

Regions Hospital - Connectivity Helps Put Patient Care First

Devices needed to be integrated so that data goes directly into the EHR

Founded in 1957, HealthPartners is the largest consumer-governed non-profit health care organization in Minnesota, providing health care services, health plan financing and administration, research and medical education.

Regions Hospital, part of HealthPartners, is a Level 1 trauma center and teaching hospital that has been serving Minnesota and western Wisconsin for more than 130 years. It is a private hospital providing medical and surgical care with special programs in heart, women's care, cancer, orthopedics, neurology, burn and emergency care.

As part of the Region's ongoing commitment to adopt technology that improves clinician efficiency, patient care and patient safety, the hospital wanted to automate the collection of patient data from medical devices. Devices such as monitors and ventilators needed to be integrated so that data would go directly into Epic, the hospital's electronic health record.

Clinical efficiency

One of the drivers for implementing an automated medical connectivity solution was to improve clinician efficiency. Without connectivity, nurses were tasked with manually charting and transcribing data from various devices every hour (or more frequently) for various patient populations. To put this in perspective, cardiac monitors alone can have as many as 23 data elements that need to be recorded each hour.

And for patients in critical care, this data may need to be documented as often as every one to five minutes. At the same time, the patient may need medication or some other immediate care. In a critical care situation, two nurses may be necessary --one to document and transcribe data every five minutes or less, and the other to administer medication.

Manually transcribing and entering data was not the best use of clinicians' time, so Regions looked for a connectivity solution that could automate that task, improve workflow, reliably deliver accurate patient data into Epic and free up the nurses' time for more one-on-one patient care.

Regions needed a solution that connected its medical devices with Epic. It selected Capsule (www.capsuletech.com) and DataCaptor, a connectivity solution with successful installations at more than 350 health care organizations worldwide.

Initial rollout of DataCaptor included Regions cardiac monitors, and later its ventilators. DataCaptor is now being used in multiple departments at Regions to automate data collection from monitors and ventilators, and to integrate the data into Epic. Departments using the technology include the intensive care units, emergency department, post-anesthesia care unit, same-day surgery unit and recovery areas.

"Using DataCaptor has been instrumental in helping our clinicians put patient care first," said Karen Jones, director of clinical informatics at Regions Hospital. "We can now make patient care our first priority, and know that the necessary vital signs data is waiting there for us with 100 percent accuracy in Epic."

"Capsule's support has been great; the team continues to be responsive to our needs," said Kim LaReau, CIO at Regions Hospital. "We can tell just how important this type of connectivity solution has become to our clinical care teams, both nurses and respiratory therapists. It is a vital part of Regions workflow efficiency."

Regions' goal is to continue to roll out DataCaptor for all patient monitors or bedside devices. According to Jones, "the technology has proven itself to be a time-saver for our nurses and therapists, and it ensures our patients get more one-on-one time with the nurses for more personal care and treatment."

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