



ViewPortal® delivers records management lifeline to St. Vincent's University Hospital Emergency Department

Founded in Dublin in 1834, St. Vincent's Hospital is a prestigious academic teaching hospital with 515 in-patient beds and a front-line Emergency Department treating more than 40,000 patients yearly. The hospital's overriding mission is to ensure that it is equipped to provide excellence in healthcare services.

Effective administration of patient records is challenging for any Emergency Department (ED). Timely access to current and historical episode data is paramount, enabling medical staff to research and identify relevant links between episodes, make more rapid diagnoses and achieve hospital response targets.



The problem: a costly, inaccessible paper archive

Prior to January 2002, paper-based medical records relating to all patients entering St. Vincent's ED were stored in twelve, four-drawer filing cabinets. The medical record card alone consisted of a four-page document, and supporting paperwork could add up to 25 pages, so records could not be stored in the filing cabinets for long.

These paper-based records were regularly transferred to storage boxes that remained in an on-site archival room in case they were required for research or legal purposes, or a patient returned in the future with a new episode and historical data was required. To access files an administrator had to find the paper records stored in one of hundreds of storage boxes held in the archival room. This was often a lengthy process, sometimes delaying progress of clinical research, diagnosis and treatment. After two years the paper records were transferred to microfilm for long term archival storage.

Defining criteria: save time, money and space

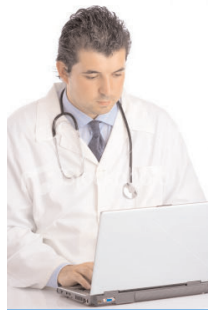
Records management and IT staff from St. Vincent's visited several Emergency Departments in Ireland to learn from their experience and define comprehensive criteria. According to Candy Molloy, Senior Supervisor in St. Vincent's Patients Services, "Primarily we were looking for a fully automated electronic solution that would dramatically increase the efficiency of medical record handling, make data more readily available to clinicians, facilitate research and diagnoses, and minimise patient waiting times. We also needed a system that would be secure, enable us to control access to information and avoid storage of duplicates. Last but definitely not least, we needed to eliminate our paper archive, freeing up considerable high value floor space for other uses."



ViewPortal
Healthcare

Benefits in a nutshell

- **Electronic archival of all medical records** and related information, regardless of size or format.
- **Instantaneous access to all ED documentation** for legal work, research, training, repeat episode assessments, outpatient clinics, social workers, etc.
- **Elimination of costly floor space** previously consumed by filing cabinets and storage boxes.
- **Dramatic reduction in duplicate files** and lost documents.
- **Consistent quality of stored electronic documents** compared to paper-based originals when handled repeatedly.
- **Significant productivity gains** resulting from elimination of manual document searches.
- **Failsafe audit trails** monitoring all storage and retrieval activity.
- **Increased staff morale** due to increased efficiency and enhanced customer service.
- **Capturing up to 1.46 million documents annually** (100 medical records daily, including up to 40 documents per record).
- **Highly scalable solution** to accommodate future growth in patient and document numbers.
- **Secure and controlled document access** by authorised personnel from multiple workstations within the hospital.
- **Improved customer service**, reduced waiting times and more timely assessments for patients who have visited the hospital previously.



“We have found ViewPortal to be fast, reliable and deliver accurate results”

Lloyd Felton, IT Project Analyst Manager at St. Vincent's

Powerful document management from SpectrumITech

St. Vincent's selected a solution consisting of two components: IMS MAXIMS, a specialist ED software solution that seamlessly interfaces with the hospital's existing Patient Administration System (PAS), combined with innovative ViewPortal Healthcare document management from UK-based SpectrumITech. While IMS MAXIMS processes and tracks a variety of hospital procedures including registrations, attendance, assessments, treatment, admissions and discharges, ViewPortal Healthcare provides the vital link that enables paper-based medical records and all other related paper documents to be scanned, indexed, archived and retrieved electronically.

ViewPortal Healthcare offers a powerful range of document management capabilities including the storage and retrieval of multiple document types, sizes and formats. This facility is essential for St. Vincent's. "Every medical record is different and can include a wide range of documents. The medical record is A4, ambulance sheets are A3, an ECG reading is smaller than A4, blood gas readings are similar to credit card slips, pathology results are A5 and GP referral letters vary in size. We needed to capture and handle every relevant document, whatever its size or format, which is easy to do using ViewPortal Healthcare," says Molloy.

Understanding requirements, delivering excellence

SpectrumITech dedicated time and resource to fully understanding St. Vincent's document management requirements. In addition to offering an effective document management solution to meet these needs, the company also recommended a reliable, cost effective hardware solution that would suit anticipated volumes and achieve high quality scanning. One scanner is positioned in ED Reception to allow on-the-fly document capture. A second scanner, also located in ED, is available for dedicated staff to undertake backfile conversion.

Lloyd Felton, IT Project Analyst Manager at St. Vincent's, is confident that SpectrumITech and ViewPortal Healthcare will meet his expectations. "The system is easy to use, from both a scanning and retrieval perspective, it's highly compatible with MAXIMS and training requirements for the ED staff were minimal. We have found ViewPortal Healthcare to be fast, reliable and deliver accurate results," says Felton. "We considered a number of storage management alternatives before opting for an electronic solution. SpectrumITech offered a functionally rich solution that was easily tailored to meet our requirements, is easily scalable to accommodate increased volume in the future and could be delivered within our required timescale".

The results

Today, when someone enters ED, their key demographic data is verified and if they have visited the hospital before their records are retrieved instantaneously using a variety of search criteria such as patient name, number or date of birth. When the patient is seen by an authorised clinician, all previous episodes, test results and correspondence are viewable from one of thirty workstations in the ED.

If the patient has not visited the hospital before, a new medical record number is created. When paper-based documents are added to the medical record they are prepared for scanning, scanned and indexed. If the document displays a barcode ViewPortal Healthcare recognises the Patient ID number and indexes the document automatically. If there is no barcode the scanned document is transferred to a pending folder for verification and manual indexing, which is important to ensure that the scanned document is accurate and complete.

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