

## Ascension St. John Health System in Oklahoma First Private Healthcare Facility to Install VirTra Simulator

According to a [2022 report](#) for the American College of Emergency Physicians, 55% of physicians taking the survey said they have been physically assaulted while at work, and 79% have witnessed an assault. Unfortunately, violence and threats are common in medical facilities, and security must be prepared to protect healthcare providers.

Most hospitals employ a security team, and like traditional law enforcement officers, hospital security must undergo effective training to perform their duties proficiently.

VirTra is a company that provides advanced training simulators to law enforcement, military, security, education, and medical industries. Hundreds of organizations across 40 countries use VirTra simulators. Ascension St. John is the first private healthcare facility to obtain a VirTra simulator.

The Ascension St. John Health System currently employs over 40 security officers trained in security procedures, communication, de-escalation, and active shooter events. The safety of their patients, guests, and associates is a top priority, so these officers must be prepared for active threats, even if they occur infrequently.

In 2022, Ascension St. John Health System secured the VirTra simulator through the [FEMA Nonprofit Security Grant Program](#), a program designed to promote emergency preparedness coordination and collaboration among public and private community representatives and state and local government agencies. Healthcare industry facilities services provider, Medxcel, facilitated the grant application, procurement, and installation processes.

“As part of our emergency management program, we help our healthcare locations apply for federal grants that help pay for damages after a disaster, grants that help reduce risk, such as hazard mitigation and security grants, and manage the required paperwork and reports.” explained Scott Cormier, Vice President of Emergency Management, Environment of Care, and Safety at Medxcel. “In the past six years, we’ve received approval for over \$110M worth of grants. These grants are even more important as healthcare systems continue to recover from the worldwide impact of COVID-19 and find capital funds are limited.”

The three-screen VirTra V-180® decision-making simulator was installed in January 2024, allowing users to practice for many interactive scenarios reflective of real-life situations. The simulator features a large library of scenarios that offer various pathways to resolutions. Scenarios pivot based on the officer’s responses, and actions and numerous training points can be covered, including contact and cover, mental health/autism awareness, crisis de-escalation, active threats, and many more.

Dynamic decision-making scenario-based training allows the security team to practice numerous skills in a safe environment. Before receiving the simulator, Ascension St. John Health System security officers would train in a classroom, practice handcuffing techniques or spend time at a shooting range.

“We can implement frequent training in scenarios representing our environment. This is a tremendous asset and allows all security officers within the Ascension St. John Health System to ensure patient and associate safety.” Darrel Long, Director of Security for Ascension Oklahoma stated.

Not only will the security team benefit from this system, but other staff members will be able to experience situations, potential outcomes, and de-escalation techniques. By understanding the possibilities of what could occur and how to respond, the rest of the hospital team can see how the actions employed by the security team ensure a safe environment.

## **About VirTra, Inc.**

VirTra (Nasdaq: VTSI) is a global provider of judgmental use of force training simulators and firearms training simulators for the law enforcement, military, educational and commercial markets. The company’s patented technologies, software, and scenarios provide intense training for de-escalation, judgmental use-of-force, marksmanship, and related training that mimics real-world situations. VirTra’s mission is to save and improve lives worldwide through practical and highly effective virtual reality and simulator technology. Learn more about the company at [www.VirTra.com](http://www.VirTra.com).

## **About Medxcel**

As the largest sole provider of healthcare facilities services in the U.S., Medxcel delivers operational savings, reduces supply chain costs, and increases compliance scores by optimizing current resources and improving the overall healthcare environment.

## **About Ascension St. John**

Ascension St. John operates six hospitals and more than 90 healthcare clinics and facilities in eastern Oklahoma and southeastern Kansas. Ascension St. John employs approximately 4,500 associates. In fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023), Ascension St. John provided more than \$79 million in total community benefit and unpaid costs of Medicare services, including care of individuals living in poverty. Serving Oklahoma for 98 years. Ascension is a faith-based healthcare organization committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. Ascension is one of the leading non-profit and Catholic health systems in the U.S., operating 2,600 sites of care – including 142 hospitals and more than 40 senior living facilities – in 19 states and the District of Columbia.