

SUCCESS STORY

Medical Records Scanning and Retrieval More Efficient with EDCO

Challenge

In early 2008, Nancy Knaggs, director of health information management at Lawrence Memorial Hospital, had a big problem on her hands — literally. The medical records department was overflowing with patient records, a challenge that Knaggs faced at least once annually. In the past, the solution was to put each year's records on microfilm, creating space for another year's records.

But that made locating previous patients' records time-consuming and often difficult. While scanning the records would be the best long-term solution, Knaggs' team had concerns about the migratability of the scanned records into LMH's Cerner system — and what would eventually become a full electronic document management system.

Solution

VHA-contracted supplier EDCO, which provides document imaging, on-site scanning and document storage, provided the perfect solution. Together, EDCO and Cerner gave a joint presentation to Knaggs and her team demonstrating how LMH's patient records could be scanned in a dual format that would allow them to eventually be imported directly into the hospital's Cerner EDMS.

"We were able to give LMH a temporary, interim software solution that gives them the benefits of being electronic now, and also the benefit of being able to move those records into their long-range product when they're ready," says Ken Karriker, a senior healthcare specialist at EDCO. "And it was an almost budget-neutral proposition — the hospital could do this for about the same cost as they could microfilm."

Knaggs says that EDCO's ability to work directly with Cerner gave them the edge over other suppliers, as did EDCO's reputation. "One of the most attractive features for us with EDCO was that our scanned images could be brought

continued on back

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- Nancy Knaggs, Lawrence Memorial Hospital



Lawrence Memorial Hospital

Lawrence, Kan.

Founded in 1921, 173-bed Lawrence Memorial Hospital is completing the final phase of a three-year, \$45 million campus expansion project, including the emergency department, maternity, intensive care and surgical services areas. The hospital also converted to private rooms.



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into Cerner when we do start scanning into our electronic records. That was really the convincing factor for us," she says. "In addition, I previously worked at a facility that used EDCO's services and we were always very pleased with that relationship."

And while EDCO was not a VHA-contracted supplier when LMH began using its services, EDCO did begin working with VHA shortly thereafter. "We do use VHA suppliers whenever possible — both for the pricing and because we know that VHA does its due diligence when qualifying suppliers," says Tim Tatlock, LMH's director of purchasing. "We appreciate VHA working to proactively contract with suppliers that offer the technologies that hospitals are moving toward, instead of waiting for members to ask for those things."

LMH began accessing EDCO's VHA-contracted pricing immediately. "The reduced pricing allows us to reinvest the dollars we save into other services and equipment that help us remain a competitive organization," says Tatlock.

Results

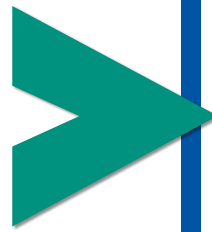
EDCO's Technical Professional Services Division went on-site to perform the necessary software installation and administrator and user training. "The project went very smoothly, and the system has proven incredibly easy to use," says Knaggs. "My staff members are delighted with it — they wish we had done this a long time ago."

EDCO's Retrieval Net online tool even allowed those needing patient records to access them during the 90-day transition, something that worked "very well," according to Knaggs.

The biggest benefit of EDCO's scanning services has been the decreased time spent retrieving records. "We used to have someone pull records from microfilm every day and every evening for return patients, so this has been a huge time savings for us," says Knaggs. "And the quality of the image is so much better — there is no comparison between microfilm and scanned records."

Scanned records also offer multiple simultaneous access and they track who views each record, increasing accountability and further protecting the hospital. "We're able to see who has accessed each record, and it does provide a good audit trail," says Knaggs.

Timeliness and quality are often hard to measure, but Knaggs says that she and her team feel the benefits of having scanned patient records daily. "It's made things infinitely easier when, for instance, another medical facility requests a patient record," she says. "We can turn it around immediately and print a quality record to meet their request. That's a huge thing for us, and EDCO has worked very well with us throughout this process to meet our needs."



VHA-contracted supplier EDCO's investment in cutting-edge, highly automated scanning processes outputs more than 1 million medical record images daily. Adding volume increases efficiencies while delivering economical options to VHA members, and EDCO applies innovative ideas for managing documents within goals that balance both productivity and budget realities. EDCO also sets up and manages on-site services for day-forward scanning and indexing, allowing hospitals to outsource without active records leaving the facility.

For more information, please contact VHA at 800-842-5146 or vhacustomerservice@vha.com