



## Jill Collins

*Emergency Management Coordinator  
The Regional Medical Center of  
Orangeburg & Calhoun Counties.*

# Enhance Communications in Health Management

### Industry:

Emergency Management

### Location:

Orangeburg, SC, USA

### Challenge:

Enable staff to understand emergency plans at a glance.

### Toolkit:

ConceptDraw  
MINDMAP

### Solution:

Use MINDMAP to visually communicate complex emergency planning.

### Benefits:

ConceptDraw MINDMAP offers a cross-disciplinary hospital team the ability to capture, organize, and display their responses to the five most likely threats to provision of care.

Jill Collins is an emergency management coordinator for a not-for-profit hospital in South Carolina.

Part of her job includes managing the protocols, procedures, and policies put into place to deal with threats to the delivery of quality patient care. ConceptDraw MINDMAP gives Collins the ability to manage and communicate planning and preparations for all of these potential problems.

### Simplifying Complexity

"Our hospital is accredited by The Joint Commission, which requires that we have a comprehensive emergency management program," says Collins.

"Thankfully, true emergencies are infrequent... things like bad weather, chemical events, utility failures. Any one of these can compromise the hospital's ability to function. Keeping staff prepared for events like these is an ongoing challenge."

"This is particularly important, when you have multiple projects ... MINDMAP helps you see the whole picture of all the projects on your plate, dive down into details when you need to, but hide those details when you don't need to see them. "

She says that for each hazard, there are four phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Within each of these four phases, the Joint Commission identifies six critical areas: communication, resources and assets, safety and security, patient management, staff responsibilities and utility management.

### Communicating Solutions

Collins says she recently gave a presentation to the hospital's Community Outreach program on the Environment of Care standards from the Joint Commission. At first, she said, she was overwhelmed by the complexity of the information she had to share.

Her challenge was to effectively represent emergency planning fit into the hospital's general safety standards and security. Inside of that overall planning, she needed to communicate specific plans for dealing with hazardous drugs and materials, medical equipment, utility safety, and the near constant construction projects going on around the hospital.

Then she had to explain each of these in relation to the five most likely emergencies, lay out planning for the four phases, and then show how they were prepared for the six critical areas in each phase. Faced with enormous complexity, she chose ConceptDraw MINDMAP to help her present a clear, understandable visual representation of the planning.

"I first saw MINDMAP at a Fred Pryor professional training seminar and decided to see if it could help with this presentation. I opened up the program and just jumped into some really complicated brainstorming. Once I finished that, I went back in and organize everything and added some additional information. Then I pushed a button and exported the whole thing into a PowerPoint presentation. I'll tell you, seeing the PowerPoint presentations suddenly appear was the coolest thing since sliced bread. And I was just so tickled, because that was my first time using MINDMAP."

"The visual display ConceptDraw MINDMAP presents helps everyone focus in on the big things and helps make complex things much easier to understand."



### Clearly Defining Roles

On another level of emergency planning, the Regional Medical Center of Orangeburg & Calhoun Counties uses HICS, Hospital Incident Command System, a planning framework that assigns specific job tasks for each staff person's role in the emergency. Needless to say, being able to confirm their role with a quick glance at a visual map is much easier than having to plow through a text document or decipher a spread sheet.

"MINDMAP visual interface gives the emergency planning team and our front line hospital staff a clear picture of what needs to happen in each emergency," she says. "It can also help me get buy-in on the planning since it clearly lays out each person's role and the impact that role has in our overall handling of the emergency."

### Accessing Team Creativity

Collins says that ConceptDraw MINDMAP can be a great team tool too. “We can use MINDMAP when we need to put our heads together and make sure we’re considering all the angles. ‘Is this one response recovery mode the duty of one nursing only? Or is it nursing and maybe respiratory therapy too—and maybe radiology?’ MindMap will give us the ability to collaborate on these questions and leave meetings with clear action plans.”

Business teams that use MINDMAP often project a mind map on the wall and add to or subtract from it as the meeting progresses. By documenting the meeting in one visual map that everyone can see, no one has to worry about taking notes. And that means meeting members can focus more on the ideas being exchanged. As Collins notes, “People can stop being note takers and start becoming critical thinkers.”

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### Getting to the Best Decision, Fast

“MINDMAP helps me keep things in some kind of structuring and yet allows me to see the full picture at the same time,” Collins says. “This ability to go from details to the big picture is really helpful.”

This is particularly important, she says, when you have multiple projects and are trying to get a handle on how many tasks you have in play, and how many resources you need for each one. MINDMAP helps you see the whole picture of all the projects on your plate, dive down into details when you need to—but hide those details when you don’t need to see them.

“Yes, I could write a big, long report with every single detail in it,” she says. “But I like to give stakeholders the ability to focus on the major points. If they want to see all the details, they can. But they don’t have to. It’s up to them.

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Collins says that in any business situation—especially ones when tension can be high, the less wording and more action-oriented items you use to convey information, the better people can focus on the job at hand. “And that’s how we approach our emergency planning. We want to get our hospital back to normal operations as soon as possible—and keep the patients safe and comfortable during the process. We strive to provide our patients very good care, regardless of the situation we are facing.” ■



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