



PHILIPS

Healthcare

Multi-Vendor Services

Enhancing images and uptime in the radiology department

Philips teams up with The UVM Medical Center to deliver multi-vendor service and support

Who/where

The University of Vermont (UVM) Medical Center, Burlington, Vermont. Named a “Best Regional Hospital” by U.S. News & World Report four years in a row.*

Challenge

Maximize system uptime, streamline workflow, control costs, and improve the patient experience for the busiest and largest radiology department in Vermont.

Solution

Provide a single source of onsite service and support for a full range of highly advanced CT scanners, MRI machines, PET-CT and Spect-CT scanners, Interventional systems, and diagnostic X-ray systems – from Philips and other manufacturers.

Results

The Radiology Department’s close working relationship with Philips has led to consistently high quality clinical imaging, predictable system availability, and exceptional patient satisfaction. It began in 2001 with the purchase of a Philips CT scanner. Today, more than 85% of imaging equipment is Philips.

The University of Vermont Medical Center is committed to providing a high level of diagnostic and interventional radiology expertise – supported by advanced imaging technology. But keeping its imaging systems performing at their peak is a constant challenge. “The more advanced the equipment is, the more potential problems you have. We can’t afford downtime. We need to keep our systems up and running, so our radiologists have the images they need to reach a confident diagnosis fast,” says Paula Gonyea, Director of Radiology. “Our close collaboration with Philips has helped contribute to our overall success.”

Multiple vendors, one service provider

The UVM Medical Center's relationship with Philips was initially driven by the purchase of a Philips 16-slice CT scanner in 2001, followed by the addition of a Philips MRI system.

Not only were the hospital's radiologists impressed with the imaging systems' consistent performance, they liked the fact that Philips had a highly trained workforce of field engineers and a committed onsite presence. It was a big change for the Radiology Department and it led to a decision to consolidate support for all imaging systems with Philips – despite the fact that most of medical center's equipment was from another vendor.

"We were really attracted to onsite service from Philips because the turnaround time was really great. It was nice to have someone come from down the hall and make a change or fix a problem," says Ms. Gonyea. "Some of our vendors are from far way and it could take a half day for them to get here. Not with Philips."

A short learning curve

As Philips field service engineers completed training and gained licensed access to the technical specifications of the hospital's non-Philips OEM equipment, the team quickly learned what they needed to know. "Just as important, they were open and honest about expectations. They never wasted time tinkering if they didn't have a timely answer. They were always willing to call in expert help to get us back up quickly," recalls Ms. Gonyea.

Communication is the key

"The relationship with the field service engineers is what makes it work for us. They have my cell phone number; they can call our managers or me any time. They're tuned in to the fact that we can't afford downtime, and they're always looking to service our systems in a way that will have the least impact on our schedule," explains Ms. Gonyea.

Excellent communication is built into the working process every step of the way. A daily dashboard gives the UVM Medical Center a clear picture of the status of every single piece of imaging equipment. Is it down, temporarily disabled, or good to go? They know at a glance.

A weekly conference provides both the Philips team and the hospital with a chance to talk about the line items on the dashboard and evaluate how things are going. And a monthly call with The UVM Medical Center physicist offers the opportunity to make changes or adjustments based on a clinical expert's inspections and analysis.

"The Philips team is always looking to get our feedback on what they can do differently or better – by focusing on the needs of our radiologists and technologists. This kind of collaboration is critical to continually improving the quality of the imaging we deliver to our patients."

Paula Gonyea

Director of Radiology
The University of Vermont Medical Center

Working together

The UVM Medical Center's relationship with Philips is based on mutual trust and cooperation. While operational and technical problems are a given, it's how these challenges are handled when they occur that sets Philips Multi-Vendor Services apart.

Often, Philips field service engineers and UVM Medical Center managers work together to solve the most complex technical issues. For example, when the hospital installed its latest 3T MRI scanner, it was independent testing by the Philips team that revealed a potential problem with the shielding in the imaging room – after it had already been closed up. "Philips worked with us to bring the shielding up to spec, so we could produce high-quality images," says Ms. Gonyea.

Creative solutions

Philips also helped the Radiology Department balance economic constraints with clinical impact by creating RightFit Flex Pools – a versatile source of funds available for diagnostic imaging services. Now if there's a sudden system failure or emergency, radiology managers no longer need to decide whether to save money or pay a premium to get a scanner back up. They can simply get the system fixed and pay for it with funds from customized RightFit Flex Pools, based on the spending history and anticipated budgetary needs. So there's no need to disrupt workflow or reschedule patients. "Am I going to worry about the dollars or get us back up and running? It's a nice option to take that decision out of the equation," adds Ms. Gonyea.

Success – moving forward

The UVM Medical Center believes that having Philips imaging equipment in place has positioned the Radiology Department at the leading edge of technology.

According to Ms. Gonyea: "I'm proud of the imaging systems we've chosen, our protocols, and the technologists we have to operate this equipment. We have a great onsite Philips service team committed to working with us around the clock – to going beyond the contract to minimize downtime and deliver quality images. I have friends willing to make a trip across the country to have a scan here because they feel we have the best imaging. That says a lot."

Learn more

Philips Multi-Vendor Services can help you maintain high uptime, keep unplanned service costs under control, and deliver quality images. Discover the rewards of getting responsive service and support for all your imaging systems from a single source. For more information, please visit www.philips.com/multivendorservices.

* As Fletcher Allen Health Care.

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