Concord TECHNOLOGIES

FROM GOOD TO GREAT:
Healthcare system reimagines operations with advanced, AI-driven digital fax capabilities

NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY HEALTH

COMPANY
North Shore Community Health Inc.

HEADQUARTERS
On the North Shore, Mass.

WEBSITE
www.nschi.org

CHALLENGES
- Existing Concord Technologies Cloud Fax solution not being leveraged to its full capabilities
- Ineffective queues and workflows
- Delayed patient care and compliance

SOLUTION
Implement Concord's Practical AI™ suite of capabilities to:
- Support customized workflow-queue information flows.
- Create flexible, customized pathways for document and data classification, extraction, and delivery.

RESULTS
- Faster referral processing
- Speedier data delivery to clinicians
- More effective communications between teams
- Improved patient care and satisfaction

Keeping up with healthcare technology is a "blink and you'll miss it" proposition. Unworkable or inefficient data flow can wreak havoc on everything from timely patient care to critical business operations. Having a digital fax partner who knows your current needs, and is actively preparing for future ones, is essential. North Shore Community Health Inc. (NSCHI) has exactly that kind of relationship with Concord Technologies.

NSCHI, based on the North Shore of Massachusetts, is a Federally Qualified Health Center, or FQHC. It has three family practice sites; two school-based health and behavioral health centers; and four school-based behavioral health sites. Each is tasked with delivering high quality, culturally competent, comprehensive primary care, including medical, dental, and behavioral health services. NSCH also offers supportive services including health education, translation, health insurance legibility and enrollment assistance, and transportation.

This essential community health provider has been using Concord Technologies' Cloud Fax services to send and receive documents safely and securely for several years. Now it is expanding that functionality into five major, and newly reorganized, workflow queues that will reinvent data analysis and delivery across the enterprise.

The full suite of Concord's Practical AI™ solutions will perform document classification and data extraction on all incoming documents, so critical information like consult notes, referrals, service and medication requests, and images are automatically analyzed and routed quickly to their next destination. After working closely with Concord's engineering and implementation teams, NSCHI's newly designed Referrals queue is up and running — and is yielding significant time savings, says Curt Swanson-Lewis, Senior Manager of Operations Systems.

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Reimagining data movement and usage

"Our fax setup needed to be reconfigured for what was happening in our current day-to-day operations." Swanson-Lewis explains.

> "We were using queues that were all over the place and realized that by cleaning those up and implementing Concord's classification and extraction capabilities, we could **significantly reduce processing time and improve workflow.**"
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> —Curt Swanson-Lewis
> Senior Manager of Operation Systems

Comprehensive studies were performed to see where tasks were getting dropped, or where logjams regularly occurred. For instance, the number of searches for, and the amount of time it took to locate, documents or data were chronicled. Importantly, these findings were tied to potential quality of care gaps to provide some real-world metrics. Once that information was in hand, NSCHI began to work with the Concord team to customize how expanded and enhanced data-delivery services could be woven into new workflows.

"We took a full stop, charted out our current situations, and re-laid a good, brick foundation so we could rebuild our queues correctly," Swanson-Lewis says. "I knew what possibilities existed within the Concord technology we already had in place. Now we are seeing it, and this has been a game-changing moment for us. What Concord is doing allowed us to begin operating in a realistic, clear, direct, and concise manner."

The team began with the Referrals queue, Swanson-Lewis says, because "that department is under a huge spotlight. It's an important process that needed tightening up so that we could meet compliance goals and also improve the patient experience. We worked on teams internally, and also met with Concord about how to separate and classify documents and data. There were a lot of 'A-ha!' moments."

Now when referral documents arrive, they are analyzed based on what type of documents they are; what individuals or teams need to see them; what data needs to be extracted and placed elsewhere; and what will be the final destinations for both the original document and all its data.

"It's cleared up a lot of ambiguity around responsibility and follow-through," he says. "Now we have accountability and can meet our performance goals. It's all fallen into line."

Major time savings, other benefits, immediately apparent

The revamped and enhanced Referrals queue has already resulted in dramatic time drops in terms of searching for documents. For instance, if a request for an endoscopy comes in from a clinic by way of a

longer document containing other details about a patient's gastrointestinal treatment, the appointment can be scheduled while the rest of the information, such as medical imaging updates, makes its way to other destinations, all without staff having to sift, sort, and reroute the elements of the original document.

At the same time, information such as patient name and date of birth has been checked against the incoming documents and matched to existing records, so that a user elsewhere is able to tap into the most current information about that patient right away.

"It's changing how things are done," he says. "Now people don't have to sit and look at, and wait for, faxes all day. And the Concord workflow is also positively affecting major areas like medication refills, which were being printed and given to providers, and now are being done paperless. We're saving time everywhere and have cut down on a huge amount of waste."

> "Previous work that used to take hours — sorting through queues, sorting through documents — we no longer have to do. **We've cut human interaction from 8-10 steps down to about 4.** What used to take 20 minutes now is down to about 2 minutes and 15 seconds."
>
> —Curt Swanson-Lewis
> Senior Manager of Operation Systems

Next up: Continue the revolution across the enterprise

Best of all, the lessons learned while standing up the reimagined Referrals queue will inform other major workflow pillars as they are brought up to speed with Concord's advanced technology.

"This was our first bite, and it was a large mouthful," Swanson-Lewis says. "Now that we've seen how these tools work with Referral, we can begin to apply this process to the bigger picture. We're working with our staff and Concord now, taking lots of notes, so we can redo our other queues as well."

One major goal will be to ramp up the time to get vital patient data, such as medical image files, to providers in under two days — preferably on the same day. Swanson-Lewis is certain that, as the NSCHI team continues to leverage Concord's technology, it'll happen.

"If we can do that it will be ground-breaking for us," he says. "We've never had that quick of a connection. No more logging into another system to see if the image is there. It'll all be dropped into a chart and sent out. Our CMO was amazed when we told him we were shooting for getting those into providers' inboxes on the same day. We're moving toward a future state that will really change how we operate."