

# Niagara Health System

## St. Catharines, Ontario, CA

### Automating Report Distribution Across Multiple Departments and Sites

The Niagara Health System (NHS) is Ontario, Canada's largest multi-site hospital amalgamation with seven facilities serving 434,000 residents across the 12 municipalities in the Regional Municipality of Niagara. The NHS offers a wide range of inpatient and outpatient clinics and services and has almost 900 beds for Acute Care, Complex Continuing Care, Mental Health, Long-Term Care and Addiction Treatment. The NHS includes 599 physicians, 4,154 employees and 1,100 volunteers, and has an annual operating budget of approximately \$400 million.

To automate its patient report distribution processes, Niagara Health System implemented Interbit Data's NetDelivery, which securely transfers reports and data from NHS's MEDITECH Magic healthcare information system (HCIS) to clinicians and others involved in patient care. Reports may be sent to multiple recipients across various departments and sites and via any one of several delivery methods, including fax, email, print stream and encrypted file. NetDelivery also delivers reports such as the electronic master patient index and wait times for surgical procedures to NHS's HL7 interface.

"With MEDITECH scheduled distribution, reports can only go to one printer, but NetDelivery allows us to print to multiple printers and send reports to multiple folders," explained Scott Poirier, Business Systems Analyst, Information & Communications Technology, Niagara Health System. "We can distribute to multiple people and locations at the same time. It pretty much boils down to being able to send reports to almost anywhere and in any way we want."

### Leveraging Report Distribution Capabilities For Range of Applications

Since implementing NetDelivery in 2003, Niagara Health System has found numerous uses for NetDelivery beyond patient report distribution and across a number of non-clinical departments.

"NetDelivery is our bread and butter; it's a tool we've been able to utilize to solve several problems by pairing it up with other technology we have, such as scripting software," stated Poirier. "Combining NetDelivery with MEDITECH Magic NPR Report Writer allows us to do many things. We have tons of reports we distribute through NetDelivery."

Niagara Health System uses NetDelivery to send reports on diagnostic imaging and community-wide scheduling of surgical procedures to its physicians. Distribution to physicians is typically by fax, but if a fax is not verified for the recipient or a fax fails, NetDelivery sends the report to the most logical printer as a default. If a physician is not designated for the report, NetDelivery will send it to a default recipient.

NetDelivery is also used by Niagara Health System to send purchase orders and service requests to outside vendors, such as the company that provides therapeutic bed surfaces and third-party ambulance companies. As it sends the order directly to the vendor by fax, it also sends it to the printer of the requesting department as verification.

When NetDelivery is paired with a scripting tool, it can take a MEDITECH Magic NPR report and place it on the scripting server for scripting into a specific application, such as a spreadsheet of statistical information for designated administrative staff. NetDelivery applies logic that allows the spreadsheet to be kept up-to-date and accurate. It also enables a snapshot of the spreadsheet to be sent to the same recipients' Blackberry devices.

"NetDelivery's significant use of logic with its report distribution is a big contributor to its flexibility," stated Poirier.

## Enabling Electronic Pay Stubs to Ease Distribution and Support Green Initiatives

In addition to applying logic, NetDelivery's ability to take a single long report and split it up for distribution to multiple recipients has allowed Niagara Health System to send electronic pay stubs to its employees instead of printing physical pay stubs through MEDITECH. NetDelivery receives the pay information from MEDITECH as one large batch and then emails employees' pay stubs to them as a PDF, allowing NHS to go paperless with its pay stubs.

"By not printing a physical report, we save costs as well as meet green initiatives," reported Poirier.

## Continuing to Uncover Applications and Benefits

Because it has found so many different ways to use and get the most out of NetDelivery, Niagara Health System considers it a critical tool for its organization.

"NetDelivery is fundamental to a lot of what we do," explained Poirier. "We would be hard-pressed if we did not have it and would probably have to find other tools to do the jobs it performs."

## The benefits NetDelivery provides expand with the range of uses.

"The automation and reduced paper usage that we've now enabled with most of our report distribution activities has allowed us to increase our operational efficiency, which in turn saves time, costs and waste," reported Poirier. "NetDelivery is so extremely useful, powerful, and becoming more and more reliable. We see there's further room for it to grow."

As far as Interbit Data's product and customer support, Niagara Health System reports that it is very good.

"They are really really responsive, which was especially important as NetDelivery has evolved," explained Poirier. "When implementing new product versions, and especially when we've tried something experimental, we have relied on the support folks at Interbit Data and received a great deal of help."

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