Western North Carolina Health Network uses "virtual" medical records to share patient data.

Overview
Western North Carolina Health Network Asheville, North Carolina, USA www.wnchn.org
Industry • Healthcare
Services • IBM Global Business Services • IBM e-business Hosting
IBM Business Partner • MEDSEEK, Inc.

—— WNC ——
HEALTH
—— NETWORK ——

"For several years, WNCHN has been exploring the exchange of electronic medical records. IBM and MEDSEEK have finally made it happen, quickly and securely, without replacing our existing record systems."

—Gary Bowers, Executive Director, WNCHN

Western North Carolina Health Network (WNCHN) is a collaboration of hospitals, county health departments and other healthcare providers that supports the delivery of cost-effective, quality health services to the western North Carolina region.

Challenge

The health network was looking for a way to implement its vision—the availability and exchange of patient data anywhere, anytime—to healthcare providers in its 16 hospitals. WNCHN needed a solution that would allow the decentralized creation and retrieval of electronic patient records and enable their exchange among facilities, and one that would integrate with existing health information systems, rather than replacing them.

Solution

WNCHN engaged IBM Global Business Services, IBM e-Business Hosting and MEDSEEK to design and implement an electronic healthcare record (EHR) exchange system. The system, called Data Link, allows authorized clinicians to view a patient's electronic records across all 16 western North Carolina hospital systems. Data Link differs from many EHR exchange systems because it is based on an innovative "virtual" records system that uses the data from hospitals' existing records systems instead of creating a new, centralized system for WNCHN.

Benefits

• Improves patient care by reducing medical errors and unnecessary treatments

• Lowers overall costs through fewer duplicate lab tests, improved data entry and document management, and less human error

• Reduces time to retrieve patient records—from up to 30 minutes to mere seconds, and enhances security of medical records

For more information

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