Swedish Medical Center

Enhancing Service to Referring Physicians

DENVER, CO: When planning its transition to PACS, the radiology group at Swedish Medical Center in Englewood, CO, wanted a solution that would enhance its service to referring physicians while keeping its radiologists in charge of the system. The Fuji Synapse PACS installed at Swedish has met these expectations, and enhanced patient care in the process.

Radiologists had been reading cross-sectional exams on digital workstations at Swedish for five years, but wanted to advance to an integrated system that would permit the archiving of cross-sectional and radiographic images with distribution over an ATM network. In making the shift to Enterprise PACS combined with Fuji's computed radiography, the radiologists at Swedish were eager to build upon their strong reputation for subspecialty interpretations. They sought an implementation that would support this strength, while improving the speed of their communication with referring physicians.

The group, Radiology Imaging Associates (RIA), provides radiology services to Swedish Medical Center, and, through a joint venture with HCA, a chain of imaging centers in the Denver area. About 150,000 imaging exams are conducted annually at Swedish.

The Charms of Single-User Interface

A foundational distinction of Synapse is its single-user interface for all workstations; the PACS experience is the same for a neurosurgeon or family practice physician as it is for a radiologist. "This is a clear advantage over all the other PACS I've worked with. With Synapse, the radiologist becomes the expert in terms of helping others use the system efficiently," said Dr. Matthew Fleishman, Medical Director, Department of Radiology at Swedish Medical Center. "If I have a high-powered workstation that's different from the workstation that, say, a pulmonologist has in the ICU, then I can't teach him the tricks I use to best display images or to adjust something in a certain way. We wanted to make sure we didn't foster workstation envy among our referring docs."

With the exception of high-resolution monitors used to read CR exams, the 70 workstations installed throughout Swedish are simple PCs with dual flat-panel monitors. "We made sure to put PACS everywhere a doctor might want to look

Why Fuji?

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Matthew Fleishman, M.D.
Medical Director
Department of Radiology
Swedish Medical Center

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"Not only does the Notes feature provide instantaneous readings to the referring docs, but it also allows a general radiologist who is consulted to review a case to see what the subspecialized radiologist reading was. In our opinion, the use of Notes obviates the need for voice recognition."

Matthew Fleishman, M.D.
Medical Director
Department of Radiology
Swedish Medical Center

Facility Facts

- 150,000 imaging exams
- 368 beds
- 55-member radiology group

PACS Facts

Enterprise PACS
Clustered PACS database
2 DICOM servers
70 dual-display workstations
23 imaging modalities, including Fuji CR Readers and Speed Suite
HCA Meditech RIS, ADT and Reports interface

at an image or consult with a patient. We could do this affordably with the 1K color displays we selected," Fleishman said.

Crucial to the early success of the PACS was its "big bang" implementation. Rather than move into PACS by subspecialty group or modality, the radiologists converted all parts of their practice over the course of a week. This permitted them to immediately reap the financial benefits of reducing film use and having to maintain a file room. A predicted 30% drop in film use grew to almost 80% within six months of the conversion. The former file room is now available for revenue-producing imaging activities or patient care.

Radiology at Swedish Medical Center is highly specialized, with all exams read by subspecialty-trained radiologists. Synapse has enhanced the group's ability to read electronically rather than physically dividing studies for reading. With Synapse's on-demand access, every study is available at any workstation at any time allowing for efficient workflow without complicated exam routing rules.

In addition to going filmless, imaging services at Swedish have also gone paperless with a digital dictation system integrated into Synapse. Pressing the "F8" function key while viewing a case sends the medical records number and accession number from Synapse to the dictation system. Radiologists now read directly off the Synapse worklist, both on-site and remotely, without paper requisitions.

Synapse has accelerated the flow of diagnostic and therapeutic information, enhanced subspecialty practice, and made electronic consultation with referring physicians more effective, all of which has improved patient care, according to Fleishman.

"While these factors can be hard to measure, I'm unconflicted that we've achieved these goals with this project."

Synapse—The Next Generation PACS

Synapse represents the first next-generation PACS developed and supported by a large imaging company. It was designed to meet the challenges presented by today's healthcare industry, and with its open architecture it will also meet the challenges of tomorrow. Synapse is designed around four design cornerstones—On Demand information access, Cascadable™ Architecture, Integrated Web technology and a Consistent User Interface whether a user is working on the Internet or an intranet. Synapse is the Next Generation PACS.

FUJIFILM—Providing the Path to Your All-Digital Future

Fuji's Synapse and Digital X-ray lines comprise the total solution to the challenge of Image Capture, Display and Storage of patient images and information in the healthcare environment. To take the first step on the path to an all-digital future, contact your FUJIFILM representative or visit us at www.fujimed.com for more information on our broad range of imaging and information products.

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