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Tyler Memorial Hospital Speeds Delivery of Patient Records with Open Text Document Server and Fax Server

Digital Records Management Enhances Service

"When I saw the Fax Server and Document Server integration, I was overjoyed. If physicians say they did not receive reports, it is easier to search and retrieve faxes, decreasing our risk for liability."

– Kathe Bartron,
Health Information Management System Director,
Tyler Memorial Hospital

Tyler Memorial Hospital (www.tylerhospital.com), located in Tunkhannock, Pa., serves more than 50,000 patients every year. As the only hospital in its rural county, Tyler provides a wide range of diagnostic and therapeutic services.

The Challenge

To effectively treat patients, doctors and nurses at Tyler Memorial Hospital require fast access to the most recent medical charts. Staff members in Tyler's medical records department managed the overburdened storage room to retrieve and deliver the files. When the records department was closed, nursing supervisors had to delay other duties and travel to the records room to retrieve the documents. Quickly locating the necessary record among millions of paper documents in the 200-square-foot storage room was difficult and time consuming, according to Kathe Bartron, Health Information Management System (HIMS) director with Tyler.

State regulations require medical records to be completed within 30 days and, after completion, stored for at least seven years. "Charts would pile up because we had no ability to automatically purge files," Bartron said. Additionally, transcribed reports must be furnished to physicians for their patients' continued treatment at their offices. "The hospital could become liable if we had no way to prove the physician received the report," she explained. To address the issue, the records staff faxed reports via Open Text Fax Server, RightFax Edition and saved every "fax-delivered" electronic notice. For legal backup, Bartron then spent at least 45 minutes each day transferring the files to Microsoft Word documents for storage. While Fax Server

provided digital document capture, Tyler needed a solution specifically for document archival and retrieval.

To allow the nursing supervisor to concentrate on nursing care and to better serve patients, Bartron added another position and increased department hours. "The evening staff member was spending 80 percent of her time locating and running charts all over the hospital," Bartron said.

The Solution

Tyler Memorial Hospital worked to automate the records management and archival processes for its Health Information Management Systems (HIMS) with Open Text Document Server, Alchemy Edition. The prognosis is exceptional. "By implementing Document Server for our records management processes, we will be able to connect departments within the hospital, so that patient records are quickly and efficiently updated and retrievable from a variety of different locations," said Dan Diljak, Tyler's Information Systems manager.

Records—and in the future, lab results and other documentation—will be archived using Document Server to be available electronically to all qualified personnel. Nurses obtain records right at their stations, and physicians dictate discharge summaries directly from any location within the hospital. The integrated products offer other benefits. Using Fax Server,
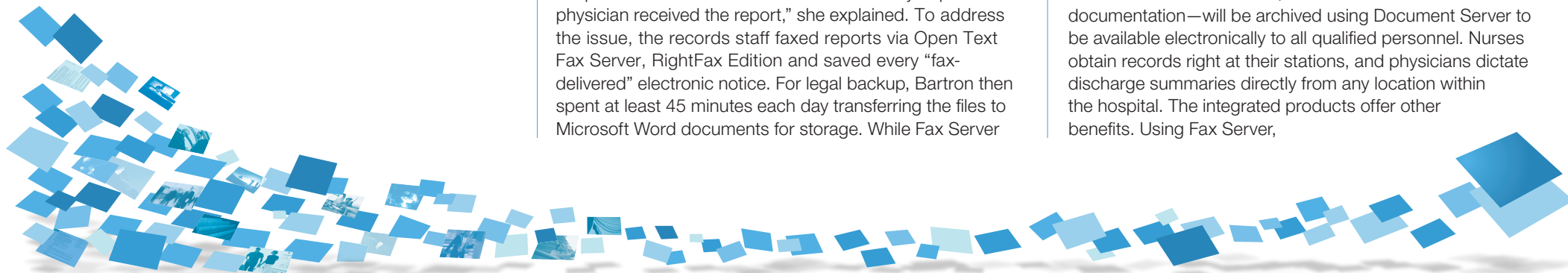
Tyler personnel send and receive electronic faxes from their desktops, and then, with Document Server easily store the files as backup. Together, the products automatically keep track of delivery notifications. "When I saw the Fax Server and Document Server integration, I was overjoyed," Bartron said. "If physicians say they did not receive reports, it is easier to search and retrieve faxes, decreasing our risk for liability."

The hospital looked at several options before deciding on Document Server, including a microfiche solution as well as software provided by a multiservice corporation. "None of the options had the functionality, scalability and quality of the Open Text records management solution … not to mention, they were much more expensive," Diljak said.

The Results

Within its first few months of use, Document Server improved documentation service to hospital staff and physicians, enhancing patient care and supporting compliance with state regulations. The new system has saved what almost amounts to a full-time position, or at least $22,000.

"Document Server enables us to offer better patient care and better services to hospital staff, physicians and state regulatory authorities," Bartron explained. Document Server delivers information to hospital staff members and physicians in half the time. With fast and convenient digital document access, nurses are able to focus more on patient care versus clerical duties.

Once discharged records are entered, medical records coders access information from home offices through an intranet; the ability frees up workspace and increases productivity, which results in a faster revenue turnaround, according to Bartron. Future plans will enable physicians to access Document Server from their offices, allowing them to complete dictation from sites other than those within the hospital. With this feature, Document Server will enable the hospital to more easily comply with the 30-day regulation for chart completion. The Open Text Document Server Records Manager Module also provides a trigger to alert the HIMS staff when records have reached their legal storage time limit and may be purged.

Converting paper to digital files also allows Tyler to reduce physical storage space. The amount of paper from Radiology and labs may eventually be reduced by as much as 90 percent, decreasing the amount of supplies and man-hours spent on paper-based filing, Bartron said. She hopes to clear out the overflowing file room soon. Because of the immense success with HIMS, Document Server will soon be implemented within the hospital's Human Resources department, and plans are in process to expand the solution to Accounting and other administrative areas.

The Profile

Customer: Tyler Memorial Hospital

Industry: Healthcare

Business Solution: Open Text Document Server, Alchemy Edition, Open Text Fax Server, RightFax Edition, and Open Text Document Server Records Manager Module

Business Challenge: Paper-based records hamper retrieval and compliance with regulations

Integration: Dictaphone; Dairyland Healthcare Solutions mainframe; potentially the lab results program

Results: Saved $22,000 by automating document archival and retrieval; reduced records retrieval time by 50 percent; improved productivity; and decreased storage space and supply costs

For More Information

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