

# LOS ANGELES COUNTY CHILDREN'S MEDICAL SERVICES

## Healthcare provider turns paper records into digital information



### BUSINESS OVERVIEW

The Los Angeles County Children's Medical Services (CMS) group, in the county's Department of Public Health, provides health care services to children (infant to age 21) in several specified target populations. CMS manages approximately 48,000 active patient cases and comprises nearly 1,000 employees—mostly nurses, physical and occupational therapists, and case managers—in its headquarters and 65 remote locations.

### CHALLENGES

CMS receives on average 5,000 pages of documents via fax and mail each day. This paper onslaught is manually sorted according to complicated criteria—CMS processes more than 100 different kinds of forms from more than 10,000 providers—and is eventually bundled into physical folders or charts. The sorting and filing process is time consuming and error prone—documents can be filed in the wrong charts or lost altogether. The process is also costly, as is the physical storage for the tens of thousands of patient records. For example, filing a single patient record can cost more than \$20; the cost of searching for a misfiled record, \$120. And if a lost or misfiled document is required to meet an e-discovery or regulatory compliance (such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or HIPAA) request, CMS faces losing astronomical amounts in lawsuit awards, government agency-issued penalties, and more. Most important, however, are the ways in which lost or misfiled documents adversely impact patient care and case management.

### EMC SOLUTION

In Phase I of a projected four-phase rollout, CMS and EMC partner Burtsand deployed an automated case management system based on EMC® Captiva® InputAccel® for scanning, indexing, and delivering all case documents received into EMC Documentum®. The system included Scan Plus and Index Plus modules, as well as EMC Documentum Forms Builder and EMC Documentum TaskSpace. Four dedicated HP ProLiant G5 Series machines are running various aspects of the solution.

Burtsand was instrumental in designing the CMS system. "We had a great experience working with Burtsand," says John Eid, director, information systems, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health. "We were especially impressed with their professionalism, knowledge, and focus. They totally committed to this job and really, really came through for us."

## THE WAY IT WORKS

Once a provider faxes in the relevant documents, CMS registers the patient in the case management system, which automatically generates barcodes and applies them to each document depending on its type. Each document is then scanned and recognized by InputAccel, and the system notifies the nurse, therapist, or case manager handling that case that new documents are now available online. According to Eid, "Using Captiva to transform paper medical records into digital content and then storing the information in the Documentum repository has enabled us to create a modern-age digital office for medical records.

Faxes are currently saved for 30 days after the bar-coding process. "But that's just until end users get familiar with the system," says Eid. "Eventually, we'll scan the faxes and shred them." CMS expects every member of its staff to be fully engaged in the new system by January of 2010. Burntsand trained the first few teams who are now spreading the training throughout the CMS organization. "The more tech-savvy users pick it up quickly and really like it," says Eid. "Though, as we expected, we have to work through some resistance from those more comfortable with the old-fashioned way of keeping records."

## ENHANCING PATIENT CARE

The EMC Documentum solution securely stores, and makes immediately retrievable, critical information once only available on paper—enabling caregivers to make timely and accurate clinical decisions. "The number one benefit is definitely accountability," says Eid. "We have audit trails for paper records now, and we're capturing every unique form related to a case in the electronic chart. The bottom line is we're enhancing patient care, and improving case management for our nurses and therapists."

"The return on investment due to storage savings is, all by itself, going to be huge."

John Eid, Director, Information Systems, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health

## REDUCING COSTS, IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY

The new case management system eliminates manual chart filing, retrieval, and archiving. File rooms and resources can be repurposed, and shipping fees are vastly reduced. "The return on investment due to storage savings is, all by itself, going to be huge," says Eid. "That's 48,000 charts we don't have to store."

## COMPLYING WITH REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Current state and federal laws (including HIPAA) mandate that patient information be both confidentially held and quickly accessible. An EMC-based automatic case management system easily fulfills both requirements.

## A FIRST FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY

CMS is the first group in the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health to implement an electronic charts solution—and the first in Los Angeles County to implement an EMC Documentum solution of any kind. It won't be the last: The Board of Supervisors recently named EMC the county's sole provider of enterprise content management solutions.

## WHAT'S NEXT FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY CMS?

In the second half of 2010, CMS will begin scanning in charts that existed prior to implementation. The really exciting stuff will happen in future phases, says Eid, when the entire system will be upgraded with form recognition, a fax server environment, workflow automation, and more.

## SUMMARY

By working with EMC partner Burntsand to develop an EMC Captiva InputAccel solution to electronically capture its incoming medical forms and documents, the Los Angeles County Children's Medical Services (CMS) group became the first in Los Angeles County to implement a successful medical e-chart system.

CMS has improved patient care, streamlined case management, cut costs, boosted productivity, and ensured it can comply with a variety of government regulations. But that's only the beginning. Phase II of a projected four-phase rollout kicks off in the second half of 2010.

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