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Tamara Allbright
Technical Supervisor, Laboratory
Baton Rouge General Medical Center

Budget constraints, staff shortages, and the unrelenting demand to improve patient care with fewer resources. These are the day-to-day challenges of clinical diagnostics laboratories. Many of our customers are turning to strategic deployment of diagnostics IT capabilities to help them automate, standardize, and integrate their testing processes and data management functions. And these customers are finding rich rewards in improved patient care through higher quality results with faster turnaround. There is also a new level of productivity that helps the staff do more in less time and, just as important, enjoy their work more by reducing repetitive manual tasks.



ADVIA LabCell track with lab automation software

Customers Share Their Experiences with ADVIA CentraLink Data Management System

Winning with Diagnostics IT

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Diagnostics IT at Work

ARUP Laboratories at the University of Utah Hospital

At ARUP Laboratories at the University of Utah Hospital, Salt Lake City, the clinical lab looked to the ADVIA CentraLink® Data Management System to improve turnaround time (TAT) for hematology at the main lab, as well as at the lab at Huntsman Cancer Hospital. Their three ADVIA® 2120 hematology analyzers support a total of 12,000 samples per month from the two facilities. This strategy has paid off: Turnaround time has decreased from 37 minutes to 23 minutes, which is a significant improvement and helps doctors expedite treatment decisions for patients, especially in the oncology daycare setting. Key to decreasing turnaround time are the auto-verification capabilities on the ADVIA CentraLink, which also improves the quality of results. “The advantage of having ADVIA CentraLink is that it doesn’t matter who is running the instrument. All of the samples are treated the same; so you standardize your process. And I think that improves quality,” says Omar Muñoz, lead technologist. “The techs like the colors: green means go; yellow, hold and review; red, stop and take action.”

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Omar Muñoz
Lead Technologist
ARUP Laboratories

Baton Rouge General Medical Center

Baton Rouge General Medical Center in Louisiana took a big leap in July 2008 when the institution installed two identical systems at Mid City and Bluebonnet, their two main hospitals, to handle the growing testing volume. Each system included two ADVIA 1800 Chemistry Systems, two ADVIA Centaur® XP Immunoassay Systems, a Clinitek Atlas® Automated Urine Chemistry Analyzer, and a Diagnostica Stago® STAR® Coagulation Analyzer, with the support of the ADVIA® LabCell® Automation Solution and ADVIA CentraLink. Says Tamara Allbright, technical supervisor, Laboratory, “We went live with all of the instruments, data and process management, and a new Laboratory Information System (LIS) all on the same day. As hard as it was, we had very good support from Siemens, which made a huge difference.” She adds, “Our techs like the system because it is pretty user-friendly. They like being able to control everything from one computer. They call it the ‘captain’s chair.’ We’ve always had good turnaround time. Now we have added confidence because some of the human variables have been eliminated—such as forgetting about a specimen in the centrifuge—and we can tell a physician when he/she can expect a result.”

Kaiser Permanente Denver

Kaiser Permanente Denver, Colorado serves as a reference lab for 19 clinics within an area that spans 80 miles north, 60 miles south, and 20 miles east and west. The lab handles 3.5 to 4 million results a year for 160 different chemistry, immunology, hepatitis, HIV, and specialty tests such as vitamin D with a small staff of fewer than six FTEs (full-time equivalents). Two ADVIA 1800 Chemistry Systems, an ADVIA Centaur, an ADVIA Centaur XP, plus an IMMULITE® 2000 Analyzer and a Diagnostica Stago STAR Coagulation Analyzer are all on the ADVIA LabCell track. Says Michael Sheehan, PhD, technical operations manager, “The ADVIA CentraLink is the part that makes my job easy and fun.” Dr. Sheehan likes the ease with which he can write rules and queries.

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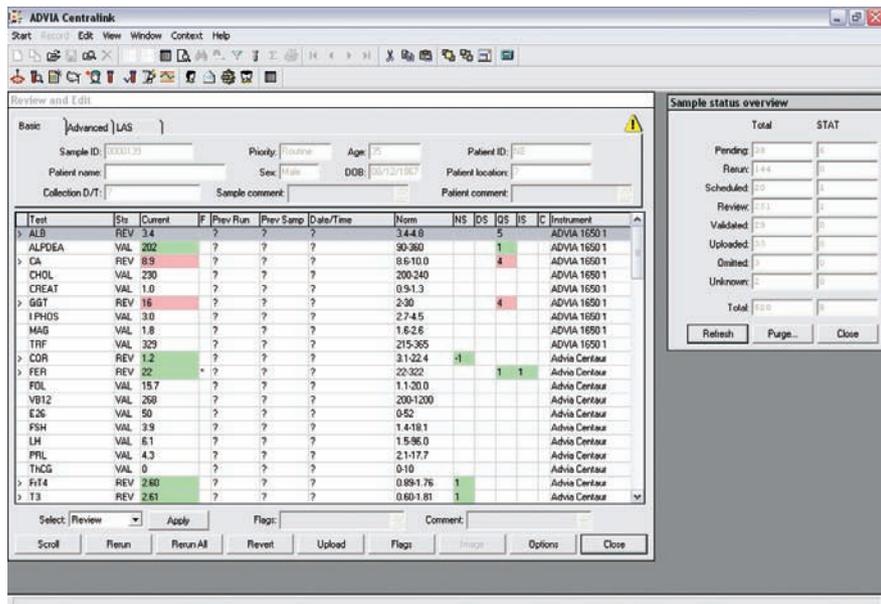
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Kaiser Permanente Denver



Dr. Sheehan and team from Kaiser Permanente Denver



ADVIA Centralink screen shot

Swedish Covenant Hospital

Thomson Healthcare’s Solucient[®] ranked the clinical laboratory at Swedish Covenant Hospital in the top 15 percent for productivity, as measured by total billed tests per lab FTE, and the bottom 12 percent for total expenses per 100 billed tests. The ADVIA Centralink workstation, in operation since 2002, manages three immunoassay analyzers, two chemistry analyzers, two hematology analyzers and a coagulation analyzer, while specimen handling is automated by the ADVIA WorkCell[®] Automation Solution. The result is an efficient, effective operation that handles 1.1 million tests per year to support the 550 physicians at the hospital and another 110 community physicians. Says Susan Dawson, clinical lab manager, “It goes without saying that the ADVIA WorkCell streamlines everything. But the true benefit is in the back-end where results review takes place. That’s where the ADVIA Centralink has the most impact, by making more efficient use of our technologist staff.”

University of Michigan Hospital

The University of Michigan Hospital (UMH) is a tertiary care academic center where the clinical lab churns out 8 million test results a year—7 million just in chemistry and immunodiagnosics, so effective deployment of automation and information technology to maximize productivity and cost efficiency is a given. According to Sue Stern, administrative healthcare manager of the Chemical Pathology Department, the lab has been able to almost double its volume over a period of four years without adding staff or instrumentation. Just as important are quality improvements. Even as the volume doubled, the number of errors was reduced by half. Turnaround time also kept dropping. And the lab was able to reduce the number of SST Blood Collection Tubes per patient by as much as 60 percent in the outpatient area. “If you look at our turnaround time and error rate statistics, you can see how we’ve worked with the automation line, leaned out our processes, and improved things with the ADVIA Centralink,” Stern notes. UMH’s case study will be published in Medical Laboratory Observer in early 2010.

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Sue Stern
Administrative Healthcare Manager
Chemical Pathology
University of Michigan Hospital

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