

## INDUSTRY

Healthcare

## CHALLENGE

Standardise and reduce cost of archiving paper-based patient records

## SOLUTION

Centralised off-site records management with scan on demand services and secure destruction

## VALUE

- Standardised processes and freed-up space for clinical use
- Accelerated file access through scan-on-demand service
- Reduced external archiving costs by 50 per cent

## CASE STUDY

### PARACELSUS-CLINICS GERMANY

## LEADING GERMAN HOSPITAL GROUP DRAMATICALLY IMPROVES PATIENT FILE ACCESS AND HALVES ITS COSTS THROUGH RECORDS CONSOLIDATION

### SECURE STORAGE PLUS REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

Paracelsus-Clinics Germany is a privately-owned hospital group based in Osnabrück. With 40 acute and rehab hospitals across Germany and Switzerland - between them offering 4,000 beds - it employs more than 5,000 staff and treats 100,000 patients yearly.

The group keeps current patient files onsite at each facility, while dormant files are normally moved offsite after three years. Dr. Adrian Schuster, Head of ICT at Paracelsus-Clinics, says: "We'd used the same off-site records management contractor for years but had become dissatisfied with their quality of service and cost of storage. We issued a formal tender to explore other options."

Safe and secure file storage and easy accessibility are vital as is compliance with four levels of data protection regulations, which require records to be kept for up to 30 years.

From a shortlist of three, Paracelsus-Clinics chose Recall®<sup>1</sup> as its exclusive document management service provider. The contract scope includes information lifecycle management, secure storage, scan-on-demand, end-of-life destruction and auditing.

### SEAMLESS TRANSPORT AND TRANSITION PROJECT

Records consolidation was a huge task. It involved transporting around 29,000 boxes of files taking up over 14 kilometres of shelf space. With files collected at a rate of 33 pallets daily, the exercise took three months to complete.

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**DR. ADRIAN SCHUSTER**  
HEAD OF ICT  
PARACELSUS-CLINICS

<sup>1</sup> Recall was acquired by Iron Mountain in 2016

Once received at a central state-of-the-art storage facility in Hamburg, the inventory was checked against metadata supplied. It was then restructured for consistency. Each individual patient file is barcoded and each box of files has an RFID tag. This improves traceability and makes locating a specific box fast and virtually foolproof.

“We were most impressed by the customer service, technology platform and attractive commercial terms offered,” says Adrian Schuster.

## STORAGE COSTS HALVE WHILE FILE ACCESS IS TWICE AS FAST

Since that original transition, further files archived at Paracelsus-Clinics hospitals have been transferred. A recent service enhancement sees patient x-rays stored too.

“There are currently 35,000 boxes of files in store that contain records for around 800,000 patients,” says Adrian Schuster. “Ultimately we anticipate this will grow to more than 45,000 boxes. The transition will almost halve our document storage costs compared to our previous provider.”

File retrievals originating from clinical questions are ordered over a secure internet portal. This automatically generates a works order at the store and the required patient record is scanned and uploaded to the portal. The requestor gets an email advising them the file is ready for download and the hard copy original is returned to storage. The ultimate aim is for 99 per cent of files to be retrieved electronically.

“The service level agreement is for files to be sent electronically within eight hours,” says Adrian Schuster, “but we normally get them within four. It’s a great service that frees our archive staff to focus on other work instead of moving and scanning paper piles.”

## GETTING GREATER EFFICIENCY AND FREEING VALUABLE SPACE

Paracelsus-Clinics has achieved its aim of simplifying and standardising paper-based patient records management processes at much lower cost. Improved speed of access and enhanced compliance are other benefits.

With all patient records in one place with a single service provider, process standardisation has been a key enabler for more efficient working practices.

Adrian Schuster sums up: “Outsourcing makes sense. We no longer have to worry about safety or fire and flood prevention and it makes demonstrating compliance much easier. On top of that we’ve freed-up valuable space, which can be reused for clinical purposes.”

“ THE TRANSITION WILL ALMOST HALVE OUR DOCUMENT STORAGE COSTS. ”

**DR. ADRIAN SCHUSTER**  
**HEAD OF ICT**  
**PARACELTUS-CLINICS**

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