



INDUSTRY

Healthcare

CHALLENGE

With 45,000 emergency attendances annually, paper medical records had become complex to manage and store

SOLUTION

Managed scanning and hosting service, enabling instant retrieval of digitised emergency admission records

VALUE

- Faster access to vital clinical information
- Increased speed and quality of patient welfare decision-making
- Improved staff productivity and space utilisation

CASE STUDY

BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

DIGITAL FILES ENHANCE CHILD WELFARE

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Birmingham Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (BCH) is one of the leading paediatric teaching hospitals in the UK and a recognised centre of excellence for children with cancer, cardiac, renal and liver disease.

The hospital creates comprehensive paper-based records - a booklet containing up to 15 pages documenting the circumstances of the medical emergency, patient injuries, test results, treatment and ongoing care plans. These records were being filed in storage boxes and held onsite for six months and then transferred to an Iron Mountain® records management facility for long-term safekeeping.

SIMPLIFYING THE MOVE TO ELECTRONIC PATIENT RECORDS

With the emergency department typically seeing up to 200 patients each day, the records were piling up, occupying valuable space that could have been better used for clinical purposes. Furthermore, with up to 400 patient files stored in each box and up to 100 boxes kept in the storage facility at any time, document retrieval was far from straightforward.

Sue Hobday, Head of Clinical Records and Clinical Coding at BCH, explains: "If a child attends the emergency department more than once, something that often occurs, we need to access their historic

files. Finding the records was time consuming and unproductive. We decided it was time to move to an electronic patient records system."

ENSURING CONTROL AND PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Fortunately, BCH didn't need to look far for a solution. Guided by Iron Mountain document management specialists, it developed a plan for the back-scanning project. "The bonus was that Iron Mountain was already holding some of the records we needed to scan, which would improve the efficiency of the process," adds Sue.

Now, once files are scanned, an advanced optical character recognition system matches the file to the patient's unique hospital number and enables the creation of other metadata fields to complete the record. The files are then uploaded to the Iron Mountain digital records centre for images (DRCI) platform.

Authorised BCH staff are able to access patient files through a secure web-based portal using a patient's name and/or hospital number. For added patient confidentiality, as well as normal access controls, patient records can only be printed from the Iron Mountain DRCI by a strictly controlled group of accredited staff.

“IRON MOUNTAIN OFFERED A COST-EFFECTIVE SOLUTION FOR SCANNING AND STORAGE.”

Sue Hobday
Head of Clinical Records and Clinical Coding Manager
Birmingham Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

CERTIFIED SCANNING

The back scanning project involved around 40,000 patient records, which were all digitised at the Iron Mountain specialist facility at Stone in Staffordshire. The scanning process is certified against the requirements of BS10008, which means that images are of sufficient quality and integrity to be used in a court of law.

“Iron Mountain also provided a scan-on-demand service during the back-scan phase, which was fantastic,” says Sue Hobday. “The team couldn't have been more responsive to individual requests.”

Going forward the plan is for patient records to be stored onsite for between two and four weeks, before being collected by Iron Mountain for scanning, hosting and archiving of the hard copies.

ENHANCING CLINICAL DECISION-MAKING

Clinical teams at the hospital have almost instantaneous online access to patient files for all previous emergency department admissions. The new process will help improve patient care as multiple admissions are far easier to spot. Moreover, in the

event of child protection concerns, records will be available to investigation teams in an instant, enhancing the speed and quality of patient welfare decision-making.

Information security has been improved too. The Iron Mountain process provides a full chain of custody as well as enhanced governance through a complete audit trail of individuals who have viewed or printed patient files via the DRCl.

FREEING-UP SPACE FOR FRONTLINE CARE

The back-scanning project also provided the opportunity for record indexing, so that hard copy files are easier to locate should they ever be needed. And, with a process now in place for the routine ongoing scanning and offsite storage of new patient records, the space previously allocated for archiving can be put to better use.

Sue Hobday sums up: “Iron Mountain has been very supportive and responsive throughout the project. We couldn't have asked for more.”

“IT'S SO MUCH MORE EFFICIENT. GOING FORWARD, OUR STAFF WILL SAVE A GREAT DEAL OF TIME AS THEY'LL NO LONGER NEED TO SEARCH FOR PAPER FILES.”

Sue Hobday
Head of Clinical Records and Clinical Coding Manager
Birmingham Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

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ABOUT IRON MOUNTAIN

Iron Mountain operates in major markets worldwide, serving thousands of customers throughout the UK, Europe, US, Canada, Asia Pacific and Latin America. For more information, visit our website at www.ironmountain.co.uk or at www.ironmountain.ie

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