Carestream Health
Transforms Irish Hospitals
with Integrated RIS/PACS and Voice Recognition Software

Carestream Health's new integrated RIS/PACS with voice recognition software and regional archive has now been successfully rolled out at the Irish Health Service Executive's Midland Area Regional Hospital at Tullamore and Mullingar Hospital, two acute service hospitals. RIS Web electronic ordering capability will shortly be added to the already deployed RIS Web system to enable ward staff to remotely facilitate order entry.

Here, we speak to Pauric Greenan, Project Coordinator for the Health Service Executive (HSE) Midland Area about the impressive workflow benefits that have become part of a new and systematic IT solution.

The Midland Health Board is committed to developing world class services to optimise patient care over the three acute hospital sites in the region. As part of this, funding was granted a number of years ago for a major capital development project, of which this plays a significant part.

Says Greenan, "I have been involved as PACS Project Co-ordinator for the capital project, building the new hospital in Tullamore (Midlands Regional Hospital at Tullamore), which subsequently became a Regional Project. We have just completed the second hospital in the region, the Midlands Regional Hospital at Mullingar and are waiting for funding to proceed to the Midlands Regional Hospital at Portlaoise." Carestream Health were the obvious choice for this project simply because: "We liked the system and it was competitively priced. It also came out top of our selection procedure."
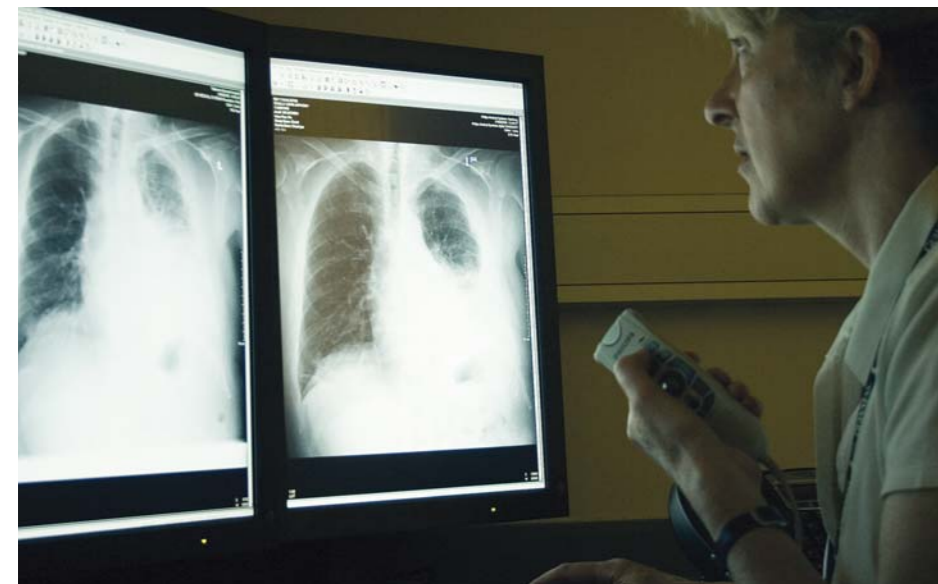

Pauric Greenan

This new hospital development was vital to addressing shortfalls in its facilities and to provide services in accordance with the requirements of a modern acute hospital service. By increasing workflow, amongst other hospital-wide measures, this serves to reduce patient flows to other regions and in particular helps to alleviate further service pressures in the Eastern Region.

Benefits

The single, enterprise-wide IT solution facilitates better hospital management, and in particular the benefits are seen in the radiology department. Greenan's experience backs this up: "It's of great benefit to our regional clinics particularly orthopaedics. The patient can be X-rayed at one site with their images available in the other immediately. This removes the need for copies to be constantly sent between sites which is laborious and expensive."

The solution is providing all operational requirements from voice recognition, diagnostic reporting and e-ordering to RIS deployment and image viewing over Citrix. The benefits to the hospitals are immense, particularly in reducing report turnaround time. This subsequently has the knock on effect of reducing patient bed occupancy periods as they sometimes are unable to be discharged until the result of an X-ray is known. Users are particularly satisfied with the system's flexibility and ease of use.

Voice Recognition Software Compensates for Staff Shortages

Voice recognition software has revolutionised workflow in radiology departments, often compensating for staff shortages and saving considerable amounts of time. Within the Midlands project, "VR has been a revelation, continues Greenan. "It was easy to implement, it adapted to individual voices very quickly. In one site it has brought our reporting time down from a week to about 20 minutes (during 9-5 hours) to 3 hours posted out. The new digital services were quickly adapted to by existing staff, when they saw the real benefits of the technology for themselves."

Remote services will soon be a part of this

new IT package—Greenan anticipates great workflow benefits. "Remote monitoring will be great as Carestream Health will be able to see a problem before we do, hence get it fixed a lot quicker, even before we have realised it has happened."

Structure

The KODAK CARESTREAM RIS/PACS will manage local image capture from a variety of modalities and support the diagnostic reporting process. A single KODAK CARESTREAM RIS will integrate with the PACS to facilitate enterprise-wide referrals, scheduling, worklist generation and diagnostic reporting. KODAK CARESTREAM Information Management Solutions, powered by KODAK Versatile Intelligent Patient Archive (VIParchive) software, will manage the central regional repository for long-term image storage and retrieval.

The solution met specific clinical and business requirements set by the HSE Midland Area. Integration of the RIS with multiple Patient Administration Systems (PAS) required a number of unique

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customised developments to ensure correct query routing and for the RIS to prefix PAS IDs on import to avoid different patients being assigned the same number from different systems.

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