



AdventHealth expands complex MRI exam access without growing existing staff¹

How remote scanning assistance is transforming its MRI service





“We’ve already experienced great value out of this partnership—we are now able to perform MR cardiac exams at one of our locations, which we couldn’t do before. We have also seen a considerable decrease in exam variability, turnaround time, and travel costs between facilities. We love syngo Virtual Cockpit and are looking forward to expanding this product.”

Ann Hester
MRI Service Line Modality Manager
AdventHealth

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With its most experienced lead tech in Orlando, FL, AdventHealth expanded advanced MRI exams, improved overall MRI exam quality, and increased exam consistency at three separate sites in Florida. Why and how did they do it?

“We had patients traveling 60 miles to Orlando because their local hospital didn’t offer the MRI exam they needed,” says Will Lee, Expert Technologist for Virtual Cockpit at AdventHealth. The need for more complex MRI exams was clear but exams, like cardiac MRI, are challenging. Many technologists need to invest multiple hours scanning patients and working with radiologists to become experts in complex exams, such as cardiac MRI. Still, these complex exams provide valuable information and are necessary in order to provide the best patient care.

The challenge, then, was clear: How to expand services, improve overall MRI quality, increase consistency across staff, and streamline protocols—without adding significant costs.

“Siemens Healthineers has been a great collaborative partner for us and syngo Virtual Cockpit has exceeded our expectations,” Hester continues. “Our patients are experiencing improved access to care—outpatients can get scanned closer to home or work and inpatients do not need to be transferred to our main hospital. We love syngo Virtual Cockpit and are already looking forward to expanding this product.”



Virtual, real-time optimization

The team elected to leverage *syngo*® Virtual Cockpit, remote scanning assistance software from Siemens Healthineers, on three MRI systems at three separate locations (Altamonte Hospital, Apopka Hospital, and Celebration Hospital). By using *syngo* Virtual Cockpit, Lee can virtually help technologists in different locations in real-time.

“Will can teach them how to do cardiac MRI and improve their imaging quality,” says Ann Hester, MRI Service Line Manager, AdventHealth. “And, if a technologist at another site is out sick or is very busy, Will can scan patients remotely, as long as there is someone² there to work with the patient.”

Eliminating transport costs

The results have had a dramatic impact on patients. “Now, they can often stay at their local hospital for their MRI exams,” says Lee. This saves outpatients the time and cost of traveling for an MRI exam—and saves AdventHealth costs. Before using remote scanning assistance, inpatients who needed advanced MRI exams often had to be transferred to the main campus in Orlando. *syngo* Virtual Cockpit eliminates that inpatient transport cost.

It’s changed the workflow for Lee as well. He no longer needs to travel to each of the three sites to optimize protocols or perform system changes. As a result, more of his time can be spent focusing on the needs of his team and their patients, not travel.

Protocol consistency across sites

The software’s communication features enable AdventHealth’s technologists and radiologists to reach out to Lee as protocol changes or exam needs arise. “There are more exam sequences than the technologists may be aware of or comfortable with. I can use the software to show them how to use a specific sequence,” says Lee. “I can also review protocols and improve specific images on all three systems. And based on what a radiologist needs, I can optimize parameters or work with the radiologist to create a new protocol and make it available quickly at all three sites.”

syngo Virtual Cockpit also provides a level of transparency the team didn’t have before. When a new protocol is created or shared, the team in Orlando can see if it’s in use. “Will can see exactly what’s on each scanner in each location,” says Hester. “It is not possible or realistic for him to drive to each location to look. This way, we can actually see the protocols and anything that’s been changed on each of the three MRI systems.”

With this kind of support available, the radiologists at each of the sites felt comfortable with the quality of the complex exams from the very first patient. In fact, the first exam the team performed using *syngo* Virtual Cockpit was a pediatric cardiac MRI. The field team set up the patient and provided her with contrast, and Lee did the study. The patient was a 14-year-old special needs child who—thanks to remote scanning assistance—did not have to travel to a different facility. “This was the first exam of this kind that this site’s team had ever done. She was able to stay with a facility that is familiar to her and her family and did not need to come back for additional images. That’s pretty phenomenal,” says Hester.

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²The local user/person with the patient at the scanner must have the required qualifications per all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations; they must also have any required certifications.

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