



The Computerworld Honors Program

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Final Copy of Case Study

Status:

Laureate

Year:

2013

Organization Name:

Hennepin County

Organization URL:

<http://www.co.hennepin.mn.us/>

Project Name:

Hennepin County Medical Examiner Merger

Please select the category in which you are submitting your entry:

Mobile Access

Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)

The Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office (HCME) is dedicated to providing the citizens of Hennepin and other partnering counties with state-of-the-art medical examiner services in a regional fashion. This vision will be realized through a multi-county collaborative effort. The goal of this effort is to merge the talent and resources from two offices and create new efficiencies in the process, thereby ensuring that this newly formed regional center of forensic excellence is well prepared to provide whatever medical examiner services are required by the jurisdictions we serve in the future. This merger will enable participating counties to make use of the highly skilled forensic pathology and death investigation talent, the state-of-the-art morgue facility in the Forensic Science Building, and the services available close at hand from the laboratory at Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC) by extending and establishing their strategic business partnerships to other jurisdictions. The HCME-MRMEO technology architecture accomplishments for the Phase I initiative in 2012 included: - Infrastructure Redesign to support the new business (including mobile/off-site staff) - Forensic

Advantage upgraded in production with majority of the physical servers to "state of the art" virtual servers. - Extensis added the capability to view authorized photos as an authenticated internal user. Plans are underway to implement access to Policy Manuals and photos for authorized external users. - Winscribe migrated from the local only Olympus dictation to the Winscribe server-based solution. Plans are underway to implement access to the system so that physicians can securely dictate off-site and upload real time using iPhone/Android apps. In support of this project, Hennepin County's IT Department provided services including the redesign of system architecture, provided new equipment and appropriate security access, performed data validation and conversion for the consolidation of legacy systems.

When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)

The merger occurred on January 1, 2013. Additional enhancements and application upgrades are planned to occur in 2013; these include continued development of an overall content management plan, migration to higher tiers of system availability, and a major application upgrade to the Forensic Advantage case management application.

Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)

Phase 1 of the project completed on January 1, 2013, and is currently in the warranty phase. Phase 2, which includes the enhancements and upgrades referenced in question #6, is scheduled to occur during 2013.

Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)

Mobile computing has resulted in the greatest benefits. - Physicians can now manage and review cases from anywhere, at any time, without having to drive into the office. This enables physicians to more easily stay current on their cases, thus getting death certificates and autopsy reports done in a timelier manner; this directly benefits families of the deceased. – On-call investigators appreciate that they can now work remotely from their laptops and still have access to all of the various software applications they need. This gives them greater flexibility in managing all of their commitments. - Investigators have mentioned it is very beneficial having trained investigators mobilized out in the field who can handle cases and be available as needed. It is especially beneficial during high-volume times.



Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)

This project is a best practice in that it merges the talent and resources from multiple counties and creates new efficiencies in the process, thereby ensuring that this newly formed regional center of forensic excellence is well prepared to provide whatever medical examiner services are required by the jurisdictions served now and in the future. This vision aligns with Hennepin County's values and goals, is in the best interest of its citizens and those in partnering counties, and builds on the already nationally recognized reputation of our Chief Medical Examiner and his office.