

Case Study

Healthcare

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Joseph Brant Hospital – Better Medication Order Processing For Better Patient Care

Ricoh's solution enables hospital staff to process, prioritize and communicate orders with greater efficiency and fewer interruptions.

"Our process is pretty much the same as it was before except it's electronic. Ricoh matched the technology to our workflow. This has made it extremely easy for everyone to adapt."

Jane Cheng,
Computer Support Pharmacist
Joseph Brant Hospital

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

Founded in 1961, Joseph Brant Hospital in Burlington, Ontario has been providing quality healthcare to their community for over five decades. The hospital offers a variety of inpatient and outpatient programs to meet the unique needs of its patients across six categories of care: medical, surgical, maternal and childcare, emergency and ambulatory, mental health, and rehabilitation and geriatric. With a dedicated staff of more than 2,000 physicians, health professionals and volunteers, Joseph Brant is committed to compassionate care and exemplary service.

CHALLENGE

A significant part of patient care at Joseph Brant is the processing and delivery of medication. In order to facilitate fast and accurate fulfillment, medication orders were sent from the nursing staff to the pharmacy staff via two workflows: a fax-based system for stat orders and a scanning-based system for routine orders. *"Ideally, stat orders would come down via one system and routine orders would come down via the other. But in reality, each nursing station had its own way of doing things, and orders would get mixed up,"* says Jane Cheng, Computer Support Pharmacist.

The inefficiency that this system caused was magnified by the fact that some nursing stations did not have scanning capabilities or had mislabeled buttons. Additionally, the staff had no system in place to see which orders were being processed at any given time. *"It was often the case that the nursing staff would send a stat order and immediately follow up with a call to make sure we received it, making the system we had in place redundant,"* Cheng explains.

Using a paper-based system, management also had no means of accessing metrics to assess efficiency, errors, workload and other issues that could help them improve staffing, budgeting and patient care.

CHALLENGE

- Two separate workflows for stat and routine medication orders.
- Misfiled stat orders resulting in phone calls and interruptions from nursing staff.
- No access to metrics to measure efficiency, errors or workload.

SOLUTION

- Ricoh Pharmacy Order Manager Solution featuring DocuScripts to streamline order placement.
- Combined stat and routine orders into single workflow, ensures orders are filed correctly and processed quickly.
- New and existing staff trained quickly to use new system.

RESULTS

- Eliminated misfiled stat orders and reduced unnecessary interruptions.
- Improved efficiency due to a unified system visible to all staff from any terminal.
- Allowed for long-term archival of orders to comply with regulations.
- Enabled efficiency, error and workload metrics.

SOLUTION

In order to improve efficiency, Joseph Brant began searching for solutions and received an impressive RFP from Ricoh, with whom they had a six-year relationship. The hospital quickly realized that the Ricoh Pharmacy Order Manager Solution would be the ideal solution to improve their medication order process. The solution features powerful DocuScripts software, designed to streamline order placement and fulfillment, and eliminate complications for both pharmacy and nursing staff.

Rather than burden staff with two systems, Ricoh combined the entire medication order process into a single workflow. After inserting their document into a Ricoh multifunction device, nursing staff press one of three buttons: Stat, Routine or Missing Meds. This triggers the relevant workflow that delivers and displays all orders to the pharmacy and prioritizes stat orders without a single phone call or interruption.

The Ricoh team provided training for all staff using the solution, and Cheng notes that it typically took under 30 minutes to train existing staff to use the new system properly. The simplicity of the system also means that new staff can be trained quickly. *“Some of the changes in regulation in Ontario have impacted who gets trained on this software,”* says Peter Thornley, Director of Pharmacy Services. *“Even though we have had an influx of new employees that have had to be brought up to speed quickly, it speaks to the solution because that hasn’t been a major headache.”*

RESULTS

Staff and management at Joseph Brant can now trust that medication orders are getting to where they need to go, on time and without errors. *“Now that everything is scanned using a single button, there are many fewer orders coming down as stat when they shouldn’t be,”* Chen explains. *“The nursing staff doesn’t have to think about whether to fax or scan a document, and the pharmacy doesn’t have to question whether something is inappropriately filed.”*

Efficiency has improved across the board. The pharmacy staff can see their entire department’s workload, track who is working on what in real time, and can work from multiple locations within the hospital. Nursing staff can securely view the number of orders their station submitted, which orders are stat, and the current status of any order.

The solution also features an internal messaging system that enables staff to communicate about orders from any terminal throughout the hospital and pharmacy. *“With the messaging function, we can send a direct message to the pharmacist we need to speak with when he or she is up with the nursing staff, rather than having to call or leave our work to find him or her ourselves,”* says Cheng.

The archiving capability of the solution has eliminated the need for paper filing cabinets and time wasted searching for missing files. It also helps the hospital address the new regulations set by the Ontario College of Pharmacists that, in part, require orders to be archived for at least ten years.

Despite the drastic changes that typically accompany leaps in efficiency, staff did not have to adapt to the new technology – it was built around them. *“Our process is pretty much the same as it was before except it’s electronic. Ricoh matched the technology to our workflow,”* says Cheng. *“This had made it extremely easy for everyone to adapt.”*

Looking at the big picture, the next step for Thornley is to harness the powerful metrics provided by the new system, and use them to deliver better patient care: *“We are working with the Ricoh team to fine tune our reporting and tracking. Tracking things like the average time it takes to get an order filled and whether we are improving or not are going to help us be better for our patients.”*

ABOUT RICOH

For more than 50 years, Ricoh has been delivering solutions for Healthcare clients across North America. Today, this includes over 40,000 customers across the Acute and Ambulatory sectors. Ricoh Healthcare can work with your organization to prescribe customized department specific and healthcare enterprise-wide solutions for managed document services and enterprise document management. Our solutions include on-site and off-site managed services, technical services and support, and customized workflow design and implementation. Our team of dedicated healthcare solutions experts work with your organization to improve healthcare efficiencies, address security initiatives, and discover opportunities to reduce costs.

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