Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center

eHealth Connect® Record Retrieval Service consistently delivers access to external medical records for Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center Abdominal Transplant Department.

Transplant programs rely on the acquisition of external medical records to evaluate potential candidates and determine whether or not that person should be listed. Yet, the typical process for obtaining these records is laborious and often wrought with inefficiencies, leading to a delay in patient presentation at selection committee meetings.

Patients must also receive a series of tests as part of the transplant evaluation process. If some tests were recently completed at another facility, such as an EKG or routine chest X-ray, it is possible to use those results rather than re-test the patient. However, a facility's inability to quickly access prior records can lead to unnecessary duplicate testing and additional provider expense.

From weeks to hours

When Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center's Abdominal Transplant Program first started using eHealth Connect Record Retrieval Service for referred patient medical record retrieval, the results were instantaneous. The average turnaround-time for urgent medical record requests dropped to 24 to 48 hours, while standard, non-urgent requests were received within one week. Prior to implementation of eHealth Connect, receipt of patient records from external health facilities averaged 14 days. eHealth Connect, with eHealth Technologies™ world-class customer service team, expedites the entire process, says the abdominal organ transplant administrator.

This leads to several advantages. "We can see, evaluate and list patients quicker, which makes a difference for that patient's life span and quality of life," she stated. She added that finding out if external patient records do exist and then obtaining them quickly does reduce repeat testing.

"By having all the appropriate patient health data in front of us sooner, we can determine if there is a need for urgency of transplant or other, more appropriate treatment options," she explains. For example, she notes that potential kidney transplant patients will fare better if they have the transplant before dialysis begins. "For these patients, time is of the essence."

Reducing costs is as important as ensuring quality outcomes. She estimates that the Hershey kidney and liver

transplant program saves one FTE support person's salary each year by using eHealth Connect Record Retrieval Service. "We are not only saving money, but we have a more efficient utilization of our staff." According to the administrator, eHealth Connect replaces approximately 16 staff hours each week – time that was spent requesting and tracking down referred patient medical records. Today at Hershey, the service is used for all patients who live at least two hours away or in a different state.

Portal viewer facilitates patient care decisions

Impressed with the success of eHealth Connect, Hershey agreed to become a beta test site for eHealth Technologies' eHealthViewer® ZF. The eHealthViewer ZF is a zero footprint solution that can be launched from any secure browser and enables clinical image analysis and review.

"Many of our clinicians want to view patient images in real-time for comparison with prior films," says the administrator. Imaging studies are often performed

differently to capture specific details on a particular disease. Prospective Liver transplant candidates receive scans that look for the progression of the disease. Since all types of diagnostic images are captured – from MRI to visible light exams using endoscopes – the ability to electronically view any image "is very useful for making patient care decisions." She adds that prior to this service, clinicians may have repeated a test that was not available for review. "eHealthViewer ZF allows for better utilization of testing without duplication."

She states that these tests are available for viewing by the team in selection committee meetings; prior to implementation, only a paper record was available. Once a transplant case is closed, the images and data obtained by eHealth Connect are easily tagged to the rest of the patient's medical file.

"What's amazing about eHealth Technologies is that even after we've exhausted all our efforts to obtain a patient's medical record, we use eHealth Connect and they are able to deliver."

"We are not only saving money, but we have a more efficient utilization of our staff."

Administrator, Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center

eHealth Technologies | 250 Thruway Park Drive | West Henrietta, NY 14586
www.eHealthTechnologies.com | info@eHealthTechnologies.com | 1.877.344.8999 ext. 617

eHealth
TECHNOLOGIES