

A decorative graphic consisting of several hexagons of varying shades of blue and grey, arranged in a honeycomb-like pattern, positioned above the main title.

HACKENSACK RADIOLOGY GROUP

CASE STUDY: SYNAPSE® ENTERPRISE IMAGING





Hackensack Radiology Group

Don Elting, Director of Operations, Hackensack Radiology Group

Contactless Patient Workflow

How two technology vendors and Hackensack Radiology Group ensured a safe, efficient process for patients and staff during the time of COVID-19

Imaging exams can often leave patients feeling anxious and uneasy. Imaging providers are accustomed to taking the right steps to put patients at ease before they undergo an MRI, CT scan, mammography, or even a simple X-ray exam. Unfortunately, that pre-exam anxiety intensified when COVID-19 arrived.

Deemed a global pandemic, COVID-19 brought stay-at-home orders that limited the ability - and desire - to interact with others face-to-face. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that elective and non-urgent medical procedures be postponed due to increased risk for viral exposure and transmission.

Even so, many Americans had urgent diagnostic imaging needs. But patients were cancelling appointments despite the urgency level - out of fear of contracting the virus in the reception area, exam room, or anywhere on the premises.

Thankfully, some imaging centers were able to take early steps to ease patient anxiety—before they even arrived at the center. [Hackensack Radiology Group](#) (HRG), a leading regional provider of diagnostic and interventional radiology services in Northern New Jersey, did just that by creating a “virtual waiting room.”

Once a patient is scheduled for an appointment, they receive automated communications to complete their registration online from the comfort of their home. On the day of the appointment, the patient can complete check-in electronically with their personal mobile device and wait safely in the comfort of their car for an automated call or text message from the staff when they are ready to start the exam, providing the patient with peace-of-mind knowing they were entering a sterile facility contact-free. These new workflows help healthcare facilities manage their waiting rooms in a new way, keep their staff safe, and comply with social distancing guidelines.

“Easing concerns about COVID-19 was not easy. Of course, we put all the best practices for cleaning and disinfecting our premises and equipment into effect, and our staff stayed current with the latest protocols for social distancing to keep patients safe,” said Don Elting, Director of Operations, Hackensack Radiology Group.

“However, it was technology that enabled us to solve our waiting room dilemma. The capabilities that allowed us to have a full ‘virtual waiting room’ in the height of the pandemic will serve us well beyond the immediate COVID crisis.”



Technology Partnership Makes it Possible

“Contactless patient workflow” is the best phrase to describe the wonders of the virtual waiting room that HRG put into practice in order to operate efficiently during COVID-19. But how did the imaging practice acquire the technology to do so?

HRG currently leverages both Royal Solutions’ Patient and Provider Engagement platforms and [Fujifilm’s Synapse® PACS](#). Through the partnership between Fujifilm and Royal Solutions, Royal’s suite of Self-Service Care and Revenue Management solutions are available to the entire Fujifilm Synapse customer base, extending the Fujifilm portfolio of integrated value-added capabilities.

“Combining Royal’s capabilities with our enterprise imaging and informatics solutions allows us to further strengthen our offering to enable providers to better engage with their patients, improve care and operational efficiencies, while also reducing operational costs,” says Bill Lacy, Vice President, Medical Informatics at FUJIFILM Medical Systems U.S.A., Inc.



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In the era of COVID-19 and beyond, a “hands-off” process that lets technology do the work is invaluable. HRG is able to provide a comprehensive contactless patient workflow—from appointment scheduling and pre-registration, to collecting payment prior to the visit, to clinic check-in, and finally providing patients with the study result.

“During this pandemic, we had to pivot on a daily basis as new information and concerns were raised,” says Elting. “Our staff and patients were apprehensive about sharing items like insurance ID cards and prescriptions when they arrived on site. Royal quickly worked with HRG to allow patients to take a picture from their mobile device and upload it into the Royal Solutions platform. Not only did it reduce the handling of items, but the prescription was readily available for the Radiologists when viewing the images in Fujifilm’s Synapse PACS.”

With the strategic partnership between Royal and Fujifilm, now all Fujifilm Synapse customers have access to a wide range of electronic communications and workflows. The solutions include insurance verification, estimation, authorization and streamlined payment processing, electronic patient workflows including pre-registration, contactless registration, access to results, images and engagement from any device, robust communications and notifications, complete revenue cycle management, and referring provider engagement enabling authorization, clinical decision support and robust interoperability services.

Operating Effectively in “The New Normal”

In today’s uncertain world, all imaging providers can benefit from workflow solutions that help limit the spread of communicable illnesses via reduced wait time and reducing close contact inside the medical practice’s lobby or waiting room.

With Royal’s integrated solutions, Fujifilm’s Synapse customers can now transform more quickly to meet today’s challenging climate. Contactless patient workflow functions include the ability to send automated notifications via text, email, or robo-calls to communicate with patients and offer the ability to request and manage appointments online.

In addition, the tools offer the capability for patients to complete and sign all pre-visit forms in advance electronically. They can even pay their bill or co-payment online before the visit. Upon arriving at the

clinic, patients can check-in, answer any final screening questions, and wait safely in their car until escorted into the facility.

Synapse customers who use Royal solutions can seamlessly send exam results to patients via text and/or portal messages. Referring physicians also enjoy the ease and speed of receiving results and images electronically. The result is higher quality and more efficient care for patients.

In the case of HRG, Royal’s Contactless Patient Workflow feature has proven to be a game changer. Utilizing this feature, the team at HRG successfully adapted patient workflows for the safety of both patients and staff. They can continue to have a full schedule while the waiting room remains vacant.



“Ordinarily, an empty waiting room would be a very bad sign, but when you are using Royal to register patients it’s a sign of safe business practices,” says Don Elting. “Our patients are registering at home, then we text them when it’s time to enter our suite for the exam. We are thereby reducing potential exposure for both our staff and patients!”

For imaging centers, operating effectively in “the new normal” means taking additional steps to adapt and ensure safe, anxiety-free visits for patients as well as healthcare workers. The right technology—and the right partners—can make all the difference in succeeding.

Learn more about Fujifilm’s Enterprise Imaging solutions by visiting ei.fujimed.com, or [contact us here](#) to request a demo.