



The On-Call Crisis: From Chaos to Clarity

How to achieve more accurate,
efficient on-call-scheduling and
communications



On-Call: The Lifeline of Healthcare

Emergencies don't take a break. When you're delivering round-the-clock care in a healthcare environment, accurate data and efficient communications are vital to addressing urgent patient needs. On-call scheduling and communications play a crucial role in ensuring that the right provider is available and easily contacted — every time — for faster time-to-care and better patient outcomes.

Every second wasted tracking down the right on-call provider can have serious repercussions. Lacking centralized visibility into who's on-call, clinicians often end up searching multiple sources or accessing outdated schedules. As a result, they may mistakenly contact an off-duty provider or send communications that go unanswered before reaching the right person. This stresses out clinicians, frustrates off-duty providers, and delays patient care. Research shows that prolonging wait time by 10 minutes for a patient who arrives with a serious condition will increase the hospital's cost to care for the patient by an average of 6%.¹

With patient demand, provider burnout, and turnover on the rise, this chaotic approach to on-call is simply not sustainable. That's why rethinking on-call must be a top priority for today's healthcare organizations.

Up to **40% of communication time** is considered problematic, including time spent attempting, but failing to reach the correct provider or searching for contact information.²



On-call inefficiencies can have high-stakes consequences:



Negative patient outcomes



Provider dissatisfaction



Heavy administrative burden



Longer patient stays



Potential EMTALA violations

Chaos Reigns in On-Call

What’s causing all this chaos? Many hospitals and health systems are still using manual or disparate on-call processes and technologies across departments, locations, and affiliates – making it nearly impossible to maintain and access an accurate, up-to-date enterprise on-call schedule. Instead, clinicians are relying on spreadsheets, back-and-forth emails, faxes, and even paper and pencil to publish and distribute on-call schedules. And if providers swap shifts, there’s no way to update the enterprise on-call schedule in real-time to ensure everyone has access to the latest information.

As M&A activity continues in the healthcare space, the number of technologies in play – and lack of interoperability – are only adding to on-call complexity. Without proper governance, enterprise-wide consistency, and strong alignment between clinical and IT leadership, the on-call chaos will continue to spiral out of control.

With decentralized on-call systems and processes, healthcare organizations face:



Tedious, error-prone manual maintenance of on-call schedules



Delays in finding and reaching the right on-call provider



Difficulty tracking provider swaps and affiliate schedules in real-time



Obstacles to identifying on-call coverage gaps



Lack of visibility into accurate on-call information enterprise-wide



Communication failures were implicated as the root cause of **50-80% of sentinel events**.³



Creating On-Call Clarity

To control the chaos, hospitals and health systems need a connected digital solution that unites on-call schedules across the entire healthcare enterprise and affiliate groups into a single, centralized source of truth with real-time updates. In addition, they require intelligent automation that streamlines workflows, eliminates manual errors, and simplifies EMTALA compliance.

With centralized on-call schedules and on-call provider search, your entire organization gains on-demand access to accurate and reliable on-call information so they can contact the right provider immediately – improving the clinician experience , promoting better patient outcomes, and mitigating compliance risk.

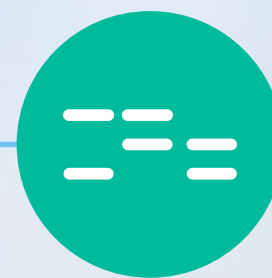
How a single, unified platform improves accuracy and efficiency:



Automated email alerts notify appropriate staff of on-call coverage gaps



Intelligent search of on-call providers



Real-time data flow to and from department and affiliate schedules to keep information up to date



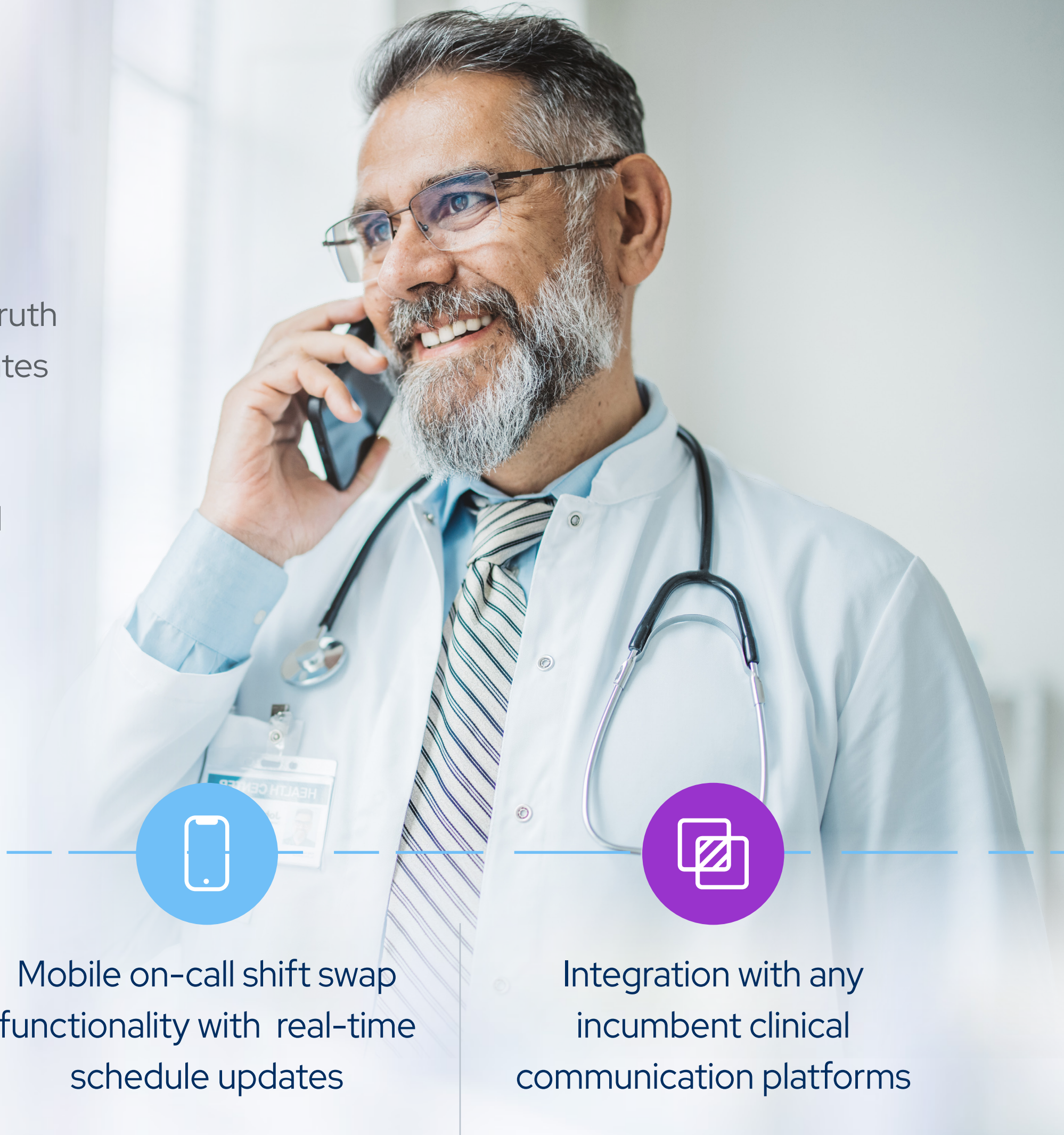
Mobile on-call shift swap functionality with real-time schedule updates



Integration with any incumbent clinical communication platforms

Make it Mobile

Give your clinicians the **flexibility and autonomy** they expect with an on-call mobile app. Provide easy access to the on-call schedule and on-call provider search. Simplify on-call swap requests and approvals. And **update the enterprise on-call schedule in real-time**.



Best Practices for On-Call Implementation Success

Implementing the right on-call scheduling solution is key to transforming chaos into clarity. But not all provider on-call scheduling software products — or vendors — are created equal. It's important to know what to look for when selecting and deploying technology to tackle your on-call challenges.

Here are some best-practice recommendations for choosing an on-call scheduling solution and ensuring a thoughtful and structured implementation:



Survey providers and administrators before and after on-call solution implementation to measure user satisfaction.



Limit your search to on-call platforms that are **purpose-built for healthcare**. Make sure the solutions are designed to address healthcare scheduling complexities, integrate seamlessly into any healthcare IT ecosystem, and scale to accommodate organic growth or M&A transactions for the **healthcare** enterprise.



Establish an **enterprise-wide, all-specialty governance working group** to ensure implementation to a unified set of standards.



Engage clinical leadership early and often — from requirements definition, through implementation, to go-live. They bring valuable understanding of how on-call works within each department that can be used to maximize clinical data workflows, facilitate change management, and drive user adoption.



Consider the **vendor's track record for success** and commitment to **continuous product investments**. Partner with a solution provider with proven implementation expertise and enterprise-level deployments across hundreds of large, complex health systems.



Develop clear, **consistent naming conventions** to support the clarity and searchability of the on-call system across the healthcare enterprise.



KLAS data shows **85% of customers** experience a good implementation when the vendor establishes proper expectations up front by promoting the product accurately.⁴

Getting Started: Assess Your Current On-Call Performance

To create a path toward more accurate and efficient on-call scheduling, you need to know where you're starting from. By taking the following steps, your organization will better understand your current on-call performance – insight that can be used to guide configuration and implementation of your new solution.

1

Analyze

the accuracy and accessibility of your on-call data – from schedules to provider contact information.

2

Understand

your current data workflows – both manual and automated – across departments and systems including scheduling, EHR, and CCV.

3

Identify

where errors occur in your on-call workflows so you can create processes and add technology, such as integrations, to address gaps and inefficiencies.

A comprehensive assessment of the current state of enterprise-wide on-call will uncover broken workflows, inconsistencies, and automation gaps – setting you up for success with your new on-call system.

With Centralized Enterprise On-Call Scheduling, Everyone Wins

With unified enterprise on-call scheduling and real-time visibility, your healthcare organization and its affiliate groups can easily access who's on-call and how to reach them – saving precious time, preventing contact mistakes, and ensuring patients get the immediate care they need. A single source of truth – with automated schedule updates – standardizes on-call across the enterprise for new levels of accuracy, reliability, and governance.

Centralized enterprise on-call scheduling delivers exponential value through:



Reduced Labor Costs

- Cut down on time wasted trying to locate the correct provider
- Reduce time spent managing on-call schedules
- Increase capacity of admin team to take on other tasks
- Gain greater insight into on-call coverage



Improved Retention

- Foster a better employee experience
- Provide schedule transparency and on-demand accessibility
- Simplify real-time shift swapping
- Support equitable call assignments
- Reduce accidental contact with off-duty providers



Better Patient Outcomes

- Provide on-call schedule on-demand
- Improve collaboration among clinicians
- Simplify real-time shift swapping
- Minimize delays in patient care
- Reduce time in ER and length of hospital stays



Compliance Risk Mitigation

- Alleviate the burden of managing compliance with rules-based reporting
- Avoid EMTALA violations by identifying and filling on-call coverage gaps
- Reduce likelihood of lawsuits by enabling faster, safer patient care of hospital stays

QGenda On-Call

QGenda On-Call provides a single source of truth for enterprise on-call provider information. The solution centralizes department and affiliate on-call schedules into an accessible, up-to-date enterprise database to ensure your care teams have accurate and instant visibility into exactly who's on call and how to contact them. On-call provider search capabilities make it easy to quickly locate all necessary on-call information. Plus, QGenda On-Call integrates seamlessly with any and all of your organization's clinical communications platforms, ensuring that the correct on-call provider can be contacted immediately when emergency strikes – improving patient outcomes, provider satisfaction, and EMTALA compliance.

Connected to QGenda Advanced Scheduling for Providers as part of the unified ProviderCloud® healthcare workforce management platform, QGenda On-Call brings automatic, real-time updates to the enterprise on-call schedule when department or affiliate schedule changes occur. With QGenda, you can trust that the right care team members are contacted on time, everytime.

Is it time to rethink your approach to on-call?
Ready to turn on-call chaos into clarity with QGenda On-Call?
Visit [QGenda.com](https://www.qgenda.com) to learn more.



More than **4,500** healthcare organizations and **650,000** providers partner with QGenda to advance provider scheduling, optimize capacity, and improve access to care.

About QGenda

QGenda revolutionizes healthcare workforce management everywhere care is delivered. QGenda ProviderCloud, a purpose-built healthcare platform that empowers customers to effectively deploy workforce resources, includes solutions for scheduling, credentialing, on-call scheduling, room and capacity management, time tracking, compensation management, and workforce analytics.

More than 4,500 organizations partner with QGenda to advance provider scheduling, optimize capacity, and improve access to care. QGenda is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, with a second office in Baltimore, Maryland.

Learn more at www.QGenda.com



1 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/ecin.12849>

2 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK43663>

3 [https://www.jointcommission.org/-/media/tjc/documents/resources/patient-safety-topics/sentinel-event/03162023_sentinel-event_annual-review_final-\(002\).pdf](https://www.jointcommission.org/-/media/tjc/documents/resources/patient-safety-topics/sentinel-event/03162023_sentinel-event_annual-review_final-(002).pdf)

4 <https://klasresearch.com/report/the-power-of-strong-implementations-how-hit-vendors-and-customers-can-lay-a-foundation-for-success/3067>