

Washington Hospital Center Washington, D.C.

- One of the busiest Trauma and Burn Centers in the country
- 270,000 radiology reports annually

The Situation

- Report turnaround time averaged 38-42 hours.
- Radiologists often personally called results in to referring clinicians, resulting in many interruptions and inefficiencies.

The Solution

- Perform extensive due diligence with multi-disciplinary committee to evaluate speech recognition solutions.
- MedQuist's SpeechQ for Radiology met and exceeded all selection criteria.

The Result

- 90 percent of all reports are immediately signed off by radiologist.
- Radiology named #1 department in hospital-wide survey.

The Benefits

- Return on investment was achieved in less than one year.
- Radiologists experience significantly fewer interruptions.

Prominent East Coast Hospital and Trauma Center Realizes Significant Cost Savings

Washington Hospital Center (WHC), located in the heart of Washington, D.C., is one of the country's busiest hospitals and Emergency Department (ED) trauma centers. Home to MedSTAR, a nationally recognized shock-trauma treatment and transport facility, as well as the region's Adult Burn Center, WHC is consistently ranked among the nation's top hospitals as measured by numerous metrics and organizations, including *U.S. News & World Report* and Thomson Top 100 Hospitals.

The Radiologists' World Is Their Reports

Because of WHC's location and designation as a Level One Trauma Center, many of the patients require immediate diagnostic testing, radiology services and STAT results. Before the radiology department started using SpeechQ for Radiology's™ speech recognition technology in late January 2007, the traditional dictation and transcription workflow resulted in a turnaround time (TAT) that averaged between 38-42 hours. This meant radiologists had to personally call results in to referring clinicians, resulting in many interruptions and inefficiencies.

As Director of Radiology Gayle Thompson Smillie, CRA, RT, states, "The radiologists' world is their reports. Despite having five in-house medical transcriptionists (MTs), as well as outsourcing overflow transcription to an external company, we just could not keep up with the reporting process. This was a source of frustration for everyone, including the radiologists and those clinicians waiting for patient diagnostic information."

As with many other hospital radiology departments, WHC continues to experience an annual increase in the number of imaging procedures performed. In the past year alone, the radiology department performed 270,000 exams. Because of these volumes, WHC never seemed to be able to catch up or reduce their TAT, and Smillie was paying more than \$450,000 per year for the outsourced transcription service.

Technology Becomes the Answer

Initially, when Smillie and the radiologists considered how to improve their reporting TAT, there was some reluctance to even consider speech recognition. Some of the radiologists had used older, less sophisticated speech recognition solutions at other hospitals and were not willing to implement those systems at WHC. Other radiologists were concerned that speech recognition would significantly slow down their reporting process or would not work effectively for them.

When Smillie formed a committee to evaluate speech recognition, she included at least one person from each area that would be affected, including the RIS administrator, the PACS administrator, a transcriptionist, a senior level technologist, and several radiologists. In fact, one of the radiologists on the committee initially did not want speech recognition, so the feeling was if he agreed to implement the selected solution, then the other radiologists would feel comfortable with the decision.

WHC radiologists realize that using SpeechQ for Radiology is right for the patients, right for the hospital, and improves patient care.

When compared to other solutions, SpeechQ for Radiology provides much more accurate results, more flexibility, and significantly better implementation, training and support.

**Gayle Thompson Smillie, CRA, RT,
Director of Radiology**

After a detailed due diligence process, the WHC selection committee agreed that SpeechQ was the ideal solution. Among the key factors were:

- The ability to easily integrate SpeechQ within the hospital's RIS and PACS; and
- MedQuist's experienced in-house implementation team and support organization.

James Jelinek, MD, Chairman of Radiology, says three things drove his decision towards MedQuist:

1. Versatility;
2. Flexibility to self-edit or use transcriptionists as correctionists; and
3. The continuous learning feature of SpeechQ.

Lessons Learned

As Smillie learned from this experience, installing speech recognition is disruptive. However, with appropriate planning and a strong implementation team from the hospital and MedQuist, problems were quickly identified, and solutions were discussed and put into practice.

Smillie took a unique approach by including a radiologist as a member of the hospital's implementation team. This radiologist attended meetings and training sessions, including "train-the-trainer" classes at MedQuist's Learning Center in Atlanta, Ga. As a result, the "go-live" went smoothly, and everyone involved with the project understood their roles and responsibilities.

Another decision that Smillie and the implementation team made was if a speech-recognized report had any errors, the report was routed to an editor for correction. Since SpeechQ learns from errors corrected by either the physician or the editor, this was a great way for SpeechQ to "adapt," or learn and update the physicians' voice files. After a few short weeks, the system was working so well that most reports were immediately signed by the physician. Today, the editors review about 10 percent of the reports, and most of those are complex interventional or trauma cases.

Outstanding Results

Only six months after implementing SpeechQ for Radiology, WHC and the radiologists have fully embraced speech recognition technology and realized many significant benefits. Recently, a hospital-wide survey resulted in the radiology department being ranked as the #1 department in the entire facility. According to Smillie, "This satisfaction survey was very important to the radiologists and radiology department staff, and validated that we are truly meeting our responsibility to our patients, other hospital personnel and our medical staff."

Among the metrics that Smillie has measured since SpeechQ has been implemented are:

- 90 percent of all reports are immediately dictated and signed, so TAT has been significantly reduced.
- The department no longer needs to outsource any transcription, resulting in an immediate cost reduction of \$450,000 per year.
- WHC achieved a return on investment in less than one year.
- The five in-house transcriptionists at WHC became editors, and even with one recently leaving the department, the four remaining editors can easily keep up with their workload.



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