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UPHS Focuses on Infections

In an effort to prevent infection and detect real-time injury, UPHS taps a different sort of doctor, TheraDoc.  
Michelle Grey



Philadelphia-based University of Pennsylvania Health System (UPHS) has selected several infection surveillance and real-time injury detection and prevention systems provided by Salt Lake City, Utah-based TheraDoc Inc.

"With the state of Pennsylvania mandating that all infections be reported, we were faced with the challenge of gathering information from multiple databases, which was extremely time consuming. Infection control practitioners were spending all their time on the computer, instead of at the patient's bedside. The work shifted from prevention to data gathering," says Neil Fishman, M.D., associate professor of medicine, division of infectious diseases, University of Pennsylvania.

According to Fishman, UPHS was looking for a system that could improve the workflow and expedite the processes of information gathering and reporting, so that staff could focus on prevention. "We wanted to incorporate multiple functions into one system. Initially we looked at a variety of systems but chose TheraDoc because it was the most flexible and had the functionality we were looking for. We wanted an intuitive interface, the ability to customize our needs, and interpret radiology reports. It was also important to find a system that would keep all of our data onsite as opposed to routing it to an offsite server," says Fishman.

Moving away from just the infection control capabilities, TheraDoc will also offer decision support for antibiotic selection, which UPHS currently does manually. "It has the ability to prevent or monitor adverse drug events with its enhanced decision support capabilities," Fishman says. Through these capabilities UPHS will be able to monitor antibiotic usage patterns, and the real-time emergence of infections and antimicrobial-resistant organisms.

"We're in the process of implementing TheraDoc, but it's not yet functional. We're going to begin piloting the program at the end of February, and we hope to have other functionalities, including the infection control assistant, up and running by April."

Mandatory public reporting of infections is spreading throughout the United States. "If an institution is looking for an information system, they need to make sure the IS package meets their reporting needs," Fishman says. It's important for them to make an accurate assessment of their needs."