

Imaging Center's RIS/PACS Solution Delivers Greater Efficiency, Productivity

Detailed RIS Reporting Helps Build Closer Relationships with Referring Physicians

Goal: Replace homegrown RIS and PACS systems with an integrated RIS/PACS solution from a major vendor that offers specialized reporting capabilities designed for imaging centers.

Result: Higher productivity, closer relationships with referring physicians, detailed reports on business operations and reduced wait times for patients.

This is Borg Imaging Group's story.

The imaging center bills 125,000 imaging procedures a year at eight locations in the Rochester, N.Y., area. It has 12 radiologists and 140 staff members. The organization had outgrown its existing RIS and PACS and needed an integrated RIS/PACS solution that would provide maximum productivity and better access to critical information needed to drive its continued success in an extremely competitive market.

Borg Imaging selected Carestream Health as its vendor of choice because of the capabilities offered by its KODAK CARESTREAM Radiology Solutions and the firm's commitment to the imaging center market. "After evaluating seven vendors, we selected Carestream Health because of its tightly knit RIS/PACS solution, the features and functionality of its platforms and its understanding of the specialized needs of imaging centers," notes Borg Imaging's Chief Operating Officer Kevin Ring.

As part of the implementation, Ring adds that Carestream Health project managers worked closely with Borg's IT staff to tailor a RIS/PACS solution to address the unique needs of imaging centers, which was part of the sales agreement. "Carestream Health engineers brought extensive expertise and resources to the table. The result is best-of-breed platforms that fit the unique requirements of the imaging center market."

Integrated Desktop Enhances Productivity

Productivity is enhanced through an integrated desktop that makes patient and exam information easy for staff and radiologists to access. In addition a DICOM modality worklist eliminates manual data entry and resulting errors, while automatic generation of reports with a 'normal' diagnosis saves time for radiologists and eliminates transcription services.

Borg's relationships with its referring physicians are closer than ever before thanks to both technology and personalized service. The PACS system's ability to post key images with the radiology report, which is accessed via the Internet, is a huge hit with referring physicians. "Physicians really appreciate the efficiency of being able to read the report and view images selected by the reading radiologist. Physicians can also review the entire imaging study if they choose to," Ring explains.

An important advantage of the CARESTREAM RIS, especially for imaging centers, is its ability to generate detailed, user-defined reports. "The reporting capabilities of the RIS are exceptional. We issue weekly reports that measure staff and equipment utilization and referral patterns, including increases and decreases by individual physician," says Luke Bernier, Director of Business Systems.

Bernier explains that Borg has a liaison (“our feet on the street”) who uses this critical information to communicate with referring physicians. “We take time to thank physicians who are sending more patients to us and ask what we are doing right. At the same time, we contact physicians whose referrals are decreasing to see if there is a problem,” he explains.

“There have been situations where we have identified a miscommunication and we have been able to correct it before we lost the physician’s trust. In fact, our responsiveness in addressing physician concerns often results in an overall increase in referrals from those physicians’ offices,” he continues.

Utilization Reports Maximize Resources

Staff and equipment utilization reports identify areas of over- and under-capacity so that the imaging center can make full use of its resources and maximize profitability. Borg also uses the flexible RIS reporting capabilities to track cycle times for all elements in the imaging process, from patient check-in to delivery of the report. “In many cases, physicians have our radiology report within one to two hours. We receive excellent feedback on the timeliness of our report delivery,” Ring adds.

While digital technology can certainly expedite many functions, processes must also be examined for ways to improve productivity and reduce unnecessary steps. Borg Imaging retained a CARESTREAM Business Diagnostics team to examine its registration and scheduling processes and suggest improvements.

Based on the team’s recommendations, a streamlined patient registration process now allows a smaller staff to handle up to a 66 percent increase in exam volume. Thanks in part to new methods for document scanning and pre-populated demographic forms, patient wait times are down by 10 percent and registration is also 10 percent faster. As a result, patients spend 20 percent less time in the front office, which increases satisfaction.

In addition, expedited scheduling allows fewer staff members to handle growing patient volumes. Screen prompts now speed schedulers through the process and Borg eliminated its previous tradition of having separate staffs handle calls from referring physicians and patients. Now one staff handles all calls.

“The scheduling process illustrates the benefits that can be gained through combining digital technologies with more efficient processes. In the past we needed two dedicated staffs but now a centralized group can deliver responsive service to both physician offices and patients,” notes Bernier.

Both Ring and Bernier emphasize that reducing staff size was not the objective and that all reductions were accomplished through attrition or reassignment.

Premier Care Earns Loyalty

“Our goal is to use the best tools and technology available to deliver premium care that earns loyalty from both our patients and referral physicians. Streamlining our processes simultaneously boosts productivity and enables us to maintain profit levels in the face of increasing competition,” Ring reports. “The imaging center market is extremely challenging. Our investment in digital technology and workflow redesign services is already reaping rewards that will support our continued growth and success.”

More Information

To learn more about KODAK CARESTREAM Outpatient Solutions, contact your Carestream Health representative or call 1-877-865-6325, ext. 655.

www.carestreamhealth.com

Kodak
Licensed Product

Carestream Health, Inc.
150 Verona Street
Rochester, NY 14608

The Kodak trademark and trade dress are used under license from Kodak.
Carestream is a trademark of Carestream Health, Inc.
M1-871 Printed in U.S. A. 6/2007 © Carestream Health, Inc. 2007

Carestream 
HEALTH