Should Your Medical Office Convert X-Rays to a Digital Format?

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In looking to streamline and digitize files as part of the movement toward paperless medical offices, one question often considered is whether it is beneficial to convert X-rays to a digital format versus keeping X-ray film in paper medical record filing systems? There are actually a number of advantages that can be gained from deciding to convert X-rays to an electronic management system, and itâ€™s easier than you might think.

How to Convert X-Rays to Digital Format

X-rays are converted to electronic files using film digitizer machines that can scan the X-rays and then convert them to various formats, including JPG, TIFF, or DICOM. These can be put onto CDs or DVDs, or they can be emailed, uploaded to an FTP server or secure Intranet or Extranet site, and transferred over to a digital record keeping system.

While this equipment and labor can be procured for in-house conversion, there are, of course, companies available that specialize in this service who already have the hardware, software and skilled staff needed to properly convert and store digital X-rays.

The Benefits of Digital X-Rays

There are a range of benefits for all types of medical practices â€“ from radiology and ultrasound to hospitals and mobile medical practices Digital X-rays:

Streamline work flow within an office. Less tasks, involving copying and filing saves time and allows staff to work on other departmental functions.

Offer an effective and efficient way to store, view, duplicate, share and distribute X-rays. This means it can be easily and quickly disseminated to those that are requesting this type of information no matter their physical location.

Free up physical office space and even allows for less square footage or takes away the need to rent storage space. This change can vastly reduce overhead expenses.

Reduce staffing needs, which cuts down on operational costs considerably. This is always a critical issue for medical practices and hospitals.

Facilitate speed and accuracy. This is a must when dealing with life-changing decisions.

Are reliable, offering enhanced security in terms of medical records management, including encryption and password protection methodologies relative to authorized access. Privacy and security are a key and part of HIPAA regulatory guidelines.

Lastly, because such digital medical file management does so much for your health practice, staffers are free to focus on the core business. This resource re-allocation can provide the opportunity to grow a practice and take on more business while remaining efficient and service-oriented.

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Fig Gungor is CEO of OneSource Document Management, a New York based company that offers a broad range of customized copy and scanning services regarding a converting x rays to digital format

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