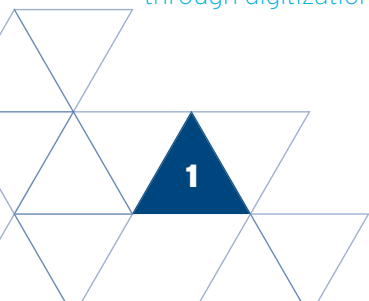HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS

CHALLENGE:

The acquisition of new satellites and hospital affiliates leaves Louisiana's largest healthcare system with an influx of records and a need for additional clinical space.

SOLUTION:

Iron Mountain Records Management Iron Mountain Image on Demand™ Iron Mountain Secure Shredding

VALUE:

▶ Enhanced governance of records across a broad network of hospitals, clinics and affiliates

▶ Improved HIM solutions that free up real estate for patient services

▶ Greater continuity of operations through easy access to patient charts - wherever the patient seeks care

▶ Seamless EHR integration through digitization

OCHSNER HEALTH SYSTEM

KEEPING RECORDS UNDER CONTROL AND FACILITATING BETTER HEALTHCARE

Established in 1942 with a staff of just five surgeons and fourteen administrators, Ochsner Health System now proudly stands as Louisiana's largest academic, multi-specialty, not-for-profit healthcare system. Since its inception, Ochsner's mission has been both to save and to improve the lives of its patients–all while helping to influence the future of medicine through rigorous research. Its organization manages 10 core hospitals, oversees operations with more than 20 hospital affiliates as well as 50 health centers and employs more than 1,000 physicians while maintaining a network of approximately 2,700 doctors.

Yet despite its global reputation and excellent patient care, Ochsner has faced several challenges in recent years. Constant shifts in the healthcare delivery landscape have led to more competition among providers, which has created a greater need for new clinical space to facilitate patient services. In addition, as the health industry faces increasing mergers and consolidation, Ochsner has been presented with the unique and daunting task of re-evaluating the management and integration of its vast amount of legacy records into a consistent program. "As we acquire additional practices, we're facing new challenges with figuring out how to manage [our records]," Sandra Allen, Director of HIM Operations, said.

DRIVING CONSISTENCY WITH A COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

When confronted with the massive undertaking of managing patient records and integrating these records into its EPIC EHR, Ochsner turned to Iron Mountain, a company with years of experience helping health providers digitize their clinical and business records. By incorporating a multi-faceted information governance program–one that included Iron Mountain's Records Management, Image on Demand™ and Secure Shredding solutions–into its workflow, Ochsner was able to benefit in a number of ways. Perhaps the most important benefit was that Ochsner was able to achieve consistency with its health information management program. In addition, Iron Mountain's services allowed Ochsner to centralize the physical storage of its records and consolidate files that had previously been held at a number of satellite clinics. "As we expanded those satellites with more physicians and more services, the space became prime. We began to move those records to Iron Mountain, so that the space was available and could be converted for patient care and provider offices," Ms. Allen said.

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Ochsner also benefitted from the Iron Mountain Image on Demand™ solution. With this service, Ochsner was able to scan patient records into the EPIC EHR as needed, making it easy for clinicians to get fast access to patient data whenever a patient arrived at an Ochsner facility.

"As we expanded [our] satellites with more physicians and more services, the space became prime. We began to move those records to Iron Mountain, so that the space was available and could be converted for patient care and provider offices."

-SANDRA ALLEN, DIRECTOR OF HIM OPERATIONS, OCHSNER HEALTH SYSTEM

A LASTING AND SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

In Iron Mountain, Ochsner has found a one-stop-shop health information management vendor. "We've changed from [a] traditional HIM department on paper to total electronic [consolidation]... Iron Mountain was a part of all that ...It's been an evolution," Vicki Kaplan, Vice President of HIM, reported. The improved accessibility of records and the re-appropriation of prime real estate has enhanced healthcare delivery. Ochsner was able to repurpose records storage space for patient uses including a hyperbaric room, a blood donation station and other treatment space.

Furthermore, as Ochsner continues its development, a seamless integration of patient records into EPIC has been established. Every effort has been made throughout this process to ensure that, as Ms. Kaplan said, "...A patient is recognized as an Ochsner patient– wherever they are." Iron Mountain's solutions also enable a complete continuity of care. "[Physicians in one Ochsner facility do] not have to rely on a retrieval of a paper chart, nor [do] they have to go into any other system to gather that patient information. We [have] the ability to present it to them in the same system that they [are] working in."

As the relationship evolves, Ochsner will be able to keep pace with the ever-changing healthcare environment and address periods of rapid growth and expansion. With a solid health information strategy and a trusted vendor, Ochsner's employees can focus on their main objective: delivering superior patient care.

"...A patient is recognized as an Ochsner patient–wherever they are."

-VICKI KAPLAN, VICE PRESIDENT, HIM, OCHSNER HEALTH SYSTEM

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