

Case Study

healthcare

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– Trent Fookes, Director of Pharmacy at Grey Bruce Health Services

Grey Bruce Health Services

Medication order automation project delivers improved Pharmacy efficiency and transparency

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

Grey Bruce Health Services operates six hospitals in the Grey Bruce region. With 1,600 staff and nearly 200 physicians across six sites, they offer a full range of primary and ambulatory care services, emergency care, and specialty services including complex surgeries. Embracing the core values of exceptional care and leadership, Grey Bruce Health Services has made it their mission to provide their community with quality health care close to home.

CHALLENGE

The Grey Bruce Health Services pharmacy was struggling to keep up with an increasing workload. Servicing three to twelve hospitals at any given time, staff was overburdened with order entry and managing an overwhelming paper system.

"We were getting to the point where our workload was exceeding our human resources," explains Trent Fookes, Director of Pharmacy at Grey Bruce Health Services. "If we didn't make a change, we were going to have to start adding staff or radically changing the roles of individuals."

Not only was the paper system inefficient and time consuming, it required pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to be physically situated next to a printer, severely limiting their mobility and ability to spend time at the point of care.

"Our pharmacists noticed that they were tied to the entry and verification of medication orders in our central pharmacy, when they really wanted to get back up to the clinical areas," says Fookes. "This way they would have more impact at the front end of the system, rather than solving problems that had already occurred."

CHALLENGE

- Staff overburdened by increasing workload and inefficient paper-based medication order system
- Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians tied to order locations
- Pharmacists unable to spend desired time in clinical area with patients and physicians

SOLUTION

- Ricoh's Pharmacy Order Manager Solution featuring DocuScripts software digitized the order management process and eliminated paper-based prescriptions
- Orders can be prioritized, tracked and filled from a unified pharmacy dashboard
- Ricoh's solution imported into existing pharmacy workflow with minimal disruption

RESULTS

- Pharmacy technicians and pharmacists can easily manage orders from anywhere, at any time
- Patient information and prescriptions can be accessed digitally and simultaneously
- Increased transparency and communication between pharmacy, nursing and physicians
- No need for additional staff to manage increased workload
- Reduced paper consumption and waste

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SOLUTION

Ricoh was one of several vendors approached by Grey Bruce Health Services to help them move away from the paper-based medication order management system and toward a more modern, streamlined workflow.

“Ricoh was the one company that stood out as being able to turn around our requirements very quickly, while at the same time offering us a solution that we actually needed,” says Fookes.

Fookes and his team were impressed with Ricoh’s Pharmacy Order Manager Solution featuring DocuScripts software, and went ahead with the implementation.

Using the solution, prescriptions can be scanned at a nursing station or communications sent from the nursing software directly to the on or off-site pharmacy – no paper prescription required. The pharmacy has access to a dashboard that helps prioritize and track orders as they move through the system, ensuring confidentiality and accuracy while eliminating unnecessary steps involved in a paper-based system.

“The Ricoh system certainly met all of our needs, and fit within the workflows we already had in place,” explains Fookes. “We didn’t have to design new workflows around an existing product – it was imported into our existing system, while also allowing us to improve our workflows along the way.”

RESULTS

The entire pharmacy backend has improved dramatically. Now, pharmacy technicians can jump in and out of the order management workflow seamlessly, and pharmacists are no longer tied to a single location to verify medication orders – they can view and verify from any computer anywhere, whether in the pharmacy, at the bedside, or remotely.

By enabling the pharmacy to manage medication orders digitally, patient files and prescription information can be accessed instantly and simultaneously at any workstation. And eliminating physical prescriptions means less paper consumption and waste, as well as a faster and more efficient workflow.

“When you’re talking about a thousand orders per day, saving 30 or 40 seconds per order has a huge impact,” says Fookes.

The Ricoh solution also created benefits beyond staff’s expectations, including increased visibility into the pharmacy workflow. The solution has improved communication between nursing, physicians and the pharmacy, and allows for a deeper analysis of current workloads and capacity.

“Because our previous system used paper orders and fax transmissions, I had no idea how to analyze the subprocesses between a physician writing an order on the clinic unit to it being sent to the pharmacy, entered, verified and dispensed,” says Fookes. “DocuScripts allows me to actually look into these subprocesses and assess orders and our ability to process them, as well as manage my workforce.”

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