



St. Peter's Hospital
Albany, NY

Physician Web Portal Gives the Cardiac & Vascular Center at St. Peter's a Distinct Competitive Advantage

Highlights

Images and Data Available Almost Instantaneously. Clinical data and images are accessible throughout the hospital immediately, facilitating robust physician reports—and best-quality care.

Physicians Liberated from Location-based Reporting. As part of St. Peter's enlightened approach to the healthcare enterprise, doctors can access the clinical information they need from any connected location in the hospital or, via the Web, anywhere in the world.

Technological Innovations Support an Intelligent Business Plan. A comprehensive CVIS combined with a physician Web portal make the Cardiac & Vascular Center an attractive place to work, ensuring excellent physicians and a wide referral base.

Nationally recognized for its quality care, the Cardiac & Vascular Center at St. Peter's Hospital in Albany, NY is the only facility in the region honored as a Top 100 Cardiovascular Hospital multiple times. Providing comprehensive cardiovascular services—from diagnosis to surgery to rehabilitation and wellness—the physicians, clinicians and staff at St. Peter's deliver excellence through innovative techniques and advanced technology. A Web portal for physicians is the latest of St. Peter's innovations.

Steve Cameron, Director of Cardiac Services, explains the genesis of the physician portal: "About four or five years ago, we began to think the wave of the future was to have physicians access their information through a single-sign-on, single-portal, single-patient system. We thought this would be a more efficient way to work and would

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Steve Cameron
Director of Cardiac Services
The Cardiac & Vascular Center
St. Peter's Hospital

ultimately improve our marketing.” In fact, improving the way physicians and staff work gives St. Peter’s a distinct competitive advantage.

“We wanted the physician to be able to pull up the image and complete the report from wherever he happened to be. Somewhere else in the hospital, in his office, at home, on a laptop,” says Darvan Durr, CV Systems Analyst. “And we thought the best place to start to put this in place would be with our clinical information system.”

When management and the Cardiology Information Systems team began the portal project, the Cardiac & Vascular Center was already building a comprehensive Cardiovascular Information System (CVIS). They viewed a physician portal as an integral step in their overall plan.

Improving Efficiency with Electronic Physician Reporting

The need for fast, accurate and complete physician documentation was a driving factor in CVIS planning at St. Peter’s. “In the past, our process was: type reports, do transcription, wait for the report to come back and then fax it or mail it. None of the information was connected. It was a completely manual system,” says Steve.

Darvan elaborates, “Frequently the physicians’ offices would want the patient report. So the doctors would have their secretaries call over here to Cardiology and we would generate a report for them. And then we’d send it over via fax. This took up a lot of their time and a lot of our time.”

To improve efficiency, the Cardiac & Vascular Center at St. Peter’s introduced CardioDoc™ physician structured reporting. CardioDoc integrates images and procedural details into electronic patient reports. Physicians can then easily review, complete and sign the reports, eliminating delays associated with transcription, faxing, mailing copies, etc.

Adjusting a Smooth-running CVIS for Web Portal Roll-out

Integrating different applications was critical to a successful CVIS implementation, and introducing the Web portal necessitated intelligent calibration of systems already in place. The IS team worked to ensure that rolling out the portal would not in any way impede what had become a smooth flow of clinical information.

“When we started the portal project,” says Darvan. “We were already using Apollo as our cardiac data repository; Apollo’s our base. And we use CardioDoc; that sits on top of Apollo. Our physician reports needed to be picked up by an interface and sent out in HL7 to other locations—typically to a physician’s office, our EMR and our hospital information system [HIS]. We had the Results Reporting interface. As the physicians complete a report, it goes to an area on a server and that Results Reporting interface constantly polls for results. And it converts the report and then exports it to designated location.” For the portal, the conversion and export of data had to be adjusted.

PHYSICIAN PORTAL AT THE CARDIAC & VASCULAR CENTER ST. PETER’S HOSPITAL

- Saves time for physicians, staff, referring physicians
- Enhances quality of care by making clinical details immediately accessible
- Satisfies physicians – portal is user-friendly and eliminates location-based work
- Widens referral base and increases business
- Strengthens St. Peter’s position in the marketplace

Other changes were simply the result of timing. “We needed to change our PACS viewer, so we upgraded our PACS workstation and replaced ACOM with CardioPACS™ [multi-modality imaging] and a Softlinks web viewer,” Steve notes. “We took our PACS workstations and connected via our network to our long-term archive.”

With new PACS workstations set up, management and the IS team looked carefully at what they could do to improve access and speed image flow. “The full-fledged PACS workstation will pull up all the images. But we didn’t think it was time- or cost-effective for our physicians to have to go to the workstations any time they need to see an image,” Darvan says.

“So on the clinical information side, we took CardioChart™ [Apollo’s Web-based front-end browser] and embedded it into our clinical information system,” Darvan continues. “This means that rather than have physicians going to the full-fledged PACS workstations to access images, we’ve pushed out our Web viewer to designated stations all over the hospital and we have given physicians access to our clinical information system outside the hospital as well. CardioChart will launch the PACS wherever they are.”

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Darvan Durr
Systems Analyst, Cardiac Services
The Cardiac & Vascular Center
St. Peter’s Hospital

Designing a User-friendly Web Portal

Embedding CardioChart has proved useful for the overall user-friendliness of the physician portal. “We designed the portal so that we have one area called Reports Cardiology. When physicians go to that area, CardioChart launches immediately,” Darvan explains. “So for whichever patient record the doctor is viewing, we have drop-downs that show a record of every occurrence for that patient—Cath, Echo, EP, any procedures that patient has had. The beauty of all this is that these are multiple applications but the doctor doesn’t need to come out of the Reports Cardiology well and research each occurrence. They’re all there in the drop-down boxes.”

Reports Cardiology is available throughout the hospital and on the physician portal for maximum access with minimum effort.

Saving Time and Enhancing Patient Care

Making patient information and images available to physicians throughout the hospital and outside the facility has saved physician and staff time, ensuring satisfied physicians and ultimately enhancing patient care.

great applications

BUILDING CARDIOLOGY CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

“Phone calls and secretarial time have been diminished. We also believe quality of care has improved as a result of the portal. People no longer need to test their memory because they can see the report right in front of them when they need it,” says Steve. “Our cardiology information is now dynamic. We offer any report—ECG, Stress, Cath and Echo—right when the physician logs in. And they can get the image at the same time”

“We didn’t have problems with user adoption,” Darvan says. “The doctors loved it and the staff loved it because previously a doctor would tell his staff, ‘I need this. Please call who you need to call and get the information and get a courier and...’ That process was time-consuming for everyone. This makes things so much faster that we haven’t met with any complaints.”

Increasing the Hospital’s Competitive Advantage

Another significant result has been the advantage St. Peter’s now enjoys in a competitive healthcare marketplace. According to Darvan, “Ultimately every application will require being Web-based and user-friendly, and that’s what we’re trying to accomplish for our physician portal, something informative and easy-to-navigate.” Implementing the portal now puts St. Peter’s far ahead of the curve—and its competitors.

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“In general we’ve found our physician portal has been a draw for referral doctors and bringing in new business,” Steve explains. “We want to be the first in our area to develop a local network for cardiology. We hope that we will be the hospital they come to. And our ability to share information is a strength. In fact, our information sharing has extended beyond cardiology to internists and radiologists.”

As the Cardiac & Vascular Center at St. Peter’s continues to develop a user-friendly, Web-enabled, integrated image and information system, they continue to deliver top-quality care—and reap all the benefits that a center of excellence enjoys.

KEY LUMEDX SOLUTIONS AT ST. PETER’S

- Apollo Advance™
Clinical Data Repository
- Apollo Toolkit
- CardioChart™
Web-Enabled Patient Record
- CardioDoc™
Physician Structured Reporting
- CardioManager™
Performance Management System
- CardioPACS™
Multi-Modality Imaging
- Cath Module
- Surgery Module
- Echo Module
- Stress & Resting ECG Module
- Holter Module
- ACC Registry Module
- STS Registry Module

St. Peter's Cardiovascular Physician Portal Workflow

