St. Peter's Health Care Services Eliminates Paper-Intensive Processes, Centralizes Policy Access with Xerox DocuShare

With over 4,500 employees spread over 30 locations in New York's Capital region, St. Peter's Health Care Services' 442-bed hospital, two nursing homes, home care, hospice, addictions treatment, and many other programs provide an integrated continuum of care. Its wide spectrum of services and highly-regulated industry generated vast amounts of paperwork that required frequent updates. St. Peter's moved to aggressively replace its many paper-intensive processes with a paperless system that would cut costs, increase productivity, and support its mission of combining highly-personalized patient care with leading-edge medical technologies.

St. Peter's replaced all paper nursing policy and procedure binders with DocuShare, saving yards of physical storage space and reducing the time to process policy updates from months to two weeks.

About St. Peter's Health Care

Headquarters: Albany, New York

Industry: Healthcare

Applications:
Document Management, HIPAA and JCAHO Regulatory Compliance, Workflow, Project Management

Summary:
Printing crucial, frequently updated policy and procedure documentation proved costly and time-consuming for St. Peter's and made compliance with regulatory guidelines difficult. Xerox DocuShare eliminated the need for multiple binders of paper documents by creating easily updated and tracked digital files accessible from any Web browser. Users now access standardized policies and procedures that are always up to date, regardless of global location, speeding productivity, communications, collaboration, and supporting swift patient care.

The Challenge

Like many large organizations, St. Peter's was bogged down with paper and had difficulty managing communications and information sharing in its paper-intensive environment. Printing crucial, frequently updated documentation, such as nursing standards of care and training manuals, pharmacy formulary procedures, hospital-wide administrative policies, human resources forms, and regulatory mate-rials, such as those required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), resulting in increased costs and slow turnaround of updated policies and procedures.

Why Xerox DocuShare?

St. Peter's had a three-part goal: elimi-nate paper-intensive processes; provide electronic access to all documents, forms, and policies from a central location; and effectively streamline policy updates and delivery to multiple locations. George Zimmerman, Internet Administrator, eval-uated a variety of options in his quest to find a solution that would meet these objectives. He chose Xerox DocuShare because of all the benefits it offered his organization, including ease of use,

"DocuShare is a very cool way to share needed information—quickly, easily, and effectively! And it's accessible anywhere, anytime."

— George Zimmerman, Internet Administrator, St. Peter's Health Care Services.

security down to the document version level, Web-based access anywhere in the world, and the ability to flexibly store and manage any type of content.

The Results

Together, St. Peter's and the DocuShare team created a manageable solution that would enable St. Peter's to achieve all its objectives. Since the initial deployment in 2001, St. Peter's has replaced numerous paper-intensive processes throughout the organization with DocuShare—with amazing results.

▪ **Women's & Children's Department.** With an internally built solution inte-grating DocuShare and a secure fax, the Department can securely transmit offsite and onsite physician referrals instantly and also archive the referrals for later refer-ence—all within HIPAA guidelines for secure transfer of patient data.

- **Nursing.**
  Previously, all 16 nursing stations had shelves of paper binders containing all the official policies and patient procedures, which were difficult to keep up to date. DocuShare replaced them all, saving physical storage space, ensuring consistent treatment across the organization, providing quick access to patient care information, and reducing the time to process updates from months to two weeks.

- **Information Technology.**
  The IT department uses DocuShare to instantly publish electronic versions and updates of critical documentation, including emergency preparedness, safety data sheets, online storage plans, and more.

- **Regulatory Compliance.**
  DocuShare played a central role in supporting compliance with a variety of regulatory organizations, such as HIPAA and JCAHO, by making all policy documentation accessible and easily updated, saving time, printing, and mail costs.

- **Pharmacy.**
  St. Peter's multiple pharmacies now have centralized access to the most recent versions of drug information documents, policies and procedures, physician order forms, and the hospital formulary.

- **Hospice.**
  St. Peter's Community Hospice is primarily concentrated in county offices surrounding Albany, NY. However, the system includes one partner located in South Africa, where the organization plans to add hospice services for HIV/AIDS clients. With DocuShare, delegates visiting South Africa can remotely access public health policies from the St. Peter's intranet, saving courier costs and improving patient care by providing immediate access to up-to-date policies.

- **Human Resources.**
  With DocuShare, employees have access to interactive HR forms that they can complete online and email to the appropriate department, avoiding the trip down to HR to physically retrieve the forms, fill them out, and send them back. HR can also easily update personnel policies and give everyone in the organization instant access to the latest information.

- **Project Management.**
  St. Peter's has improved its project management process by placing meeting minutes for projects in DocuShare collections. This triggers an email alert to all attendees that the project plan was updated. "That's pretty powerful and effective," declares Zimmerman.

"DocuShare makes our nursing standards and policies readily accessible. With the online search function, we can find a specific standard or policy much faster than before. And revisions are available within two weeks—not months!"

— Debbie Powers, RN and Patient Care Administrative Coordinator, St. Peter's Health Care Services

The Future

With all the benefits the organization has realized since implementing DocuShare, St. Peter's further plans to take advantage of DocuShare's workflow routing capabilities and bulletin board. In fact, Zimmerman has already placed all the material and training guides for security into DocuShare and simply sends the link to everybody involved. "There's a big improvement with this approach, as we no longer have to send large files via email, only a single link," states Zimmerman.

Finally, St. Peter's is actively integrating DocuShare with its intranet solution, Microsoft's SharePoint Portal Server, to make DocuShare content more widely available to its constituents. "The ability to integrate DocuShare with other products like SharePoint makes it easy for us to take advantage of other solutions without losing any of our current capabilities," Zimmerman states.

About Xerox DocuShare

Addressing both the basic and complex requirements of Enterprise Content Management (ECM), the Xerox DocuShare family of products offers an innovative solution: two focused ECM applications built on one common platform. Xerox DocuShare enables document management collaboration, review and approval, and Web publishing to support information sharing at all points in the enterprise by every knowledge worker. Xerox DocuShare CPX offers the advanced ECM functionality required for integrating and automating content, sophisticated collaboration, and business process management around specific operational tasks. And all Xerox DocuShare products are built on the DocuShare Enterprise Content Platform, recognized for its ease of installation, administration, and use. This shared platform simplifies deployments and reduces IT complexity, despite the typically heterogeneous mix of databases, servers, directory services, and storage systems found in today's enterprise.

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