

## **St Luke's Regional Medical Center Combines Electronic Point of Care and Wireless to Automate State-Wide Home Care and Hospice Services**

*Idaho-based health system adopts Thornberry's clinical NDoc® software and uses wireless and VPN to connect hospital-based home care and hospice locations in Boise, McCall and Twin Falls*

LANCASTER, PA, September 11, 2007 – Thornberry Ltd, a developer and marketer of leading-edge management information systems for the home healthcare and hospice industry was chosen by Idaho-based St Luke's Regional Medical Center to implement its NDoc clinical management system in multiple hospital locations.

According to Mary Lou Long, Director of Community Services for St Luke's in Boise, the Idaho health system is unique among Home Care/Hospice providers in the community, with its use of wireless to connect clinicians to their health system network through a secure virtual private network (VPN).

“Combining electronic patient charting using NDoc with the ability to wirelessly fax or transmit that that information from the clinician's tablet is light years ahead of our previous paper system.

“Now as soon as they've completed charting, nurses can fax patient information from their tablets, via St Luke's network, and have it print out and be filed in a patient file at the Skilled Nursing Facility while they're still there, or they can send patient information and print to any number of stations in the hospital in advance of a patient being admitted to the Emergency Department or prior to a physician appointment for example. They don't have to come into the office and everyone has the most up-to-date information at their fingertips, at the same time.”

The new system, implemented on August 1, is not only expected to advance St Luke's ability to deliver safe, consistent care, says Mary Lou Long, but it is already pointing to significant savings in staff time spent copying and driving back and forth to the office to deliver and collect paperwork.

“We were so bogged down by the paper system that we were not able to make more than four RN visits a day. To make five or six visits and meet the timelines for documentation we were incurring large expense, both financial and emotional, because of overtime.”

According to Ms. Long, already after just six weeks, staff are 90% confident in the software. Field staff sync their tablet PCs once in the morning and once each evening using Verizon wireless to access St Luke's VPN to send and receive data, or access the health system's Intranet.

The decision to choose NDoc was relatively straightforward, she said. Magic Valley Medical Center based in Twin Falls began using Thornberry's NDoc solution for Home

Care in August 2003, before being acquired by St Luke's. And in January 2007, they implemented NDoc for Hospice. The fact that Magic Valley was very happy with the product and praised Thornberry for its customer support, went a long way in helping make their decision, said Mary Lou Long.

“Also the fact that Thornberry focuses solely on the Home Care Hospice business was important to us. We wanted a consistent solution for all our sites and even though Twin Falls was originally not a wireless implementation, they were able to help prepare the rest of our staff prior to implementation.”

St Luke's is also in the process of implementing an integrated billing solution from Thornberry technology partner Homecare Accounting Solutions.

“We see this new system as preparing St Luke's for the future where we will be able to support new patient tools like physician portals and realize the real potential of Electronic Medical Records for Home Care/Hospice,” said Mary Lou Long.

## **TRANSCRIBE**

Aug 1 implementation – six weeks later doing very well.. exception of McCall...

Area covered commonly referred to as treasure valley – 5 towns – close to 450,000 people

HC went from almost no technology (because we're off site- our staff had no access to desktops even (some have their own at home) went from a laborious paper system to way out there tech.

Even more than our own IT dept had handled. This was very different – I think that excited them.

Got advice from an ambulatory care supervisor(?) who had experienced an implementation of clinical system... In week four it will go to hell – staff are tired, they want to be able to know it by now, records will be “lost”, but you know you have to keep going. “ And that’s exactly what happened!!

Growth of community has fueled their growth plus hospice has become better understood by the community and they have focused on patients in Skilled Nursing Facilities and Assisted Living facilities for Hospice.

“We made a decision to really improve our Hospice facility, and to go into these facilities... we changed out whole model put our aides and nurses into these facilities and have staff just for these ...

Magic Valley /Twin Falls – very instrumental/influential in decision to adopt NDoc.

Had a couple if staff come down before implementation .. been helpful with some things following implementation, although not run into same glitches (with wireless and vpn..) much smaller than they are – and not wirelss.. added Hopisce to Magic Valley in Jan 2007. Been using NDoc since Aug 2003...

Focused for three months prior to implementation – Cultural Adaptive Model... regular meetings – focused on staff fears, expectations, what going to give up/what going to get etc.. Magic valley was helpful with this – able to talk it through, reassure etc.

Implementation – did it in 90 days, would have liked another month – we really weren't prepared in McCall..