CASE STUDY

"The combination of Access's e-forms and electronic patient signature solutions and Wacom signature tablets has created a fast, paperless registration process. It has further reduced our paper costs, and several patients have commented on how much better their registration experience is now."

Quick Facts

Location: Towson, Maryland

Number of beds: 310

Annual visits: 72,000 clinical outpatient, 65,000 emergency, 26,700 inpatient

Solutions used: Access e-forms on demand and electronic patient signature, Wacom STU-500 signature tablets

Located in Towson, Maryland, Greater Baltimore Medical Center (GBMC) has served the Baltimore metro area since 1965. This full-service acute and sub-acute care facility has 310 beds and last year had 72,000 annual clinical outpatient visits, 65,000 emergency visits and 26,700 annual inpatient visits.

Several years ago, GBMC decided to implement the OnBase enterprise content management system from Hyland Software to get more patient documents into electronic health records (EHRs). However, getting patient forms into this application required time-consuming, error-prone manual indexing. In addition, the hospital wanted to reduce its forms-related cost and paper output, not to mention improving the patient experience by minimizing the amount of information that patients must fill in at the point of registration.

To overcome its paper forms challenges and advance the EHR initiative, GBMC selected an e-forms on demand solution from Access.

When an admissions clerk registers a patient in MEDITECH Magic, they simply click a button and all the required forms are generated with patient demographics applied. This means that patients no longer fill out redundant information on multiple forms.

"The Access system takes the burden off of our admissions staff because it automatically assembles a forms packet based on patient and registration type," says Cherie Patterson, patient access applications trainer at GBMC.

In addition to pre-filling demographics on e-forms, the Access system applies bar codes with unique patient and forms identifiers. The OnBase system recognizes these bar codes, and sends the forms into the right place in the corresponding patient's EHR.

"The bar-coded forms provided by the Access system removes the step of manually indexing each paper form before it goes into Hyland OnBase," Patterson says. "This saves several minutes per patient packet, adding up to 455 work days saved each year."

Access

The Business Problems

Manually indexing forms in the ECM system is a time-consuming task

Need an electronic patient signature solution

Increasing number of paper forms to complete and sign frustrates patients

Producing two copies of each form—one for the hospital and one for the patient—is costly

The Solutions

Elimination of manual forms indexing saves 455 work days per year

Combination of Access solutions and Wacom signature tablets creates a paperless registration and bedside consent process

Adding electronic patient signatures to forms with pre-filled demographics improves the patient experience

Hospital now generates e-forms on demand and patients almost always decline a physical copy

Taking E-Forms to the Next Level with Electronic Patient Signatures

Since deploying Access's e-forms on demand solution, the number of forms required at registration and the complexity of these forms increased. One such new document is the four-page permission acknowledgement form. This cut into the time and paper savings provided by the Access system and inhibited the patient experience, prompting GBMC to implement Access's electronic patient signature solution.

Now, instead of sifting through the pages of their registration packet after they've filled in their information, a patient simply goes to one of GBMC's 20 cordless, battery-free STU-500 signature tablets, provided by Wacom, the world's leading provider of electronic signature hardware, and applies their e-signature. The Access solution captures this, along with biometric data, time and date information, and other data that proves this unique patient authorized their forms in the admissions area.

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Paper-Free Admissions

Instead of printing two copies of patient forms—one for the patient and one for their chart—GBMC now asks if patients want a copy. Most say "no," helping GBMC to save money and reduce its environmental footprint even more than the existing savings achieved by switching to e-forms on demand.

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Another plus of the Access and Wacom offering is that, unlike many e-signature setups, it does not require third-party software to be installed and managed at each LCD pad. A server-based approach makes it easy for GBMC to administer the solution. And as

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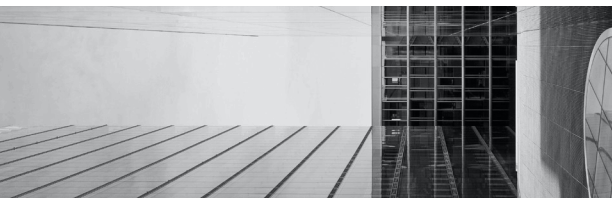
biometrics, time and date stamps, and other e-signature data is immediately accessible from a secure electronic repository, GBMC could easily provide this during an e-Discovery proceeding or audit, safeguarding the hospital. Signatures are tamper-proof, ensuring the integrity of patient data.

A Positive Vendor Relationship

Selecting top quality software is a must for hospitals, but the relationships they have with vendors are equally important. Access and Wacom worked closely with GBMC to determine its e-forms and electronic patient signature needs, and, according to Patterson, continue to provide exemplary support.

"Access and Wacom have proven products and great customer service," she says. "We're confident that they will continue to help us further our EHR project and paperless initiative."

3

4