



## **Horizon Pathology Implements Cost-Effective Telepathology System**

### **Real-time HD system allows pathologist to share and collaborate across multiple locations**

Horizon Pathology, PC\*, is a 14-physician pathology practice that provides anatomic and clinical services to hospitals, surgery centers, and medical clinics. Horizon, which contracts with four hospitals from two large healthcare organizations, Prudential Health System and Aurora Health System, provides the medical directorship of these laboratories.

Horizon's pathologists also represent eight board-certified subspecialties of pathology: dermatopathology, hematopathology, cytopathology, neuropathology, clinical chemistry, microbiology, breast pathology, and forensic pathology.

Early in 2009, Horizon Pathology was struggling with the dilemma that often plagues multi-location service organizations: how to deploy their limited subspecialty personnel in a manner that (a) best allocates scarce resources, (b) provides appropriate service levels to their clientele, and (c) maximizes revenue to the organization. To solve this dilemma, the organization viewed two options.

#### **Option #1: Whole Slide Imaging – “Costly”**

One of Horizon's pathologist partners, Nicholas Randall, MD, thought that he had an answer: deploy a “whole-slide imaging” (WSI) system at two of the smaller locations that could not financially support a subspecialty pathologist. However, upon careful examination, Horizon's partners realized that the cost associated with even one WSI system would not provide them with a financially acceptable option.

Dr. Randall summarized his partners' conclusions about the WSI product in this fashion, “If we'd had the opportunity to purchase the WSI product at 15% to 20% of its market price, it would have worked – not worked perfectly well – but well enough.”

#### **Option #2: Sharing Tool from Scope Manufacturer – “Too Distracting”**

Later in 2009, some of Horizon's pathologists were introduced to an alternative solution from one of their microscope manufacturers that would allow the sharing of newly-prepared slides over the Internet with a subspecialty pathologist at a different location. Rudy Michaels, MD, the

Horizon partner who investigated this particular alternative, indicated that it would have satisfied most of the practice's needs:

"The greatest advantage to this option was that it was priced reasonably for what we were looking for. I was convinced that this solution would have worked reasonably well – although the length of the lag time (also known as "latency") was undoubtedly distracting, and I would have preferred that the image resolution (standard resolution) was higher."

In the end Horizon's partners decided against using this manufacturer's product for a reason familiar to many pathology groups. "This manufacturer's solution did not easily accommodate microscopes from other manufacturers. In other words, we would have had to replace and purchase at least four additional microscopes. This particular 'inflexibility' made this option just too expensive," explained Dr. Michaels.

### **Option #3: the iMedHD™ Telepathology System**

Early in 2010, Dr. Randall discovered Remote Medical Technologies iMedHD™ Telepathology System. The system delivered distinct advantages not seen in earlier products that Horizon had investigated: it offered dynamic, streaming, real-time video in HD (high definition) resolution at 1920 x 1080 pixels.

"The clarity and precision of the live visual images from the iMedHD™ Telepathology system were tangibly better than anything that we'd seen in the past," stated Dr. Randall. "That benefit alone might have provided my partners with a great enough incentive to make a decision in RMT's favor, but we got a bonus benefit. RMT's telepathology technology allowed us to attach it to any microscope from any manufacturer via a C-mount device. That advantage made the choice of RMT's telepathology technology simple for us."

Horizon Pathology implemented its first two RMT HD Telepathology Systems at hospitals in the Aurora Health System in January 2011, and then added two additional systems in the Prudential Health System.

"We were fortunate," declared Dr. Randall. "We now have the live telepathology features, functions and capabilities we need – at a cost that fit our budget. For any pathologist or pathology tech who knows how to use a computer-attached mouse, the application is quite easy to master. As far as telepathology tools are concerned, we have no difficulty in recommending this tool."

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*\*Horizon Pathology, Nicholas Randall, MD, Rudy Michaels, MD, Prudential Health System, and Aurora Health System are all fictitious names. However, the persons & the organizations which they represent have been characterized in this case study with accuracy.*