

# A Digitech Systems Case Study



## Case Study Facts:

**CLIENT:** Woodstock General Hospital

**DIGITECH SYSTEMS RESELLER:** Polar Imaging, Inc.

**PROBLEM:** Needed to expand the capabilities of their medical records system and increase patient file accessibility while maintaining compliance with Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) regulations

**SOLUTION:** PaperVision® Enterprise and PaperFlow™

**RECOGNIZED BENEFIT:** Enabled clinicians to access any patient record to improve productivity and patient care.

## Saving Money While Saving Lives: Canadian Hospital Streamlines Patient Care

**W**oodstock Hospital is a large, community hospital in Woodstock, Ontario, Canada. After working out of a historic building erected in 1895, they opened a state-of-the-art, 178 bed facility in 2011 that provides a variety of services including acute medical/surgical, obstetrics, complex continuing care, and both inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation and mental health. As the Hospital upgraded, their records management needed to adapt as well.

In 2014, Kathy Lavelle, former Director of Health Records and current CFO, noticed there was a technology gap. "It was a challenge to access historical records, because they were still on paper. Clinical staff had to call the Records Department, who then had to go search for the record and deliver the information by hand. It was causing significant delays for clinicians who needed the information to provide the best care possible," said Lavelle. After expanding their use of PaperVision Enterprise and adding PaperFlow to handle their in-house scanning needs, they have improved access to information, reduced document retrieval times, saved money, and further enhanced patient care.

### The Situation

The new, full-service Woodstock Hospital provides primary care to a population of 55,000 people in Woodstock, Ontario and offers specialized care to nearly 110,000 within the County of Oxford. Their Emergency Department (ED) receives over 45,000 visits annually, with more individuals being seen in inpatient settings and outpatient clinics. The Hospital is dedicated to delivering the highest standard of medical care.

However, their original records management system was holding them back. Since 2005, Woodstock's has used a Cerner EHR system, but many records only existed on paper. Knowing they needed a full view of patient history to properly diagnose and treat individuals, clinicians would send a file request to the Records Department, who then had to physically find the record and deliver it to them. "It was very frustrating for clinical staff to wait for information they needed to provide care, especially in the ED when decisions need to be made quickly," said Lavelle. With an average of 266 patient file requests being made every week, the Records Department was staffed 24 hours a day, and porters were used to pick up and deliver the files, otherwise a records clerk had to fax the files. File retrieval hindered how quickly physicians could make informed decisions about patient care, which increased patient waits in the ED. In addition to physicians' daily file requests, 370 requests were made per month by lawyers and insurance providers.

Security and auditing were other drivers for change at Woodstock Hospital. When paper records were sent outside the Records Department, their course through the Hospital was difficult to track. "While the file was checked out, we couldn't track whether it had been updated, and we had no way to know who had viewed what or when," said Lavelle. She knew that devising a plan to leverage technology would create efficiencies, reduce costs, control record security, speed-up physicians' informed decision making, and improve the quality of patient care.

### Key Benefits

- Saved \$437,500 every year in staffing, offsite scanning, and office supply costs
- Reduced Records Department staff from 6 full time equivalents to 2.5, an annual savings of \$295,000
- Return on investment of 258% and payback of 3 months, calculated by third-party analysts from Nucleus Research

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## The Solution

Woodstock Hospital worked with Polar Imaging, a Digitech Systems reseller, who helped them implement PaperVision Enterprise to migrate physically stored documents to digitized files. Polar Imaging handled their backfile scanning needs for more than 10 years, totaling over 12 million pages. In 2015, the Hospital installed PaperFlow in order to scan in house. First, they implemented in the ED so all physicians had complete access to real-time patient records. If a patient was admitted, the file would be scanned, and the next specialized department had immediate access to their information. In April 2016, they began scanning in all health records to digitize the entire records management system for in-patient visits.

## Recognized Benefits

Retrieving documents instantly with PaperVision Enterprise has improved the efficiency of the entire Hospital, while reducing staff. The Records

Department is no longer staffed 24 hours per day;

instead of paying six full-time equivalents in the Records Department, only 2.5 are needed.

Having the information all available online eliminates the retrieving and reviewing of paper documents by the coding staff. Each page of the record is still reviewed, but the process has greatly improved. Having all of the records readily available has enabled a reduction in the coding turnaround time and created efficiencies in data submission timelines.

They now scan about 3,500 pages a day, and the indexes are created automatically using a 2D barcode that pulls information in real time as the files are scanned. "Thanks to PaperVision Enterprise, the clinicians can look up information they need themselves, and the average number of calls per day has been reduced from 38 to less than six," said Lavelle. This saved the Records Department \$295,000 a year in salary costs, and \$25,000 in office supplies. In fact, this year they have dropped the office supply budget almost entirely, and their annual budget for document scanning offsite is now zero dollars, saving an additional \$140,000. With a three-month payback, Woodstock has received 258% ROI, which was calculated by an expert, third-party analyst.

Woodstock Hospital's patient files are now securely and accurately stored, so they are prepared to comply with PHIPA regulations, which requires the Hospital to notify patients and the Privacy Commissioner if someone sees their record who isn't supposed to. The auditing and reporting capabilities in PaperVision Enterprise allow them to track every single access, and identify any breaches that require reporting. Having digital records in the system also allows Woodstock to easily answer monthly lawyer and insurance requests, as files are now sent through secure email or file exchange. The efficiencies gained through this implementation improved accessibility of patient records, which helped advance the timeliness of patient care at Woodstock.

## About Polar Imaging, Inc.

Polar Imaging, Inc. provides organizations with only the best document scanning services, document management solutions, equipment, and professional services in the industry. In business for more than 30 years, they are well-known as a diversified organization delivering a broad spectrum of document management services accompanied by a passionate team dedicated to providing comprehensive document management solutions. To learn more about Polar Imaging, visit their website at [www.polarimaging.ca](http://www.polarimaging.ca) or call 519.652.0211.

*"Patient records are readily accessible with PaperVision® Enterprise, which helps clinicians make life-saving decisions. We're saving \$437,500 every year in staffing, offsite scanning, and office supply costs, and efficiency throughout the Hospital has greatly improved."*



*- Kathy Lavelle, Woodstock Hospital, CFO*