



St. Mary's Hospital

Automates Secure Distribution of Patient Information

St. Mary's Hospital in Amsterdam, NY is the largest acute care hospital in the region, serving over 252,000 patient visits a year. Founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in 1903, St. Mary's Hospital is dedicated to improving the health of the entire community, providing healthcare services that address the spiritual as well as social, emotional and physical needs of our patients, with special attention to the poor and under served.

More than a hospital, St. Mary's has become a highly accessible healthcare system with four off site family health centers and seven behavioral health service locations throughout two counties. St. Mary's was the first hospital in the region to develop community primary care centers. These centers, with doctor's office settings, include the provision of specialty medical services and laboratory services as well as occupational health services. St. Mary's range of services is designed to fulfill the total healthcare needs of the community, while being the lowest cost provider.

As a member of the Ascension Health network of Catholic hospitals, a nonprofit health system serving patients through a network of hospitals and related health facilities providing acute care services, long-term care, community health services, psychiatric, rehabilitation and residential care, St. Mary's maintains its mission to care compassionately for those it serves with dedication to excellence and Christian ideals.

Eliminating Manual Report Distribution for Faster Access and Better Quality Patient Care

Providing information to physicians from the MEDITECH HCIS system had been a manual distribution process where staff in each of the ancillary areas would be responsible for preparing paper reports for distribution, either by courier, fax, or mail. Although St. Mary's had looked at the FAXBOX solution, it was never implemented due to performance issues. Although tedious, providing this information in a timely manner is critical to providing quality patient care. They knew there had to be a more effective way and they turned to Interbit Data for help.

St. Mary's had heard that other hospitals in the Ascension Health Network were looking at the NetSolutions products to ease the process of report distribution and decided to piggyback on that effort. Interbit Data was well known in the MUSE community and feedback about their products was very positive.

The goal was to distribute reports according to the needs of the individual physician office. Some need the reports sent via the Internet directly to a printer in the physician's office, freeing up the office fax machine for urgent faxing. Others still wanted the report delivered via fax because they had practice management software that used faxes as part of an electronic medical record or because they were a small practice and traditional faxing met their needs. And others wanted the report electronically, saving it to a PC for viewing and printing when they need it.

All of these delivery scenarios can be accommodated with the NetDelivery solution. “There is no manual intervention which reduces the likelihood that someone dials the wrong number and sends the confidential information to the wrong recipient, a serious issue that violates HIPAA security regulations,” said Eugene Coffey, systems programmer at St. Mary’s Hospital. “Now we produce radiology reports that are electronically signed and downloaded to the appropriate office for faxing or distribution over the Internet. NetDelivery simplifies the process by delivering the reports we need while providing multiple delivery options to satisfy the various customer needs.”

Creative Solutions with Interbit Data Products

While implementing the electronic medication administration record (EMAR) at St. Mary’s, it became apparent that a critical need was a downtime report that would contain all the medication administration information for each patient in case the HIS system became unavailable and Nursing was forced back to manual procedures. If the system goes down, it is very important to have up to date medication administration information on paper at your finger tips to ensure future medication administrations are performed correctly – which means safely.

Interbit Data created an application on a workstation that receives a print job that runs every 15 minutes. This effectively transfers the information to a local PC as a backup measure in the event the network becomes unavailable. This process has reduced their risk of not having the appropriate information when needed.

“We had tried developing a solution for this, but it was a challenge. FTP transferred the data but didn’t keep the format of the report intact,” said Coffey. “Interbit Data’s MPrint helped us implement an affective solution.”

Another creative solution is the pharmacy application. “We needed to provide 24×7 support to our nursing staff for prescription order fulfillment,” said Coffey. “Interbit Data helped us to use their Desktop Fax Option (DTO) to transparently redirect the fax from our internal pharmacy to an off site pharmacy during the off shift hours. The nurse units fax their orders as usual, but the DTO application forwards the order to the off site pharmacy automatically. Copies of the orders sent off site are saved at the local pharmacy for their records, but the order gets filled at the remote pharmacy. We are able to support the needs of the nursing staff without having to give them a different process for getting the orders filled. This is a very nice application.”

More than Expected

“What we wanted and thought they could provide, we got. Support is great – they are there when I need something. We call anytime and they get back to us,” complimented Coffey. “They have solved a number of challenges with creative solutions that we didn’t have to figure it out for ourselves. We didn’t anticipate some of the things we can do with these products.”

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