



# Lancaster General Health Relies on OpenText RightFax for Excellent Patient Care

RightFax simplifies sending, receiving, and storing of documents at Lancaster General Health

For more than 100 years, Lancaster General Health, an award-winning hospital and healthcare system, has upheld its commitment to maintaining the health of all Lancaster County, PA residents. Lancaster General Health (LG Health) is a 623-licensed bed, not-for-profit health system. The hospital has earned numerous recognitions; it was one of the first Pennsylvania hospitals to obtain Magnet Hospital recognition, the American Nurses Association's (ANA) highest honor for excellence in nursing. Also, LG Health has been named one of the Top 100 Wired Hospitals, for their use of IT to address the key goals of safety and quality, customer service, business processes, work force, and disaster readiness.

## Searching for a dependable fax solution

Around-the-clock reliability is a must for every hospital; LG Health cares for patients 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The emergency department alone treats more than 100,000 patients a year.

Even with such large numbers, LG Health works to maintain personal attention for each patient. Such a goal depends upon reliable and flexible technology solutions, as well as other efficiencies.

In the area of communications, LG Health recognized a need for a dependable fax solution that would integrate with the

various departments and systems used across the organization.

Like other health systems, LG Health relies heavily on fax for business-critical communication. "We manage close to 80,000 faxed pages per month, of which, the vast majority—perhaps 95 percent—is outbound communication," says Ed Rund, Information Systems Manager at LG Health.

For instance, every day, lab results are faxed to outside facilities, including physician offices and nursing homes; "face sheets" or documents containing patient information—such as name, birth date, insurance, and location—are sent via fax to various customers, including physician

## INDUSTRY

Healthcare

## CUSTOMER

Lancaster General Health

## CHALLENGES

- Required time-sensitive faxing
- Needed reliability and flexibility
- Wanted integration across departments

## SOLUTIONS

- OpenText RightFax

## BENEFITS

- Offers 24/7 reliability
- Reduces costs by integrating and automating data flow
- Integrates with numerous healthcare applications
- Simplifies sending, receiving, and storage of documents
- Complies with HIPAA and meets privacy guidelines

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ED RUND, INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGER,  
LANCASTER GENERAL HEALTH

offices; notifications of patients for transfer are sent from the ER to other hospital departments; urgent information is communicated—often three or four times per week—from the hospital to its network of close to 200 physician offices located across the county; and Transcribed Medical Records reports and clinical results are faxed to physician offices.

While email is available, a large amount of information is best handled via fax, according to Rund. For example, since nurses are often walking between patient rooms, they will see a fax they can grab to read "on the go" faster than they will have time to sit at a desk to access email.

Like many organizations at the time, LG Health was using manual fax machines and a basic network fax program to handle its fax traffic. Unfortunately, when information about meetings, conferences, or other time-sensitive items needed to be sent to physicians it could mean hours of effort for hospital employees. They would print the document, walk it to the physician lounge, and place it in physician mailboxes.

When receiving faxes, manual processes also added up to delays and difficulty in disseminating multiple copies of faxes to all the departments who needed the information.

LG Health found their previous network fax program saved time; however, it was not as consistent and easy-to-use as other solutions, so they looked at replacing their fax software with an enterprise-level solution that would integrate with their new clinical system and other applications. Rund and his team also knew they would need a solution that would support Health

Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)-compliance efforts.

While reliability and flexibility were top priorities, the new fax solution would need to provide essential functionality at a reasonable cost. "Pricing is always a consideration for hospitals," Rund says. "We historically work on tight budgets."

Finally, any changes or upgrades could not interrupt daily hospital activities. "It's important that it's up 24/7," Rund states. "Fax is a critical system for relaying health-care information."

### **Automating the flow of fax, paper, and electronic data**

LG Health found affordable, 24/7 reliability in OpenText RightFax, the market leader in enterprise fax and e-document delivery solutions. RightFax helps customers achieve significant cost reductions by integrating and automating the flow of a full range of fax, paper, and electronic documents and data.

"Without RightFax, employees would spend more time manually sending thousands of faxes per month and we would increase the potential for faxes to be sent to wrong numbers, resulting in more phone complaints," says Rund. "We couldn't deliver information in a timely manner without an automated solution like RightFax."

Several departments use Rightfax for outbound faxes, including Radiology, Business Office, Pre-Anesthesia Clinic, Lab, Visiting Nurses Association, Medical Records, Nursing, Marketing, and Physician Communications.

The health system has now used RightFax with Brooktrout<sup>®</sup> fax boards for many years

and Rund describes the RightFax server uptime as terrific.

"I can't remember a time that RightFax has been down," Rund comments. "There may have been small incidents, but the only thing I've ever had to do is reboot the server. We've never lost the system for any major period of time."

RightFax allows LG Health employees to receive faxes in their Microsoft<sup>®</sup> Outlook<sup>®</sup> email inboxes and to send faxes directly from several business applications—all right at their desktops.

LG Health appreciates the flexibility of RightFax to integrate with healthcare applications. "What's nice is that RightFax gives us the ability to solve problems in different areas," says Rund. "The flexibility we have with RightFax in conjunction with a Visual Basic<sup>®</sup> front-end allows us to integrate with any system out there," he continues. "I haven't come across any systems that I can't integrate with RightFax."

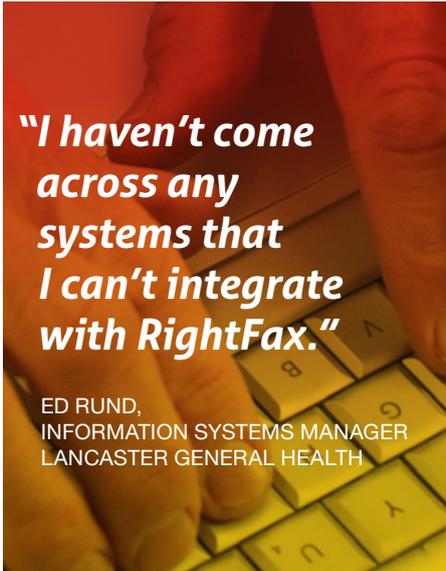
They have set RightFax to manage an automatic feed from its Cerner lab system. "When doctor's offices or in-house lab tests are conducted on blood samples, the results are entered in the lab system, which sends the result to RightFax," Rund explains. "Then, via RightFax, we automatically fax the results to the physician's office or nursing home."

Since faxes are maintained electronically with RightFax, it is easier and faster to send, receive, or store documents. The archival capabilities of RightFax have proven especially helpful for meeting privacy guidelines. To comply with HIPAA, LG Health must know where faxes are going and that

their own locations for receiving faxes are secure. "RightFax helps us meet HIPAA guidelines by notifying us when a fax goes to a bad phone number or providing a trail through fax archiving, so we have accessible data on where faxes are sent," says Rund.

### Providing exceptional care to patients

As a "Most Wired" hospital, LG Health has shown commitment and success in meeting hospital goals with efficient processes. In the case of faxing, RightFax processes save on paper, toner, and other costs associated with manual fax machines. Rund says they have disposed of about 10 fax machines so far and he estimates LG Health saves thousands of dollars per year by eliminating other hardware and supplies.



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Even with this reduction, enhanced productivity returns even greater cost savings for the hospital. Rund explains, "Paper is part of it, but RightFax reduces employee time for working with a piece of paper, including printing and getting up from the desk to go to a fax machine." Rund calculates that hospital staff members save hours per day with the improved system, which amounts to several thousand dollars per year in equivalent salaries.

Lastly, using RightFax, employees don't just save time—they are freed to focus on other business-critical tasks. This includes the most important responsibility: providing exceptional care for patients so LG Health can continue keeping county residents healthy. ■

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