REALISM™ lets radiologists visualize a new level of detail in DR

**Cuero Regional Hospital and REALISM Software**

After Cuero Regional Hospital implemented REALISM software, Konica Minolta Healthcare’s next-generation advanced image processing software, repeat exposures in digital radiography dropped 20%*. Technologists no longer make adjustments on every image, increasing their efficiency and enabling a higher patient throughput. Radiologists’ productivity and diagnostic confidence are significantly enhanced with the sharpness and clarity of images, including the ability to visualize bone and soft tissue in X-rays. And, patients receive exceptional quality care in shorter exam times.

Nestled between Houston and San Antonio in South Texas, Cuero Regional Hospital offers many of the same services as larger urban-based hospitals. The rural acute care facility has a 24x7 emergency room, a women’s center, inpatient and day surgery units and an attached outpatient center to deliver exceptional care in a comfortable environment close to patients’ homes.

With nearly 60% Medicare/Medicaid patients, Cuero Regional Hospital transitioned its three computed radiography X-ray rooms to digital radiography (DR) in late 2017 to avoid the reduction in reimbursement that would result from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016.

According to Tyler Lemke, Director of Radiology, the hospital had been using Konica Minolta Healthcare CR systems since 2007. When it came time to upgrade the systems to DR, he naturally turned to the same company that he trusted for high quality and reliable X-ray imaging solutions.

“Image quality is the most important feature of our imaging systems for our radiologists to make a confident diagnosis, enabling our clinicians to deliver high quality and more personalized patient care,” Lemke says.

Cuero Regional Hospital chose the new Konica Minolta AeroDR® wireless flat panel detectors, CS-7 workstations (Control Stations) and REALISM image processing, which provides superior visualization of soft tissue and bone structures in the same image. REALISM software delivers a new level of clarity and detail in X-ray imaging that improves the sharpness of fine details, enhances visibility of hard to penetrate structures, and delivers excellent visibility of high contrast images.
Lemke has seen first-hand improved department efficiency and workflow due to the increased image clarity and sharpness from REALISM software.

“With the previous system and software, I would make image adjustments prior to sending the images to PACS,” Lemke says. “Now, with REALISM image processing, I rarely touch them. I almost always get exactly what I want with the new system, only occasionally needing to make an adjustment.”

The decrease in image manipulation has led to higher technologist efficiency and faster patient throughput. As an example, Lemke can turn around chest X-ray studies in seconds. “Just recently, I was able to complete chest X-rays on three patients in eight minutes. That’s getting them in, capturing the exam and letting them go,” Lemke says.

Radiologist productivity and diagnostic confidence have also increased, which has helped increase accuracy of the radiologists’ reports. One radiologist has shared with Lemke that he can read through X-rays acquired with AeroDR wireless flat panel detectors and processed with REALISM software faster—without being concerned that he has missed anything.

As an example, Lemke cites a specific case of a patient with a hairline malleolar fracture of the ankle. The fracture is generally difficult to see, but when the images were processed with REALISM software it was prominent on the image and easy to visualize.

“With REALISM and AeroDR, we can now see things in X-ray that we couldn’t see before,” Lemke says.

REALISM software also enhances the sharpness of high frequency microstructures, such as bone trabeculae, for improved visibility. *The results in this case study are specific to Cuero Regional Hospital and are not intended as predictive for other users of REALISM software.

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