

CASE STUDY: MERCYCARE COMMUNITY PHYSICIANS, IOWA



MercyCare Community Physicians Choose Panasonic KV-S1025C To Handle Huge Workload From 200,000 Annual Patient Visits

The question facing MercyCare Community Physicians (MCCP) in late 2007 was simply this: What was the best way to handle the huge record-processing workload generated by more than 200,000 patient visits a year? This included record capture, storage, filing, cross-referencing, sharing, and making those medical records instantly accessible.

MCCP found the answer with Panasonic's help. MCCP chose to deploy 62 Panasonic KV-S1025C

compact workgroup scanners networked to Sage Software's tightly integrated Practice Management System and IntergyEHR's electronic health records application.

Accuracy, Access and Tons of Documents

MMCP is a for-profit affiliate of the award winning Mercy Medical Center, a non-profit located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. It's more than 85 physicians serve Iowans from 20 community-based facilities

located throughout the Medical Center's service area. Though most of the clinics focus primarily on family practice, two are certified trauma centers and several specialize in such areas as internal medicine, endocrinology, pulmonary care and occupational health.

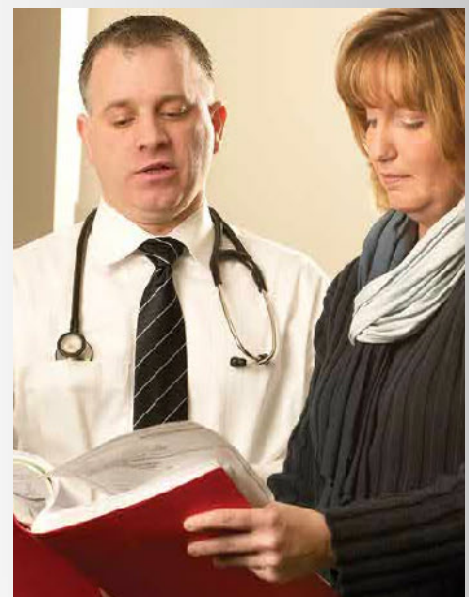
"We needed a system that would make records available on-demand at whatever clinic a patient happened to be in," says MCCP EHR Data Analyst Kevin Hockett. "If a regular patient at one of our rural clinics becomes ill and goes to one of our urgent care centers or has an accident and winds up in the Medical Center ER, doctors have to be able to access his charts without waiting for someone to find a file and feed it into a fax machine."

According to Hockett, MCCP equipped all their offices with Panasonic KV-S1025Cs based on Sage's recommendation and have never found a reason to question that call.

"Every one of them is working great, even the original ones which were installed on the first day of the deployment," he says.

"They're fast, reliable and their image quality is so high we have no problem using them to capture such visually critical documents as colonoscopy scans and

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MercyCare Community Physicians Choose Panasonic Scanners

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moving pen graphs from pre-digital EKG units."

In order to streamline document acquisition and retrieval workflow and maximize ROI on its electronic record-keeping investment, most MCCC clinics use a hub-and-spoke model for arranging their scanners and workstations.

"From our point of view, one of the KV-S1025C's major positives is its combination of high speed, quality output, extreme durability and compact size," Hockett noted. "Generally what we do is position the scanner in the back office next to a PC and use that to serve

workstations in every examining room.

"The Panasonics sit very comfortably next to our nurses without intruding unduly on their work space. Also, being able to fold the front tray up when not in use gives operators some valuable extra inches for maneuvering between desks."

Marching Forward Toward a Wider World

With patient counts rising and the number of annual patient visits at its 20 facilities inching ever closer to the quarter-million mark, MCCC is working on migrating its electronic health records network beyond the four walls of its own buildings.

Already bi-directionally linked to MercyMedical Center's Meditech® Hospital Information System, MCCC is interfacing with other healthcare providers

to expand its database and provide emergency access to any regional doctor or hospital using compatible Sage software.

Achieving this next level of clinical data sharing has "generated a lot of interest" among MCCC and Mercy Medical Center physicians, said Medical Center Vice President and CIO Jeff Cash, who added that the program may become "a significant component of a cost-effective Value Exchange solution for our community."

Planning an Upgrade Path With a Panasonic Destination

Despite the proven ability of their current fleet of KV-S1025C scanners to handle the group's daily, weekly and annual workload, change and growth may also be coming to the hardware component of MCCC's electronic records management system.

"As great as the KV-S1025Cs are," Kevin Hockett admits, "there is one problem. The amount of scanning being done in some of our offices has risen to the point that refilling the unit's (50 sheet) ADF almost constantly impacts productivity, so we're seriously considering moving up to larger scanners.

"As of now, I can't predict what model we'll choose but I can definitely tell you what brand they'll be.

"Panasonic."

