

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

At Stillwater Medical Center, the **aycan xray-print** solution is producing big cost savings and lots of smiles.

BACKGROUND

Stillwater Medical Center is a 125-bed, non-profit, community hospital located between Tulsa and Oklahoma City. SMC serves the residents of Stillwater, population of 39,000, as well as residents from the surrounding rural communities. In 2003, Stillwater Medical Center transitioned to PACS for CT, MRI, Nuclear Medicine, and Ultrasound. The radiology department transitioned from film/screen images to CR in November 2004. SMC performed approximately 70,000 diagnostic imaging exams last year.

CHALLENGE

Like all healthcare facilities, Stillwater Medical Center faces the challenge of providing superior medical care while keeping associated costs in check. In other words, reducing imaging costs is a continuing priority.

Since SMC is a level 3 trauma hospital, critical patients are often transported to Oklahoma City or Tulsa. Referring facilities and physicians typically request film or some type of hard copy media to view patient images. As a result, after the implementation of PACS, SMC's annual cost for dryview film and laser printer service was \$47,260.00. SMC needed to find a way to give the physicians the images they need in a cost effective manner.

Increasing productivity is another challenge. SMC had been using dry laser printers that could take several minutes to print a complete study. That sometimes meant technicians faced a serious backlog and patients often had to wait for their exams to print. In addition, both of its printers were reaching end of life, their service contracts were expensive, and some parts weren't covered by a service contract.

Finally, there was the issue of physician satisfaction. One example: Stillwater Medical Center's ER doctors like to show their patients images



"It's made a huge difference. Doctors and patients, technicians and administrators – this is a great system."

Shelley McSparrin, Supervisor of X-ray, CT, and MRI, Stillwater Medical Center

to help them understand the extent of their injuries. After PACS was introduced, it was possible to see images on the computer monitors, but physicians found that extremely inconvenient, both for them and their patients.

The only solution available to the ER physicians was the expensive, time-consuming and often wasteful process of printing films. "We'd print films so the ER physician could show their patient the images, then throw the film away," said Shelley McSparrin, Supervisor of X-ray/CT/MRI in SMC Imaging department. "Obviously, we had to find a more efficient, cost effective way to print images".

SOLUTION

In 2004, Shelley McSparrin attended the American Healthcare Radiology Administrators annual conference. At the aycan booth, she saw paper prints with images that just about stopped her in her tracks.

McSparrin went home and did some research. "There are other imaging systems that use paper," she said, "but their prints didn't have the same quality, speed of printing, or inexpensive consumables." She also found that since the aycan solution uses the DICOM 3.0 standard, it could be used to print images directly from each modality in the Imaging department, or directly from PACS.

In addition to being flexible, the aycan solution is fast, there are no recycling issues with the prints as there are with film, and the cost savings



"The quality of the paper images were exceptional," said McSparrin. "I was especially impressed with the quality and detail of the color images produced by the aycan system. Then the aycan staff told me how inexpensive it was to print paper images."

can be extraordinary. Paper prints are also cheaper to mail than film, so additional savings could be made by mailing paper prints to other facilities.

Stillwater Medical Center's administration approved the purchase and installation of an aycan printer in July, 2005. McSparrin was impressed with the aycan team. "aycan is the most organized company I've ever worked with. They sent me a list of pre-installation requirements, contact information, and a worksheet that made it easy for us to adequately prepare for the installation. Furthermore, we had plenty of time to contact and schedule the service engineers from our equipment vendors to be available the day of installation."

RESULTS

Doctors see the aycan solution as a time-saving convenience that also provides extremely high-quality imaging. Technicians appreciate the accelerated workflow and simplified processes in their imaging departments. Patients like having fast, easy access to their information.

"It's made a positive impact in our department," said McSparrin. "We can provide our referring physicians and patients with high quality images in a timely, cost efficient manner. The aycan printer is



"The sales and technical people are intelligent, courteous, and they deliver on everything they promise. The aycan staff always provided us with answers to our questions quickly, and we always dealt with the same people from the beginning to end of the process. I love that."

also easy to operate and is very reliable. We haven't experienced any downtime with this system."

There's no question that the biggest benefit is reduced printing costs. After only six months in operation, McSparrin says the aycan solution has already saved the hospital tens of thousands of dollars, even though they're still printing a few films.

As noted earlier, the SMC imaging department spent \$47,260.00 for film in the 12 months following the implementation of PACS. The projected cost to print the same number of paper images, including consumables and service fees, was \$2,106.65 (based on the estimated number of black/white versus color images, and the sizes of paper used). In other words, the Medical Imaging department alone could save \$45,153.35 per year by printing paper images instead of film.



Then there's the added benefit of working with the professionals at aycan. "I can't say enough about how great everyone at aycan has been," said Shelley McSparrin.

aycan's xray-print solution prints radiological and other medical images on plain paper at near film quality. It fits seamlessly into both traditional and PACS workflows, integrating with hospital databases using the DICOM 3.0 standard. Images can be received from any modality and printed on a certified aycan printer. The aycan xray-print solution makes it possible to share very high quality images while reducing film costs by up to 90%.

For more information on the aycan solution, visit www.xray-print.com or contact us at info@aycan-medical-systems.com.

aycan is a leading provider of plain paper imaging solutions for radiology.

