



Summary

CUSTOMER

Hunterdon Healthcare

CHALLENGES

Unify inpatient and outpatient data despite different patient identifiers

OUTCOME


Matching inpatient and outpatient records with HealthShare Patient Index enabled a single view of patient data, joint ventures with other healthcare organizations, and better information flow

Hunterdon Healthcare + InterSystems

At Hunterdon Healthcare, HealthShare Patient Index Helps Deliver a Unified View of Patient Care

Like other healthcare organizations running on best-of-breed IT systems, Hunterdon Healthcare, a 178-bed teaching hospital in central New Jersey, ran into some issues. The IT systems include an electronic medical record (EMR) and about 100 other applications. Hunterdon uses an integration engine and a unique patient identifier from the hospital registration application to enable data sharing among inpatient systems, and to keep them synchronized. However, the health system's 60-plus owned and affiliated ambulatory facilities use a different clinical EMR with different patient identifiers.

Through time, changes in contact information, missing information, spelling errors, or other data mishaps, it can be difficult to match inpatient and outpatient records to the same patient. It's a challenge that can have a costly impact on care and IT staff. At Hunterdon, Robin Deal, manager of data integration, and Jagdish Patel, manager, HIE and connectivity, turned to InterSystems for a solution.



**ONE HOSPITAL FOUND
DUPLICATES IN 22
PERCENT OF ALL
PATIENT RECORDS.
THE COST OF
CORRECTIONS WAS
\$96 PER DUPLICATE.¹**

HealthShare Patient Index Speeds Progress on Key Initiatives

The patient identifier mismatch was slowing Hunterdon's progress on several fronts, including:

- Providing a complete view of inpatient and outpatient data with a single logon
- Establishing a radiology imaging center with another healthcare system
- Ensuring that emergency department (ED) and inpatient clinicians are alerted to outpatient pain management history

Hunterdon chose InterSystems HealthShare Patient Index enterprise master patient index (EMPI) software to make these and other initiatives possible.

Automated Patient Matching and a Single View of Patient Data

Hunterdon clinicians and other staff were satisfied with the EMR and other IT systems they already used. There was no push, or funding, to replace these systems with a single "do it all" EMR for inpatient and outpatient care. Instead, Hunterdon used HealthShare Patient Index to automate the process of identifying the same patient in inpatient and outpatient records. Once matched, the records could become part of Hunterdon's longitudinal HealthShare Unified Care Record. Now, when a clinician using the inpatient EMR needs to see patient data from the ambulatory systems, or outpatient clinicians need inpatient data, a single click displays a carefully organized display of the complete record. "Physicians in the hospital welcomed the change," said Patel. "When a patient from our ambulatory Center for Advanced Pain Management is admitted, for example, it's easier for hospital physicians to get the complete picture of the patient's medication history."

Smoothing the Path for Joint Ventures

When Hunterdon's senior management team established a joint venture to create a shared radiology imaging center with another healthcare system, Hunterdon again turned to HealthShare Patient Index as the enabler. "We had to pass orders and scheduling messages back and forth between their EMR and our scheduling and ambulatory systems," said Deal. "Handling the different patient identifiers and matching patients wouldn't have been possible for us without HealthShare Patient Index." Hunterdon patients now take advantage of the center's radiology services with images and results data flowing smoothly between the two organizations and into their respective patient records.

¹Hidden Costs of Duplicate Patient Records. Healthcare Financial Management Association, <https://www.hfma.org/topics/article/60322.html>.

Better Patient Information Flow Through Alerts

Hunterdon leverages HealthShare Patient Index and another product, HealthShare Unified Care Record, to deliver risk alerts between NextGen – the ambulatory EMR – and inpatient systems. For example, a patient's participation in a pain management program at Hunterdon's outpatient Center for Advanced Pain Management is documented in NextGen. HealthShare Patient Index monitors NextGen for this indicator. When it's created, HealthShare Patient Index determines whether the same patient exists in the inpatient EMR. If so, a pain management alert is sent to the inpatient EMR, ready for use when the patient is next admitted. This alert also is passed to the ED system, so ED clinicians are aware of the patient's status. ED clinicians can then use HealthShare to document current medications, opioid use, or pain management program enrollment. "What we've done here gives patients more confidence in their providers and ensures that pain is managed inside and outside the hospital in the best way for each individual," said Patel.

A Community Healthcare System with Major Medical Center Capabilities

"As a community healthcare system and teaching hospital, our need for IT services is high," said Deal. Relying on HealthShare Patient Index and other HealthShare solutions has enabled Hunterdon to meet these needs and deliver the big medical center level of care that patients expect, without the big medical center levels of staff and spending. "We have so much to do, and limited resources to do it," noted Patel. "HealthShare Patient Index has played a critical role in unifying our patient information, without us having to rip out and replace multiple IT systems."

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*Robin Deal, Manager
of Data Integration,
Hunterdon Healthcare*

