

**Naples Community Hospital** realizes greater exam flexibility and return on investment by upgrading their existing AMX-4 with Canon's CXDI-50G portable digital radiography system.



## **NCH HEALTHCARE SYSTEM REALIZES GREATER EXAM FLEXIBILITY AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT WITH PORTABLE DR SOLUTIONS FROM CANON**

NCH Healthcare System is an alliance of more than 500 independent physicians and medical facilities, including two major hospitals, in Collier County, Florida. The hospitals care for more than 730,000 patients per year and more than 200,000 patients per year in the 24/7 ER and outpatient centers alone.

Four years ago, the hospitals were completely film based with six wet processors, four dry laser printers and two film rooms overflowing with film jackets. Two large on-site storage rooms housed the past three years of film jackets, while the remaining four years worth were kept in a warehouse off-site.

For portable x-ray examinations on the nursing floors and in the units, x-ray technologists would carry as many film cassettes as they could handle to patient rooms or examination rooms located throughout the facility. They would manipulate the x-ray device into tight quarters to get the correct image or exposure. Then, the exposed film would be handed off to someone who would exchange the exposed film cassette for an unexposed film cassette. The exposed film cassette would be delivered to a room in a different location within the hospital for processing, while the technologist continued to make rounds taking the prescribed or assigned x-rays. This daily process was time consuming and costly, so a better process needed to be found.

With the growth of Picture Archiving Communications Systems (PACS) and digital technology, there were alternatives. "We considered CR technology, but it didn't offer any increase in efficiency or decrease in costs," said Jim Bates, Director of Radiology, Naples Community Hospital, one of the two hospitals within the NCH Healthcare System. "Digital Radiography (DR) on the other hand is very fast and efficient, as well as affordable."



Working with Premier, Inc., a strategic healthcare alliance that provides an array of performance solutions to hospitals and other providers, the NCH Healthcare System selected DR solutions from Canon through its distributor Virtual Imaging Inc. of Deerfield Beach, Florida. The hospitals upgraded existing mobile x-ray systems with Canon CXDI-50G portable digital radiography systems.

"The Canon CXDI-50G DR system has generated a great deal of excitement from the medical staff, as the system allows them to view images virtually immediately after taking the images right in the patient's room," said Bates.

Now with the Canon DR systems, the technologist can take the AMX-4 mobile unit and CXDI-50G DR system from room to room and shoot all of the portable exams without waiting on processors or fresh cassettes. Another benefit is the ability to see the acquired images almost immediately after exposure. Also, the technologist can immediately repeat the procedure, should they need to do so, without having to leave the room or floor to develop the cassette— a huge time saver for the technologist, physicians and patients.



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To assist the physicians with the timely review of images taken in patient rooms, the hospital installed data jacks on each floor to facilitate the flow of information and images. The x-ray technologist takes the machine on his/her rounds, captures the necessary images, and before leaving each floor, plugs into the data jacks to send the information into the hospital’s PACS, so images can be reviewed and interpreted by a radiologist almost immediately.

According to Bates, “Portable DR exams can be acquired in about half the time of film-based exams, while also eliminating the cost of film, processor maintenance and the chemistry of processing the film.”

In one exam room, there is also a Canon CXDI-50G DR System being used on a bucky table and a wall stand, eliminating the need and cost of maintaining a two digital panel room. “This room has become very handy for ER patients, as the detector can also be used for patients on a stretcher for cross table and stretcher chest x-rays,” said Bates.

The use of DR technology also significantly saves on space used and needed for x-ray exams within a facility. “The patient load and resources that used to require five analog rooms and technologists now require only two or three staffed DR rooms,” added Bates. “Also, the ability to upgrade our existing mobile x-ray units with Canon DR systems has resulted in various efficiencies and cost savings to the hospital.”

Bates has a bit of advice for any facility looking to make the investment in new radiology equipment: “While converting to digital imaging can be a very expensive process, you need to consider all of the options prior to making this kind of monetary investment. Installing reliable DR equipment that produces consistently high quality images can save costs in the areas of staffing, room space and maintenance costs. It can also improve physician and staff satisfaction, which usually results in improved patient satisfaction. For NCH Healthcare, the Canon DR solutions fit our hospital’s requirements and have met our needs very well.”

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# Canon

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