

Improving the Pace of Patient Care: Self Service Technology Reduces Patient Registration Time at William Osler

William Osler Health Centre continues on its mission to build the strongest community health centre in the province by improving service to the nearly one million residents in its service area. Offering acute and ancillary healthcare, William Osler (www.williamoslerhc.on.ca) is the largest community hospital in Ontario, serving the growing and diverse communities of Etobicoke, Brampton and surrounding areas through its Etobicoke General Hospital, Peel Memorial Hospital and soon via the new Brampton Civic Hospital, scheduled to open in fall 2007.

Improving the efficiency of patient care is an ongoing goal, as the population in the area grows at an unprecedented rate. The area served by Osler is one of the fastest growing regions in the country.

One challenge to efficiency has been processing OHIP claims accurately. Often data entry errors during patient registration result in incomplete transactions that interrupt insurance claim cycles, resulting in late filing or incomplete, inaccurate claims.

In an effort to resolve these inefficiencies, Osler envisioned a way to automate the patient registration process, standardize collection of patient data, validate Ontario Ministry of Health cards online in real time, and fully integrate to Osler's ADT (Meditech) system to confirm appointments – and ultimately eliminate patient registration errors.

That vision became reality at the June Annual General Meeting, when Osler unveiled PACE™, the Patient Automated Care Experience system, designed for patient registration. PACE is a self-service kiosk – much like an ATM machine – that can be conveniently located anywhere in a healthcare facility to speed up, streamline and guarantee accuracy in the patient registration process.

One of the first of its kind in Canada, PACE was launched in April 2006 in collaboration with Aurillion Micro Systems (www.aurillion.com), an innovative software development company focused on healthcare products designed to improve productivity and workflow for patient care. Powered by Aurillion's Waveforms® integration and workflow technology, PACE can be configured to integrate with all applications and workflow processes within healthcare organizations – HIS, Hospital ADT or regional EMPI, Departmental Scheduling, Laboratory services, Financial and Regional/State/Provincial Registries.

PACE Makes Its Case in Dialysis Unit

In July 2006, Osler deployed the PACE system in the Dialysis Unit at Peel Memorial Hospital, where patients are now registering for treatment on their own with a quick swipe of their health card at the PACE kiosk. Upon arrival patients simply swipe their health card, verify their information on a touch screen and are successfully registered. The entire process? Under 10 seconds on average.

PACE can reduce patient registration time by as much as 95% and help hospital staff focus on patient care. At any given time, staff can access consistent and accurate patient or scheduling data.

The PACE integrated workflow for the Dialysis Unit was conceived and implemented within three months.

Deployment Set to Expand

Further PACE implementations are being rolled out in phases.

The prototype integrated workflow was presented in June. The pilot phase is underway – starting with the Dialysis Unit system at Peel Memorial Hospital. Kiosks are being deployed to three additional areas at the Etobicoke General and Peel Memorial sites.

This new kiosk technology is being evaluated carefully to ensure realization of all the projected benefits. Future PACE kiosks may feature Wayfinding, Recurring and Clinical registrations, patient questionnaires and health information.

William Osler Health Centre is raising the standard of patient care – and challenging other healthcare facilities to keep pace.

† The use of the term 'PACE' in this publication is not associated with the pre-existing William Osler Health Centre hospital program of the same name.

