



The Susquehanna Outpatient Imaging Center

Imaging Asset Optimization for Effective Capital Management

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Customer:

The Susquehanna
Outpatient Imaging
Center
Williamsport, PA

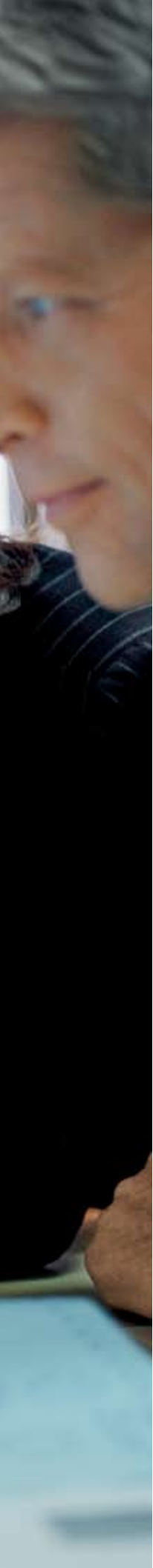
Challenge:

Recommend an
efficient and cost-
effective capital
technology deployment
for a new ambulatory
imaging center

Solution:

An Imaging Asset
Optimization plan that
addressed patient- and
process-based issues
developed by Siemens
Global Solutions





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Opening an outpatient imaging center for the first time can be a daunting task—especially when you need to determine what equipment should stay within your hospital and what should be relocated. “We’ve never done anything like this before,” says Karen Armstrong, senior vice president and chief information officer for Susquehanna Health. “We were starting from the ground up and felt it was important to have someone experienced in the field help us with the project.”

Susquehanna Health is based in Williamsport, PA, and includes three hospitals: The Williamsport Hospital, Divine Providence Hospital, and Muncy Valley Hospital. The Health System has 282 acute beds and 138 long-term care beds and provides all of its imaging services through the Susquehanna Imaging Center, located at The Williamsport Hospital.

Achieving Financial & Operational Efficiency

Susquehanna's executives believe creating an ambulatory imaging center will help the health system stay ahead of the area's competition—as long as they can do it in the most efficient and effective way possible. With that in mind, they engaged Siemens Global Solutions consultants to examine their imaging technology deployment based on demographics, services, resources, utilization, and efficient patient processes. "In particular, we needed their expertise and experience to determine what modalities should remain in the hospital and which ones we should take out or duplicate at the imaging center," says Armstrong.



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The Vision to Expand & Grow

The Global Solutions team recommended, for example, that Susquehanna locate its high-volume procedures near the waiting room to reduce the distance traveled by patients and congestion in the corridors. Additional recommendations included relocating some existing technology in The Williamsport Hospital to the ambulatory imaging center to reduce overall capital costs. Capital dollars saved could then be used to invest in new imaging technology—the new technology recommendations were established based on a coherent imaging technology vision and a plan to enable future healthcare delivery, enhance operational capabilities, and establish the health system as a leader in diagnostic imaging services in the outpatient imaging market. “Their work really added to our whole conceptualization of the center,” says Armstrong.

Although the Global Solutions team was contracted to review the outpatient imaging center, the team also reviewed Susquehanna’s current practices in CT and ultrasound. “They confirmed some facts about the productivity of our CT and ultrasound staffs, which quantified this information for us in a way that had never been done before,” Armstrong continues. “Beyond the technology recommendations, they also suggested hiring a CT aide. Rather than using expensive techs, we could use this person to do the routine stocking, help transport patients and assist in getting them ready, run errands, and handle some basic paperwork.”

“We are very pleased and plan to continue working with the Siemens consultants on this and other projects. We know they will give us quality information and recommendations that we can use.”

Opportunities to Increase Revenue

Other significant benefits can be realized through changes to Susquehanna’s existing patient flow processes and staffing procedures. By creating an IV prep area, patients receiving IV contrast can have an IV started outside the CT scan room, which eliminates approximately five minutes for every contrast exam performed and equates to the potential for an additional 2,100 appointments per year. An assessment of the existing staff resources also found that the scheduled hours of operation in CT and ultrasound could be expanded. By scheduling full-time staff on evenings and weekends (which were previously covered by on-call staff), the health system could decrease its annual staffing costs by about \$40,000 in the first year. In addition, adding weekend appointments significantly reduces the radiology department’s scheduling backlog.

All of these recommendations are being taken into consideration as Susquehanna Health moves to the groundbreaking phase of the project. “We are very pleased and plan to continue working with the Siemens consultants on this and other projects,” says Armstrong. “We know they will give us quality information and recommendations that we can use.”



Anticipated benefits to the new plan:

- Reduced overall capital costs
- Investments in new imaging technology based on a coherent vision and plan
- Enhanced patient flow processes and staffing procedures
- Potential for expanded operations and additional appointments
- Decreased annual staffing costs
- Reduced scheduling backlog

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