



# HEALTHCARE SOLUTION

| Document Imaging & Management

## NORTHERN MICHIGAN REGIONAL HOSPITAL: iDOC™ DOCUMENT IMAGING

Integrates Seamlessly with Cerner PowerChart™

Northern Michigan Regional Hospital of Petoskey, MI, is a 243-bed facility serving residents in 22 counties across northern Lower Michigan and the eastern part of the Upper Peninsula. The medical staff includes some 200 physicians from nearly all medical and surgical specialties.

### THE CHALLENGE: ASSESS THE SITUATION

The hospital leadership had specific goals in mind when they purchased the iDoc™ Document Imaging System. The most clear-cut and obvious goal was to move from the old paper-based records system to a digital one – but in conjunction with that overall objective, there was also the need to reduce DNFB and improve workflow. The hospital now had iDoc and the will to put it into practice, but they did not have an HIM specific implementation plan or the HIM expertise to carry it out. CareTech was approached to take on the task.

The first step was arguably the most important: a thorough HIM assessment of where Northern stood at that present time, answering questions such as: Would the hospital's goals be obtainable as a result of such a radical transition? Could the staff as presently constituted sustain the new system? And, ultimately, would it be worth it?

### BENEFITS PROJECTED – AND REALIZED

The assessment quickly put any doubts to rest. After an exhaustive process, CareTech produced a detailed assessment document that predicted a mid-six-figure savings that would easily pay for the implementation.

In addition, the assessment uncovered the root causes of a known multimillion-dollar backlog in unbilled accounts. It identified – and would help alleviate – the bottlenecks that resulted from the inefficient paper records system. This alone was of major significance in terms of helping to recoup the investment. Although clearing the backlog was basically a one-time advantage, it could certainly be counted as a savings attributable to iDoc, and it led the way to assuring that the normal backlog could be cut to approximately one quarter of what it had been – and maintained at that level.

Due to the paperless process and the new workflow, medical records would now go to the coder and not the other way around as in the past. In fact, the whole process was expedited. In conjunction with the Compass application, Northern would go on to have the lowest accounts receivable days of all Compass clients nationwide! This result proved to be a huge win for the hospital and for iDoc.

There was, however, one caveat: words like “outsourcing” and “reallocation” tend to make staff members nervous when everything is in transition, but the iDoc implementation at Northern resulted in no layoffs. Staff was significantly reduced, but those savings were due to either voluntary job changes, both inside and outside the organization, or retirements. And wherever possible, displaced staff was redeployed elsewhere.



### iDoc: The Enterprise Solution for Document Imaging

#### HEALTH INFORMATION

Physician satisfaction increases because charts can be completed anywhere. iDoc can be used as the patient record central data repository or as a supplement to your Hospital Information System.

#### PATIENT REGISTRATION

Capture all registration documents – IDs, insurance card, drivers' licenses, prescriptions, advanced directives.

#### PATIENT FINANCIAL SERVICES

Capture bills, EOBs, correspondence, vouchers – all for instant retrieval.

#### HUMAN RESOURCES

All employee files including hiring information, benefits, evaluations, disciplinary actions and more.

#### ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

Interface invoice numbers, vendors, PO numbers, link all corresponding documentation.

#### iDoc Features...

#### WORK QUEUES, TASK ASSIGNMENT, DOCUMENT ROUTING

Through queues or on the fly, based on users, function, documents - custom configurable.

#### USER NOTES

Permissions-based ability to add notes either directly or appended to documents.

#### SCAN MODULE

Comprehensive Scan Module integrates scanning, indexing, and quality review for increased staff efficiency.



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## INTEGRATION WITH CERNER

While assessing the integration of iDoc with Northern's Cerner PowerChart, it was evident there were options available for customization to meet the customer's needs. By observing the integration of another Cerner/iDoc customer, Northern and CareTech were able to take what they learned and, by working in partnership with CareTech's iDoc Technical Team, the enhancements were made to better meet the needs of Northern's own end users. The result was an integration that works differently depending on user need. These options include viewing scanned images directly from PowerChart, launching directly into a patient's medical record from PowerChart, or accessing scanned images by logging directly into iDoc.

According to Mark Gray, CIO of Northern, the hospital may well be "CareTech's most advanced customer in the use of iDoc with Cerner PowerChart." In anticipation of Northern's second phase of Cerner implementation, the hospital started putting in iDoc about six months ahead of time, in order to populate patient record historical content. Then, in another unique first with iDoc and Cerner, the coordinated implementation took place on the same day!

This was an enormous undertaking but with a successful finish, helped along by taking iDoc live in the Health Information Management Department slightly ahead of the official go-live, so the HIM staff would have no surprises on the big day. Now, with the solution fully integrated, a credentialed user can go directly from PowerChart into iDoc to view necessary documents, without an additional sign-on. It's a seamless transition.

## EVERYONE ON BOARD?

Initial impressions of a new system are often negative, particularly with older, less computer-savvy staff or those who have been doing things the same way for a long time. But the key to overcoming early reservations was a lot of one-on-one attention from the CareTech team, working closely with their counterparts at Northern. Patience and detailed explanations, plus the intuitive nature of iDoc's functionality quickly overcame many doubts.

## TRAINING AND EDUCATION

As with many implementations, physician participation in education was very low prior to go-live. Therefore, once iDoc was up and running, one-on-one sessions were offered to physicians if needed, as well as an iDoc hotline. For the most part, physicians were either trained over the phone or they trained themselves to navigate through the system and complete their records. That's how easy iDoc is to use!

Setting preferences helped a great deal, so that physicians viewed only the documents they needed. Of course, the entire record was also at their fingertips, if desired. There was also a "physician champion," the physician advisor who was very involved in the whole process, working with the hospital staff and CareTech.

## THE FUTURE OF IDOC AT NORTHERN

CIO Mark Gray now looks beyond the use for which iDoc was initially purchased, to other potential applications such as human resources and physician practices. Grace Gustafson of Patient Financial Services would like to use it for EOBs. That's a common experience with iDoc, where familiarity with the system leads to finding new ways to use it, to solve problems, and to expand the range of what's possible.

# Success Story

## Voices from Northern Michigan Regional Hospital

"I can't emphasize enough how fortunate we were to have someone of the caliber of CareTech's HIM client executive here for the implementation. We could not have done it without her leadership."

"Now something comes up and we think, 'Could we make iDoc do that?' And we usually figure out how to make it happen."

**Kathy Beyer**  
Senior Director, Revenue Cycle

"iDoc has exceeded our expectations, no ifs, ands or buts. Pretty much everyone keeps it open on their desktops all day long, every day."

"There was not much of a learning curve. Everybody felt that way. It's phenomenal – we don't want to live without it now. It's just been great for us."

**Grace Gustafson**  
Patient Financial Services

"The product just keeps getting better and better. I think it's very simple to use. If you know your way around a paper record, you'll find it in iDoc. And the scanning equipment produces such a clear picture."

**Kathy Jacobs**  
Manager, Health Information Management

"I've heard positive feedback – but the best indicator is that mostly I've heard nothing. And that's good! Because when I hear about a project like that, it means something isn't going the way it should."

**Tim Jodway, CFO**

CareTech Solutions, Inc., an information technology services provider for hospitals and health systems, is committed to creating value for clients through customized, flexible solutions that contribute to improving patient care while lowering healthcare costs. From implementing emerging technologies to supporting day-to-day operations, CareTech offers clients expert services to satisfy the most demanding IT requirements.