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## **Cutting Edge Technology in the Palm of Your Hands, by Rich Manley**

If you see a nurse at Fairfield Medical Center entering information into his or her handheld Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), you can rest assured it's not for the purpose of looking up a phone number.

Utilizing the latest in technology, the Center has incorporated the use of PDAs, into the every day care of its patients. "Technology is supposed to make us more efficient," said Cynthia Pearsall, Vice President–Patient Services. "It's fun to use, and we all like toys. But the bottom line is that people need to spend more time doing what they do professionally. Our tools should help them stay at the bedside and do what they do professionally." To that end, the Center incorporated the use of Palm technology to allow the nurses to enter vital information without using pen and paper.

"There are a couple of reasons to go to the Palm technology from the nurse's point of view. One is that we gather the same data on patients continuously". "Some patients get their vital signs taken every hour, some every four hours, some every eight hours. The same with intake and output data – things that go in, and things that comes out".

The data, when it is tracked with paper and pencil, doesn't create a picture and can be difficult to read.

So by using Palm technology, we can capture and standardize

the data, which means we can ask the computer to do the data summations as well as the graphical flow sheets. It makes the data more easily understood.

"It saves nurses the time and energy from having to create the graphs themselves and makes it much easier for people to read. It's also faster. Instead of carrying around a piece of paper and putting it down on that paper and then taking it to the graph and writing it down, it's one step."

The process is actually quite simple. The nurse takes the PDA with him/her to the patient's bedside and inputs the vital information, such as blood pressure, temperature and various other items. The nurse then syncs the PDA to the network using infrared capabilities, and that information becomes a part of the patient's record.

"Currently, the nurses may have to actually write down the data three or four times," said Rich Manley, Manager of the Systems department and one of the driving forces behind the implementation of the program. "There's an issue of transposed characters. Every time you write 300 characters, the rule of thumb is that you make one mistake on average."

The idea for using PDAs in this way came out of a meeting between Pearsall and Manley. At the time, both recognized the need to build a better mousetrap.

"We were both frustrated with how we currently collect vital signs, intake and output, and the number of people who need to touch that information before it gets to the chart".

"Some physicians want that information at the bedside, some physicians want it in the chart. It's very frustrating for physicians making their rounds not to have the information they need to make the decisions they need to make, so we spend a lot of time in this organization meeting individual physician's needs, which is a good thing. But it's also labor intensive, and prone to mistakes".

"We knew we had to get a point of care device to the bedside, so we reviewed Palm technology as a introductory methodology for the Clinical Informatic's needs of the organization. Through the creative talents of the Information Systems staff, patient lists and data screens (designed to replicate the same elements and workflow of the paper chart) were integrated into the PDA. Once the caregiver collects their patient's data, the PDA is synchronized to the network, allowing data to download into the patients record. Web-browser technology was deployed to all networked PC's via an Intranet. The Web browser - proxy server integrates with the Hospital Information System to allow viewing, and chart copy printing of the Vitals flow sheets, and Intake and Output reports.

Currently, all patient care units utilize this application for entering data and printing reports, except ICU where only Intake and Output results are

entered into the patient's records. Vitals data from the monitors will be directly interfaced into the Clinical Information System.

#### **Member Spot Light:**

**Darby K. Dennis, RN, MS, Director, Clinical Information Systems, St. Rita's Medical Center, Lima, Ohio.**

Darby has been very active in the chapter for a number of years. Darby just completed serving the past year as the Vice President and has recently begun serving as the Chapter President as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004.

Darby has 27 years experience in healthcare in a variety of settings and roles including implementation and project management for clinical systems in a single hospital setting, member of the Re-engineering Team and Organizational Analysis as Internal Consultant, Outcomes Research Associate for an academic medical center's general surgery department, and a variety of management, teaching and clinical positions.

#### **Success Story: CSOHIMSS Spring Conference Biggest Ever!!!**

This past June 4<sup>th</sup>, the CSOHIMSS Chapter held their semi-annual regional conference in Columbus, Ohio. The theme of this conference was Improving Healthcare Quality Through Technology.

With 11 speakers, 6 sessions, 3 vendor sponsors and over 80 attendees, the CSOHIMSS Spring Conference 2004 was a great success, and the biggest ever.

Almost half of all attendees took to the time to complete the

quality survey and results show a very high overall approval rating of 87%.

The biggest feature that received the most positive feedback was the panel discussion presented by Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. Winning the prestigious 2004 HIMSS Davies Award, Children's partnered with CSOHIMSS to put on a panel discussion.

Without question, most attendees were very pleased with the discussion and content, so much so, that it exceeded the allotted time. It could have easily gone on for another hour, which prompts our chapter to consider them again for future speaking engagements.

All in all, the attendance and the positive feedback revealed in the surveys shows not only how important of a role technology plays in the quality of healthcare delivery, but also that our colleagues in the industry are well aware of this and are taking the proactive steps of leadership examples.

#### **Spring 2004 Scholarship Award Winner: Kristen Fortner**

Kristen is currently working on her Master's Degree in Health Service Administration at Xavier University in Cincinnati.

In addition, Kristen is both a student member of CSOHIMSS, and of ACHE, as well as a member Delta Sigma Pi.

Currently, Kristen is seeking a residency to begin in January 2005 that will provide her with the hands-on experience needed to become a manager in a healthcare organization, while assisting the organization with various projects.

## Chapter Business, Activities and Participation:

### Calendar of Events:

Event	Date & Time	Location	Registration
<b>Focus Session on HIPAA Security Implementation</b>	August 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2004 9:00am to Noon	Riverside Health Center, Rm RHC A&B, 500 Thomas Lane, Columbus	FREE!!!! Call: 512-340-9991

### Open Positions:

Currently, the CSOHIMSS Chapter has several vacant positions on the Board of Directors. We are seeking any members of the CSOHIMSS Chapter to volunteer their services if they would be interested in filling any positions. The current open positions are:

- Telecommunications Liaison
- Academic Liaison
- Information Systems Liaison
- Membership

Active participation has its advantages! Members who participate in this capacity earn valuable HIMSS points which are necessary for advancement to Senior Member or Fellow status within HIMSS.

In addition, you will be plugged into what is going on at the chapter level and have an influential voice in what activities and conferences our chapter sponsors.

If you are interested in any of these positions or if you are interested in volunteering in any other capacity, please contact Darby Dennis, Chapter President, for more information.

### Open Request to Members:

The CSOHIMSS Chapter has an open request to all members for any subject or issue that they would like to see the chapter address.

Addressing the issue could be in the form of a feature article or a conference

presentation (either locally or nationally).

All suggestions welcome. Please consider those that are current, relevant and of pressing concern to the contemporary healthcare environment.

Presentation suggestions should be forwarded to Darby Dennis. Article suggestions should be forwarded to Sean McPhillips.

### Academic Scholarships:

CSOHIMSS has modified the scholarship program to be a single \$1000 award once a year, awarded in the Spring.

The CSOHIMSS Board of Directors unanimously agreed to the program at the Board Retreat on June 6, 2003.

In addition to the scholarship awards, winning applicants will receive a complimentary one-year membership in National HIMSS as well as membership in the CSOHIMSS Chapter.

If you know anyone who may be interested in applying for this scholarship, please contact Darby Dennis for more information.

### Chapter Sponsorship:

As mentioned in last quarter's newsletter, the Board of Directors for the Central and Southern Ohio Chapter of HIMSS have simplified the Chapter Sponsorship to better serve the membership.

The new pricing structure and benefits are as follow:

**Chapter Sponsor:** \$250 for 6 months/\$500 for a full year.

Company name and logo will appear on the Chapter Website and will also be considered a sponsor of all chapter events for the term of their sponsorship. Annual sponsorship terms begin July 1<sup>st</sup> and end the following June 30<sup>th</sup>. Any company that wishes to sponsor at some point during a term, the sponsorship fee will be prorated accordingly.

**Event Sponsor:** For those organizations interested in sponsoring a single event, they may do so for a fee of \$150. This will cover the cost of one attendee registration and provide the sponsor with a forum to interact with attendees in a sales environment.

If your company is interested in becoming a Chapter Sponsor or if you have any suggestions as to how companies may benefit better from sponsorship.

### Member Feedback:

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!

This section posts questions and comments from chapter members. If you have a comment or question, send them to Sean McPhillips at [newsletter@csohimss.org](mailto:newsletter@csohimss.org) for consideration.