term partnership with St. Mary's Hospital..."**

**Dr. Shafiq Rab  
Chief Information Officer  
Saint Mary's Hospital**

**St. Mary's Hospital in Passaic, NJ** recently went from one of the state's least technologically-advanced healthcare environments to one of its "Best Wired" hospitals, thanks to a partnership it formed with Computer Design & Integration (CDI, LLC).

According to Shafiq Rab, a medical doctor-turned IT expert who took over as St. Mary's Chief information Officer in 2004, the initial IT analysis of the hospital was disheartening. He recalls, "We had no fiber optic wiring in the hospital at all, a Firewall system that hadn't been installed, an antique server closet running on circa-World War II technology, and limited Internet power being used only for email." He adds, "We had to build an entire network on nothing."

With a long list of requirements – dictated both by HIPAA regulations and community demand – and an austere budget in hand, Dr. Rab set out to find a solution – and a partner to help him achieve it. Anthony Ferrante, Associate Vice President at CDI and board member of the NJ Healthcare Information Systems Management Association (HISMA), assured Dr. Rab that CDI could provide the mix of expertise, product selection, service, and most importantly, the long-term commitment to partnership that St. Mary's needed.

He explains, "Because CDI has worked with hospitals and other healthcare organizations in the past, we knew that information is the lifeblood of any medical center. A good IT infrastructure is crucial to mitigate risks, enhance patient care and maximize management capabilities." Ferrante and his team of engineers quickly evaluated the site, developed a comprehensive, scalable plan for the system, and invited Dr. Rab and his team to experience the solutions "in action" at CDI's state-of-the-art demo center in its Teterboro headquarters.

"We chose CDI not only for the quality of the technology and implementation they were providing us, but also for their commitment to a long-term partnership with St. Mary's Hospital," Dr. Rab explains. "They offered us leasing options and other creative financing ideas that made the top-of-the-line systems accessible to us, and created a long-term strategy that proved to us that they share our vision for the future of this hospital," he adds. CDI was able to provide monetary assistance to the hospital through its own financing company, called CDI Capital.

According to Ferrante, CDI was able to work within St. Mary's budget while providing best-in-class Cisco technology. CDI's plan integrated much-needed products to meet the hospital's current requirements, while laying a scalable IT groundwork for future upgrades like IP Telephony, Picture Archival Computerized System (PACS) radiology capabilities and full bedside patient management systems

The Cisco solution included a full network conversion, along with a comprehensive fiber optic wiring system throughout the facility with stackable switches in the closets, and tightened online security and wireless technology to provide HIPAA-required patient record and audit controls. New software applications implemented to enhance record keeping and management, and an active firewall prevents unauthorized access to the system, with a total shutdown feature that is activated within seconds of an unauthorized entry into the system.

"We have gone from being one of the least technologically-advanced hospitals in New Jersey to among the 'most-wired' hospitals in the state," Dr. Rab says. "Believe it or not, this has helped us to better fulfill our mission here in the community." He notes, for example, that the new systems cut down on paperwork required by doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals. "This makes St. Mary's a better place to work, because the healthcare providers can spend more time with the patients – doing their jobs – and less time on paperwork," Dr. Rab explains. "When you offer a good work environment, you can attract and retain great people." Physician recruitment is also up, Dr. Rab notes, due in part to the IT improvements. "With wireless technology in place, physicians can do more of their work from the road or from home, which appeals to them of course," he explains. Increased satisfaction and acuity of physicians will translate into more patients and additional revenues.

What's more, the patient experience has also improved thanks to the infrastructure upgrades. "We have bedside registration now, and all patient information is computerized – from medications and special instructions to medical history," Dr. Rab says. Enhanced patient safety and quality of care are direct outcomes of these new systems.

"In a hospital setting, the mission is everything," Dr. Rab says. "Our mission, in part, is to respond to the changing needs of this community, and to provide much-needed, state-of-the-art medical care for the 21st century. We are going a long way toward achieving that mission with the help of our partners like CDI," he adds.

St. Mary's Hospital was founded in 1895 by the Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth in response to the urgent medical needs of the community. St. Mary's is a 200-bed acute care hospital that offers a vast array of emergency, inpatient, outpatient, and community-based services and programs. With a staff of nearly 800 employees, St. Mary's Hospital serves as a major employer in the city of Passaic. St. Mary's provides residents from Passaic, Southern Bergen and Essex counties with a state-of-the-art facility for their healthcare needs.

Computer Design and Integration, LLC is a privately-held, infrastructure services company that combines innovative and comprehensive business solutions and service with experienced professionals to simplify the complexity of emerging technologies. Founded in 1995, and named to the VARBusiness 500 for five straight years, the company is one of the fastest-growing IT consulting firms in the Northeast. CDI offers complete solutions in Business Continuity, Backup & Recovery, Consolidations, Contract Management, Infrastructure Design, Migrations, Networking / Security, Storage, and Project Management. For more information, visit CDI on the web at [www.cdillc.com](http://www.cdillc.com).