

CASE STUDY

DUBUIS HEALTH SYSTEM / ACCELERATING ADMISSIONS, BOOSTING PRODUCTIVITY



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Quick Facts

Name: Dubuis Health System

Focus: Long term acute care

Employees: More than 1,200

Number of facilities: 13

Integration: McKesson, planning a future implementation of Meditech

Dubuis Health System consists of 15 long term acute care facilities in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri and Georgia. To provide the highest quality care and support for patients, Dubuis employs over 1,200 associates and works with physicians of all specialties related to long term acute care. Dubuis is proud to provide a work environment supporting excellence in the healthcare that the organization provides to patients, families and the communities in which its staff serves.

With locations in five states, Dubuis had complex forms management needs that it relied on a third party vendor to meet. Requests for pre-printed forms were sent to the vendor, which delivered a certain quantity and retained the rest of the order for when the Dubuis facilities needed it. This ordering process led to some costly challenges. “To get the best price on forms we had to print a lot, but as we run small facilities it could take us years to use them,” says Cheryl Davis, IT director at Dubuis. “The information required on our documents changes often, so we regularly disposed of large amounts of forms.”

When they needed labels for patient-related forms, Dubuis associates pulled up the patient’s record in the HIS and used the information to print a sheet of labels. They then affixed them one by one on the patient’s forms – a time-consuming and laborious process.

Davis and her colleagues realized that paper-based processes were driving up costs, wasting paper and inhibiting productivity, so they began a search for a forms management system. “Our HIS vendor recommended a forms automation vendor but their system was too expensive,” Davis says. “We needed a solution with a low up-front cost and a low cost of ownership, and that’s what Access offered.”

Saving Time and Paper

Dubuis deployed Access’s Patient Flow System (PFS) and e-Forms Repository (EFR) at multiple sites. This comprehensive solution eliminated the cost of using the forms vendor and of disposing of unused forms, as a precise amount of documents are now requested, generated and managed in-house in a secure electronic environment. “Access’s e-Forms Repository enables us to print forms as needed, and we no longer have to print labels and waste time sticking them on each form,” Davis says. “We’ve also cut down on wasted paper stock.”





The Business Problems

Using an external forms vendor is expensive and large amounts of forms are often thrown away as stock becomes outdated.

Employees spend too much time on manual tasks relating to patient-focused and payroll documents.

Requirements set by physicians and a medical executive committee led to costly forms changes and delayed delivery of new forms.

Sharing forms information between multiple facilities is difficult.

The Solutions

Managing forms electronically with the Access e-Forms Repository enabled Dubuis to eliminate external printing costs and forms wastage.

Automation of forms processing helped Dubuis avoid an additional hire in payroll and allows existing staff to focus on key responsibilities.

Forms are easily customized without expense in the Access system.

Staff can share information between facilities in real time.

Prior to implementing its Access solution, Dubuis admissions staff printed individual forms in multiple print runs for each patient, and then manually prepared the admissions packet. EFR provides a more efficient alternative. “Access designed a customized admissions packet for us, so with a single click we can print all the documents required to register and admit a patient,” says Kar Chong, clinical systems manager at Dubuis. “This saves staff time and speeds admissions.”

When relying on hard copies, business office associates in Dubuis’s headquarters in Houston didn’t know when a patient was admitted, as they had to wait for forms to be faxed over from the facility. Now, when personnel print admissions forms at a nurses’ station (indicating that a patient has been placed in a bed), the face sheets the business office needs print concurrently at company HQ, eliminating delays and the hassle of staff faxing documents. “Access’s solution enables us to share information across departments and facilities far more easily than when we used paper forms,” Davis says.

Improving Physician Satisfaction

One of the challenges Dubuis faces with forms is the need to customize forms for each of its locations. Previously, there were two alternatives – just use one set of forms for all the facilities or submit a complex and costly order to the forms vendor. With Access, this process has changed for the better. “Access’s forms designer makes it easy to add logos and other individual branding elements for our various locations,” Davis says.

At Dubuis, a medical executive committee meets monthly to discuss multiple issues, including the forms required for patients’ charts. In addition, physicians at the various Dubuis facilities have different requirements for how they want forms to be presented. When the health system used an external vendor, new directives from the committee and requests from physicians resulted in the placement of costly forms orders, and delayed delivery. Now, all forms changes are quickly made in the PFS form designer, reducing costs and boosting physician satisfaction. “The PFS form designer makes it easy to perform ad hoc changes to forms,” Davis says. “It also gives us the versatility to customize forms so that physicians can view information in the layout that’s most convenient for them.”

Before implementing Access products, staff at Dubuis printed each patient form in a distinct print job. Access allows them to select multiple patients and several forms to print in one run, saving time and effort.

“Our staff has reacted positively to the efficiencies the Access solution provides,” Chong says. “People at the facilities that aren’t using Access have heard about its impact and would love to have it in their departments.”



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Delivering Back Office Cost Savings

In addition to providing new efficiencies in patient-focused areas, Dubuis’s Access solution is having a positive impact in the organization’s payroll department. Previously, staff spent time changing check stock based on differing bank information and on managing, securing and ordering this paper. Now, the Access suite puts the bank information, hospital name and other details on each pay check automatically, reducing manual effort. “As we’ve grown, we haven’t added additional staff to deal with check processing,” Davis says. “Access has saved us a full time employee in payroll.”

Many forms management vendors insist on restrictive long-term service commitments that drive up the ownership costs of their products. Access prefers to give customers the freedom of a flexible, anytime support system. “Access has provided excellent customer service and the support team is very responsive,” Chong says. “Our rep calls us regularly to make sure everything is OK and to tell me about upcoming products that may benefit us, and we appreciate that.”

Dubuis currently uses a McKesson HIS but is planning to switch to a Meditech system. Administrators believe that Access will work as effectively alongside the new application as it does with the McKesson application. “We’re confident that as we move ahead with the conversion to Meditech and continue to extend the Access solution to new areas, our forms management solution will provide even greater time and cost efficiencies,” Chong says.

Nine Month Return on Investment

“The Access suite saves us \$79,410 annually by minimizing forms management costs. The system paid for itself in just nine months.”

Cheryl Davis
IT Director
Dubuis Health System

When evaluating forms and workflow automation systems, administrators at Dubuis Health System carefully analyzed the costs of manually processing forms, and the savings and return on investment that automation would provide. They chose the Access system based on the following cost/benefit assessment:

Year	Current Annual Forms Cost	Less Initial Cost of System	Less Support Cost	Less Allowance For Copy Paper	Savings
1	\$92,345	\$65,700	\$7,905	\$5,000	\$13,740
2	\$92,345	-----	\$7,905	\$5,000	\$79,440
3	\$92,345	-----	\$7,905	\$5,000	\$79,440
4	\$92,345	-----	\$7,905	\$5,000	\$79,440
5	\$92,345		\$7,905	\$5,000	\$79,440
Total Five Year Savings					\$331,500

Additional Savings

Implementing the Access suite saved Dubuis a full-time employee in the payroll department.

Rapid Payback

The cost savings delivered by the Access product suite gave Dubuis Health System a nine-month payback on its forms automation investment.





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4