Saying Goodbye to Paper:
The iPad Advantage for Healthcare
From patient intake to physician diagnosis to final discharge, paperwork maintains a constant presence in every phase of the healthcare process. But given its inherent inefficiencies, paper causes problems from both the healthcare perspective and the patient perspective. Given today’s digital society, the question arises: can paper be discarded? And, if it can be eliminated in the process, what advantages might that bring to the hospital system?

A Paper Logjam

Paperwork clogs the hospital system in many different ways. For instance, there is the purely physical nature of paper. In many hospitals, employees wheel a cart from room to room with a laptop and scanner, scanning endless forms so that the data enters the Enterprise Content Management system (ECM). These carts often get in the way, creating a physical and emotional barrier between patient and caregiver.

Then there is the “grunt work” that paperwork creates. Consider the path a patient form might take. First, the patient completes the form. A hospital employee then checks the form, returning it to the patient if there are any omissions. The finished form must be scanned. A barcode label may need to be assigned. If any data on the form needs to be searchable and accessible, it will have to be entered manually into the Electronic Medical Record system (EMR). Finally, the form may be checked as part of a quality control procedure to verify that it has been indexed properly.

Patients, of course, find paperwork frustrating. Clipboards with multiple forms can be daunting and confusing, leaving patients uncertain about what information they need to fill out. That frustration mounts if patients are required to complete the same forms more than once to get the treatment they need. For example, they may be required to provide their medical history in several different departments or clinics within a large hospital.
Finally, there is the fact that scanned images are static in nature. The data they contain cannot be searched, accessed, or manipulated. That immobility is completely at variance with the whole tone of technology today, where data is raw material to be analyzed and leveraged to meet defined objectives.

The physicality of paper, the manual processes it necessitates, the patient frustration it causes, and the inflexibility it represents all combine to create a paper logjam blocking the efficient flow of work in the healthcare setting.

$1.34
With many hospitals seeing hundreds of thousands of patients per year, forms printing, scanning, and indexing adds an estimated $1.34 per page.

Enter the iPad

Now, consider an alternative: replacing paperwork with an iPad-specific healthcare application that would allow all forms to be completed on a mobile device that is nearly universally familiar and has revolutionized the simplicity of how people interact with technology.

Why the iPad? When Apple developed the iPad, they did so with the end user in mind. They created a piece of technology that is basically age- and understanding-agnostic. That is critical for the healthcare environment, where the age-50+ population is growing. Hand an elderly patient an iPad, and they can complete the healthcare form that appears on it without technical difficulty. Similarly, hospital personnel require only minimal training to use an iPad-based application. It is a truly intuitive tool.

Bottomline Technologies’ Healthcare eSignature Solution

- Capture data once, deliver it anywhere
- Eliminate scanning and data entry, reducing paper and administrative costs
- Transmit data via auto-delivery to content management systems
- Employ validation rules to ensure all forms are 100% complete
- Speed bedside registration and deliver care in offline mode
- Use barcode-packet retrieval to scan patient wristbands with an iPad and instantly retrieve the correct pre-filled forms packet
- Maximize patient confidence and engagement
- Improve staff satisfaction with reduced administrative burdens
- Complete the patient record more quickly and easily
- Improve communication and patient safety throughout the organization
Experiencing Digital Value

Moving from paper to virtual forms via an iPad-based application has positive ramifications throughout the healthcare system. Consider these top six value-adds:

1. **Simplicity**
   - Value starts at the very beginning: with a drag-and-drop method of entering forms that automatically optimizes each form for digital input. Hospitals have innumerable forms. If each form required coding to enter it into the application, the task would be monumental. But drag-and-drop simplicity makes deployment straightforward and swift. Plus, by removing cumbersome coding, forms can be edited, managed, and controlled by business users without placing a burden on IT.

2. **Automation**
   - Removing paperwork and automating the forms process has immediate positive effects on hospital personnel and processes:
     - Hospital staff are freed up for more strategic roles as scanning, barcoding, and data entry are made obsolete
     - Manual data entry errors are eliminated
     - The correct forms for each patient are always immediately available and can be produced in more than one language if necessary
     - Patient data is instantly accessible – there is no delay for scanning and entry into backend systems
     - Hospital personnel are better enabled to engage with the patients at the point of care
     - Storage of paper documents is eliminated, along with risks associated with lost or stolen files

3. **Standardization**
   - Online forms simplify standardization of document naming conventions, with no coding or programming required. Such standardization then allows the forms to map correctly up to the EMR, creating a truly efficient hyperlink to all content.

4. **Compliance**
   - Healthcare forms must be completed in full since the data they contain carries financial and legal implications. On the financial side, the revenue cycle starts with the patient filling out the appropriate forms. On the legal side, there are often consents that have to be obtained which may have to be produced if a liability issue arises.

   An iPad-based healthcare form makes such compliance simple. Areas requiring patient and staff input are color-coded. Omissions are automatically flagged. Patients don’t have to wonder if they “got it all,” nor do hospital staff need to manually check forms for completeness. The application itself notes when the form is finished.

5. **Satisfaction**
   - An iPad application for healthcare forms increases satisfaction for all stakeholders. Hospital personnel can use the application with minimal training due to the intuitive nature of the iPad. Once the application is deployed, they can access any form and capture any consent on the spot. The patient experience is enhanced by making form completion easier and more straightforward. Patient data is then instantly accessible from any location and by any person in the hospital. With less time spent on admitting, staff members have more quality time to dedicate to patients.

6. **Cost Savings**
   - In addition to satisfaction, an iPad healthcare application generates savings for the hospital system. These savings come from many sources:
     - The automation of manual tasks
     - The elimination of data entry errors
     - Increased staff productivity
     - The ability to process patient information more quickly
     - Streamlining the flow of data through the hospital system
     - Enhanced compliance and security
     - The empowering of business users to perform tasks formerly requiring IT input

   The more a hospital system uses the iPad application functionality, the greater the return on investment they experience.
The iPad Advantage

Hospitals generate an almost unfathomable amount of data, so any solution that streamlines the generation, transmission, and accessibility of that data brings significant benefit to the entire system. Removing paper from the data flow and replacing it with an iPad application does exactly that, beginning with the moment the iPad is handed to a patient.

And the iPad itself, coupled with a consumer-focused application, makes the transition from paper to virtual forms easy. Deployment, training, and implementation are simple and straightforward. Hospitals can begin to reap the benefits of the iPad advantage from day one.

Paper has played a vital role in hospitals for centuries. But now, paper forms can be retired with honor. It’s time for online healthcare forms to take center stage.

About Bottomline Technologies

Bottomline Technologies powers mission-critical business transactions. We help our customers optimize financially-oriented operations and build deeper customer and partner relationships by providing a trusted and easy-to-use set of cloud-based digital banking, fraud prevention, payment, financial document, insurance, and healthcare solutions. Over 10,000 corporations, financial institutions, and banks benefit from Bottomline solutions. Headquartered in the United States, Bottomline also maintains offices in Europe and Asia-Pacific. For more information, visit www.bottomline.com.

To learn more about eSignature & eCapture solutions, watch this informative video or contact:

Phone: 800.472.1321
Email: info@bottomline.com