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customer success story



**Name and Location**

Chesapeake General Hospital  
Chesapeake, Virginia

**Customer Overview**

Chesapeake General Hospital is a 310-bed, acute care facility that performs more than 12,000 outpatient procedures each month.

**Focus**

Order Management

**Issue**

Effectively managing large volume of orders

**Solution**

Covisint

**Results**

- Increased patient satisfaction
- 13 percent increase in provider satisfaction
- 100 percent decrease in lost orders
- Greater staff efficiency

## Chesapeake General Hospital Brings Outpatient Order Management Online

### Introduction

Chesapeake General Hospital is a major health resource for southeastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina residents. The Patient Access Services Department schedules more than 6,300 lab and diagnostic procedures each month. These procedures are performed at three separate locations.

Hundreds of physician orders are received each day as printed faxes that are manually routed through paper-based workflows. Many of these orders required additional information, clarification and other validation processes. Often, orders were not received or misrouted.

### Challenge

The old process for receiving a physician's faxed order involved printing each order as it arrived. To manage the incoming faxes, the hospital had two high-capacity fax machines. Faxes were printed, sorted by department and manually distributed to staff who would clarify each order and call patients to schedule procedures. After scheduling, the orders were routed to the registration departments for other checks and filing. Orders were filed by scheduled date of service for quick retrieval by the registration department. Ideally, the order would be received, clarified and on file prior to the patient's arrival at the hospital. In reality, many orders were not received or lacked necessary information, and appointments were often rescheduled. Provider relations suffered when a hospital had

to call a physician's office asking for an order to be re-faxed. Patient satisfaction is impacted when the patient is forced to wait while the required order is tracked down.

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"I was certain the process could be dramatically and cost-effectively improved by utilizing technology to create audit trails and paperless workflow solutions."

*Cathy Cantrell, director of patient access services  
Chesapeake General*

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Chesapeake General needed to ensure receipt of every order that was sent to them and instant access to the document as it moved through the workflow.

## Solution

Covisint consultants worked with Cathy Cantrell's department at Chesapeake General to determine the best incoming fax solution for volume and workflow. Cantrell wanted to avoid capital expenses and the IT requirements of installing and maintaining an on-site production-level fax server, so she opted for Covisint's Virtual Fax Service (VFS). VFS is a hosted fax solution, which eliminates all paper faxes without adding hardware or disrupting existing workflows. By simply forwarding existing fax lines and using standard Internet browsers, Cantrell achieved her goals without the purchase and installation of any hardware or software.

Incoming faxes are received into a paperless fax queue and electronically routed to work lists for the schedulers to process. After a patient's procedure is scheduled, the order is automatically filed, providing quick and easy retrieval by the registration department. If an order is misrouted, it can still be easily located on the patient's communication record or fax log. Because of seamless integration, providers weren't aware of any changes at the hospital other than a reduction in requests for orders to be resent.

## Results

### Increased Patient Satisfaction

Patient satisfaction improved by substantially reducing the amount of time needed to locate orders. According to Cantrell, the percentage of patients who waited more than 15 minutes for an order to be located dropped from 6.35 to 0.32 percent.

Ability to estimate costs, insurance, co-insurance and co-pay portions prior to the patient's arrival helps keep patients "in the know" about their financial obligations at the outset.

### Improved Provider Relations

Prior to implementation, physician office staff were "on hold" with Chesapeake General on an average of eight minutes regarding order communications. This long hold time was due to a paper-based filing system that took staff longer to retrieve patient orders. Now, the average hold time is less than 64 seconds because order information is stored online, which drastically improved order retrieval.

Online order communication has also positively affected physician office satisfaction. In a Chesapeake General Hospital-sponsored survey, physician offices were asked prior to implementation how easy it was to schedule outpatient orders at Chesapeake General. Of those surveyed, 84.1 percent responded "easy" or "very easy." Post-implementation of Covisint, the response to the same question was 89.5 percent.

The survey also showed that physician offices felt the entire admissions and scheduling process had improved. When asked to rate the management of Chesapeake's admissions, registration and scheduling process, 94.3 percent of the respondents reported "very good," a 13 percent increase in three years.

Cantrell states with confidence, "I can now offer our physicians a 100 percent guarantee that if an order is faxed to us, it will be available at the point of service, resulting in no delays for the patient and a better clinical clarification process for the service providers."

### **Greater Staff Efficiency**

The outpatient staff members at Chesapeake General unanimously agree they spend a lot less time requesting, searching for and distributing orders. One nurse commented, "It just didn't make sense for a person with clinical skills to spend over 20 percent of her day looking for and routing paper." Instead of walking around, making copies and searching paper bins, the staff can now locate any order and see where it is in the workflow with just a few mouse clicks. While many hospital systems incorporate a scanning component to store medical records electronically, this step is typically done at the end of the process after a patient is discharged rather than at admission. Starting an admission with an electronic record ensures a more streamlined and efficient flow of information from admission through discharge and beyond, to medical records and the business office.

### **Financial Benefits**

With a more efficient service area, Chesapeake General increased the number of procedures and patient volume, reduced one FTE, reduced office supply expenses and eliminated payer write-offs due to insufficient information and lost orders.

Cantrell concludes, "The Covisint solution has significantly helped us track and manage orders, improving our physician relations and patient satisfaction."

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### **covisint ... helping people and systems work better together**

Covisint enables the secure access to and the improved visibility of health information. Leading healthcare organizations and communities across the healthcare continuum leverage Covisint to exchange information and support real-time collaboration, including the automation and streamlining of basic clinical and administrative processes that are generally paper-based transactions today.

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