

# Customer Spotlight

MEDITECH

## Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital Uses MEDITECH to Drive Clinical Excellence

Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital (Baltimore, MD), an unsung hero and one of the foremost users of MEDITECH's Advanced Clinical Systems, is a 102-bed teaching hospital affiliated with both Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland. A pediatric care facility with a focus on rehabilitation, Mt. Washington has been continually driving clinical excellence through a commitment to using technology for almost 15 years.

"MEDITECH's inherent integration plays a crucial role in our success, and has for some time," explains Tim Brady, director of information systems at Mt. Washington since 1993. "The key for us is being able to enter data once, and having it available everywhere throughout our enterprise. Having a MEDITECH system has really enabled us to freely access the data our providers need, to deliver the high level of care that's become our standard."

### A Strong Sense of Mission Leads to I.T. Commitment

Mt. Washington's mission is a highly specialized one, focusing on inpatient, outpatient, and day programs for children with rehabilitation and/or complex medical needs. "We're fairly unique, and as such, it's imperative to use data to validate the safety, quality, and cost-effectiveness of the care we deliver," explains Sheldon Stein, CEO of Mt. Washington. "There is so much information exchange required just to get our patients in the door. The challenges of automating data to expedite and streamline the care we provide to our kids have really helped to shape our technology vision, and made us more committed to electronic records." The vast range of patient conditions found at Mt.



Washington, while challenging, has also served to unify the staff behind the concept of using I.T. to improve care. "We see all kinds of kids, from babies to adolescents, and we see all ranges of illness, from limb lengthening to gunshot wounds," explains Heather Dewan, RN, clinical applications manager. "Serving this particular patient population has given us a sense of innovation that's really pushed us on the technology side. Our staff is used to thinking out of the box in their clinical decision-making, and they bring that same spirit to getting the most out of our information system."

"There is so much information exchange required just to get our patients in the door. The challenges of automating data to expedite and streamline the care we provide to our kids have really helped to shape our technology vision, and made us more committed to electronic records."

*Sheldon Stein, CEO at Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital*

Brady also believes that Mt. Washington's smaller size and dedicated mission have been assets in getting Mt. Washington on track with care initiatives that may have stalled other organizations. "I think the sense of focus which we bring to patient care also translates to our technology projects," he says. "What would be considered 'big' I.T. projects might get done more effectively here, because they're a bit easier to manage and facilitate, based on our tight-knit culture. Everyone is on the same page here; we all do what it takes to achieve our patient care goals."

### Beginning the Journey with Paperless Nursing . . .

One goal the organization found early consensus on was paperless record-keeping. If you're looking for paper, you won't find any in the clinical departments at Mt. Washington. Since the site's initial implementation, executives have worked directly with clinical leaders and in con-

cert with the I.T. staff, to ensure the transition to electronic medical records would be successful.

"We ultimately decided to go LIVE with electronic documentation on all nursing floors simultaneously," explains Brady. "We're big advocates of the Big Bang Theory, of getting many areas LIVE at the same time. We don't do isolated pilot programs; we'd rather go LIVE with everything across the board, so there's no looking back." All nurses at Mt. Washington now record I&Os, vital signs, and bedside assignments on-line. Likewise, all of them exclusively use the electronic Medication Administration Record (eMAR) and Bedside Verification (BV) systems to record, track, and administer 100% of patient medications. The nurses also utilize the Nursing Status Board, which facilitates handoff communications and allows nurses to personalize care for each patient.

### Improving Medication Administration with Bar Coding

One of the single biggest safety improvements for Mt. Washington has come from Bedside Verification, which provides safety checks throughout the administration process. Upon scanning a patient's barcoded wristband and scheduled medications, bar code symbols appear next to each medication's record, indicating the barcode reader successfully read the dose. Upon scanning all scheduled doses, the nurse submits the scanned information to be verified against the patient's eMAR, ensuring the five rights of medication or transfusion are met.

"BV has made our medication process much safer, and medication errors have dramatically decreased," says Sharon Kelley, RN, vice president of patient care services. "In my opinion, every hospital in the U.S. should have bar-coded medication administration, for maintaining safe nursing practices."

Working in conjunction with the on-line Medication Administration Record and the on-line Transfusion Administration Record, BV has provided Mt. Washington's nurses with the clinical decision support they need to administer medications more safely. Warning messages alert the nurse to inconsistencies such as the wrong patient or the wrong medication. In addition, assessment routines prompt the nurse to collect information (e.g., pulse rate) to help confirm a medication's clinical appropriateness at the point of administration. In the eMAR, alerts such as color-coded data cells indicate to nurses that a medication is past due or discontinued. Pertinent patient information is readily available to nurses, including allergies and adverse drug events, lab results, and vital signs.

"This error flagging system is important for any patient, but especially for our chronically ill kids, who are on many

different medication cycles," explains Linda Thornton, RN, director of clinical services. "We're administering an enormous amount of medications here, with great variances in doses, despite our relatively small size. And it's critical to the safety of our patients that we get it right every single time."

### ... And Extending I.T. Benefits On to Physicians

After automating the Nursing departments, Mt. Washington wasted no time in extending the same level of adoption to its physicians. "There are no verbal or written orders here. We order 100% of medications, 100% on-line," says Dr. Richard Katz, medical director and vice president of medicine. "We had challenges in implementing these changes, but the key to getting our physicians on board was showing them the benefits and life-saving error reduction which would result from going paperless. After that, it didn't take much convincing."

Katz reports that Mt. Washington's physicians are also seeing time management and efficiency benefits as well. "The electronic charts are easier to find and easier to read because they eliminate redundancy. When physicians can clearly see the most relevant patient information, they can administer care more effectively," he says. "Our physicians have witnessed the benefits of investing time up-front for training and transitioning to electronic records. They know they've saved so much more time in the long run."

### Non-Typical Success, Rooted in Reliability

Certainly I.T. in general has made a huge difference in quality for the staff at Mt. Washington. When asked, 'why MEDITECH?' CEO Stein notes the answer was simple: "Reliability. It's the foundation of our partnership with MEDITECH. Part of my background I spent as a CIO, and I've had a lot of experience with different systems and vendors. And the uptime is simply unbelievable with MEDITECH."

Katz agrees: "While other vendor systems may seem break 'sexier,' they're not as reliable, and they don't have MEDITECH's utter lack of system downtime. The other huge difference with MEDITECH is staffing. We have a level of I.T. advancement comparable to or in excess of many other hospitals, but it's achieved with far fewer I.T. employees, and that approach works for us. We'd rather hire more physicians!"

### ***About Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital***

*Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital provides inpatient, outpatient, and day programs for infants and children with rehabilitation and/or complex medical needs. Mt. Washington is dedicated to maximizing the rehabilitation and development of its patients through the delivery of interdisciplinary services and programs, and providing every resource available to enable its patients to attain the highest quality of life within their families and their communities. Mt. Washington is a jointly owned corporate affiliate of The University of Maryland Medical System and The Johns Hopkins Health System.*

### ***About MEDITECH***

*MEDITECH has been the leader in the Health Care Information Systems (HCIS) industry since 1969. MEDITECH's applications unify clinical, administrative, and financial information across a health care organization, including acute care, long-term care, home health care, and physician practices. Today, more than 2,000 institutions worldwide use MEDITECH's information systems. For additional information on MEDITECH products and services, visit [www.meditech.com](http://www.meditech.com).*