

CASE STUDY

PROVIDENCE HOSPITAL ACHIEVING HUGE FIRST YEAR COST SAVINGS



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Quick Facts

Name: Providence Hospital

Location: Mobile, Alabama

Focus: Full service medical/surgical facility

Number of beds: 349

Integration: Siemens

Products used: e-Forms Repository, Patient Flow System

Since its founding in 1854, Providence Hospital has been serving, caring for and healing the people of southern Alabama and southeast Mississippi. Based in Mobile and sponsored by Ascension Health, the nation’s largest Catholic and nonprofit health care system, the 349-bed hospital extends its healing ministry to every member of the community with a special emphasis on the poor and underprivileged. Providence admits more than 16,000 inpatients annually, and outpatient and emergency room registrations exceed 150,000 per year.

Providence faced a number of frustrating challenges related to its HIM procedures. To speed the imaging process and improve the organization and accuracy of patient data, the hospital spent several years working toward an effective medical records barcoding system. However, the lack of an automated forms management system resulted in high supply and storage costs, inhibited productivity and created the potential for delayed care and service to patients.

Providence’s management team recognized that the demand for fast and convenient access to accurate medical records could no longer be met by the organization’s existing systems, and that more comprehensive technology was needed. Providence relied on pre-printed forms, which were designed and printed by an external forms vendor. To complete a patient encounter, hospital staff retrieved the appropriate forms, manually entered patient information and delivered copies to physicians, nurses and the HIM department. Later, HIM staff scanned forms into the document imaging system. This laborious process limited productivity for administrative and clinical staff alike.

Working Seamlessly with Siemens HIS

In 2006, Providence’s IS team began a search for a more complete forms management solution that would produce electronic forms on demand and enable staff to distribute them via electronic workflow. A primary requirement seamless integration with Providence’s imaging product, Siemens’s Soarian EDM/HIM application and the Siemens’s Invision HIS. After careful consideration, Providence determined that the Access Patient Flow System (PFS) and e-Forms Repository (EFR) presented the right





The Business Problems

Manually managing forms incurs high storage and supply costs.

Patients may have to fill out registration forms more than once.

When the HIS is down, forms data is inaccessible.

Tedious forms preparation tasks limit productivity.

The Solutions

Electronic forms management delivers \$124,300 annual cost savings.

Fast, one-time check-in improves patient satisfaction.

Access solution offers uninterrupted access to patient data.

Auto-population of forms data boosts productivity.

combination of simplicity, versatility and integration capabilities.

Access's PFS enables hospitals to easily design customized forms in-house, and distribute them directly to the point-of-need for printing, faxing, e-mailing and archiving. As forms information is managed electronically in the EFR, users have immediate access to current data. Patient demographics can be auto-populated and printed on all required forms, and the problem of unreadable barcodes is eliminated.

"It was important to us to have a forms design tool that was flexible, allowing us to make our own customizations," says Cynthia Hyde, chief information officer and assistant vice president of information services. "And we wanted to be able to print forms quickly without a lot of lag time in the software – Access is fast. We also found that Access was the only provider that offered a true encrypted signature capability to guarantee the privacy of our patients."

Delivering Rapid ROI

Providence chose to implement the Access solution in its outpatient clinic first. It was successful, so Hyde's team moved forward with a three-stage deployment in other areas. The first phase brought the Access system to all inpatient areas except for obstetrics (OB). Next came OB and ancillary departments, and finally other areas of the hospital.

"In my 31 years of data processing, I have never been involved with such a positive implementation of software as with the Access Patient Flow System," said Beverly Goggans, solutions development lead for Ascension health information services. "In less than one day of using the product, the end users were hooked. My goal as a data processing professional is to make the life of my end user easier and better, and I believe that Access has done just that."

Providence's switch to Access began with the desire for more readable barcodes, but the IS team soon discovered that the solution offers more comprehensive benefits. A review found that first year indirect and direct savings on labor, printing supplies, shipping and wasted forms totaled \$124,300.

Improving Productivity & Morale

With the Access suite, Providence's staff can spend less time locating and completing forms, and more time working with patients. At registration, patient data is entered just once, after which all appropriate forms are printed with the patient's information included. PFS's unique Patient Data Intelligence recognizes pertinent demographic data and automatically creates pre-arranged packets of forms for specific types of patients. The forms can be printed directly to the printer at the nursing station or department where the patient will go. And with no need to label patient charts, the Access solution makes more effective use of employee time and skill.



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“We have been able to decrease the number of employees who report to work at 6 a.m., thereby ensuring adequate staff coverage for our busy hours,” says Monica Moore, Providence’s nurse manager in the GI Lab. “Access has also allowed us to prepare charts in advance of the patient’s scheduled visit, which in turn allows us to anticipate and resolve issues that in the past have delayed procedures and decreased patient and physician satisfaction.”

By automating forms processes, the Access suite helps Providence ensure data accuracy. The risk of using outdated forms is also eliminated, as forms are updated electronically in EFR and printed only when needed. Clearly printed and well-organized information is highly beneficial when an in-depth review of past documentation is required, so the Access solution is making regulatory audits simple.

With the ability to design forms in-house and manage all documents electronically, Providence eliminated the need for an external forms supplier, and the hospital no longer devotes storage space and labor to managing a stock of pre-printed forms. Registration desks and nursing stations are less cluttered with paper forms, which improves productivity and creates a more professional appearance.

“We had staff members from another hospital come to tour our facility, and they couldn’t believe how clean and organized our nursing stations were. With Access, you get a lot of shelf space back,” Hyde says.

When the HIS or other critical applications go down, Providence remains online with Access. The Access system creates a real-time backup of all patient data so employees can continue to work as normal during an HIS outage, and there’s no time spent manually entering a backlog of information when the outage is over. Most importantly, patient care can continue without interruption.





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