

Fitzgibbon Hospital Automates Data Delivery to State Health Agency, Meets Meaningful Use Objectives with Iatric Systems Public Health Interfaces



- OBJECTIVE:** Fitzgibbon Hospital, a 60-bed community hospital in Marshall, Missouri, needed to meet the Stage 1 and Stage 2 Meaningful Use requirements for electronic reporting of public health data (Immunization, Laboratory Results, and Syndromic Surveillance) to the state health agency.
- SITUATION:** As a non-profit community hospital, Fitzgibbon Hospital is a vital resource for central Missouri communities it serves. That role includes sending health data from its Health Information System (HIS) to the Missouri Department of Health so it can be used for monitoring statewide trends. The hospital had been faxing this data weekly, which was time-consuming for hospital staff and meant that the data was out of date when it arrived.
- SOLUTION:** Fitzgibbon Hospital purchased from Iatric Systems three Public Health Interfaces that automate the sending process while supporting Meaningful Use objectives. Iatric Systems complements its technology with expert systems integration to ensure the right data in the right format flows seamlessly between the hospital and state systems.
- RESULTS:** Syndromic Surveillance is now live to meet Stage 1 requirements, Immunization Reporting is in process, and Lab Reportables will be implemented for Stage 2. In addition to complying with Meaningful Use, Fitzgibbon Hospital is able to send health information to the state agency at the moment it becomes available in the HIS, making it much more timely and useful for tracking disease outbreaks.

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–Tom Jones,
Chief Information Officer
Fitzgibbon Hospital



As hospitals work to fulfill Meaningful Use objectives, the requirements for submitting electronic data to public health agencies can be particularly confusing. Differences between Stage 1 and Stage 2, technical complexity, data mapping issues, and varying levels of preparedness by state agencies have left many hospitals uncertain how to proceed.

Fitzgibbon Hospital, a 60-bed acute-care facility located in Marshall, Missouri, relies on Iatric Systems Public Health Interfaces and professional systems integration expertise to automate the delivery of public health information and comply with Meaningful Use. Syndromic Surveillance is now live to meet Stage 1 requirements, Immunization Reporting is in process, and Lab Reportables will be implemented for Stage 2. Iatric Systems is leading the three implementations, working closely with hospital staff and the State health agency.

"I could have used my primary vendor to provide the public health interfaces, but Iatric Systems was able to do it better, faster, and cheaper," says Tom Jones, Chief Information Officer at Fitzgibbon Hospital. "They have done a superb job of becoming associates with my team as well as the State. They know our State contact by name, and I've seen very pleasant emails between Iatric Systems and the State as they work on the interfaces together."

Syndromic Surveillance was in full operation well before the deadline — one of the benefits of working with a partner that is adept at guiding a hospital through a public health interface implementation. "Iatric Systems provided an in-depth spreadsheet that showed us where data was needed and what nomenclature to use when mapping the dictionaries," Tom adds.

Tracking Epidemics in Real Time

Complying with Meaningful Use is not the only benefit of the Iatric Systems solution. "I was faxing the Syndromic material every week, and now I don't have to because it's delivered to the State automatically," says Jill DeWeese, Infection Preventionist. "We know the connection is churning in the background, and we are very impressed with what the data shows and what we can gain from it."

Jill adds that the ability to share data about diseases electronically provides caregivers with more timely and useful information for tracking the spread of illness in the community and statewide. "For example, I was recently the administrative nurse on call, and the house supervisor commented that we're seeing a lot of nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea coming in the emergency room. I saw the symptoms were appearing all over the state. By knowing the symptoms were statewide, we know we didn't have a case of local food poisoning."

The ability to detect possible bioterrorism as early as possible is another key benefit. "We can detect that so much more rapidly now rather than waiting a week before finding out that a situation is occurring," Jill says. "Red flags are going to fly all over the place."

Preparing for the Next Stage

Iatric Systems continues working closely with Tom, Jill, and the rest of the Fitzgibbon team to deliver the remaining interfaces and help the hospital prepare for Stage 2 of Meaningful Use. "The Iatric Systems people are a great asset," concludes Tom, "and that's nothing they haven't heard from me already."

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