

Butler Health System Cardiovascular Services

Workflow and Connectivity Drives Growth

Neighbors taking care of neighbors, with the technology and clinical expertise equal to or surpassing a big city hospital – that's the approach that Butler Health System Cardiovascular Services takes as it delivers top-quality cardiology services.

Founded in 1898, BHS has numerous locations throughout Butler, Pennsylvania and surrounding counties. With more than 20 highly educated specialists, BHS provides care for everything from routine cardiac care, interventional cardiology, electrophysiology, open heart surgery, TAVR, and rehabilitation. The 296 bed hospital system has been recognized for receiving a 5-star rating from Health Grades for its cardiovascular surgery program and earning the Apex Award from VHA for Acute Myocardial Infarction and Heart Failure.

"The only way for a small, community hospital to survive in today's changing environment is by continuing to provide quality care, to expand into new regions, and by adding cardiovascular service lines. You have to build partnerships and demonstrate their value, and you can only do that with image management technology that drives workflow and connectivity well beyond the physical walls of the hospital," said Thomas W. Raraigh, BS, RT (R) (CT), Director, Cardiology & Imaging Services.

In 1998, in search of an image archive for Cath lab and echo studies, BHS found a cardiovascular information systems (CVIS) provider that approaches partnerships in much the same way. Starting with an archive for Cath lab images in the early years of digital archiving communication systems, the BHS and ScImage partnership quickly expanded to consolidate multiple cardiology data silos within a single database with a single log-in, including Echo, Peripheral Vascular, ECG and Nuclear Medicine.



Dr. Philip Painley, BHS Cardiologist

"The major Cardiology PACS upgrade we completed with ScImage in 2013 has been pivotal in our success over the past three years. For the first time, ScImage gave us the ability to launch cardiac PACS within our EMR, providing full diagnostic viewing and reporting capability for seamless workflow during patient imaging communication. This has resulted in faster clinical decisions and improved our workflow, reducing the length of stay for inpatients by enabling cardiac diagnostic testing interpretations 24/7."

John R. Falen, PACS Administrator

ScImage upgrades have also featured structured reporting, providing BHS a fully order-driven imaging solution for all cardiology services and capabilities." Previously, cardiology reports were not uniform and turn-around ranged from 24 to 72 hours. Referring physician satisfaction scores have significantly improved now that reports are consistent across all interpreting physicians. Importantly, the structured reporting and seamless access to a unified SQL database offers clinical and operational analytics that play a key role in meeting the stringent requirements of the ICAVL and ICANL accreditation bodies," added Falen.



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In addition to serving its own patients, Butler Hospital supports several small, rural facilities that perform echo exams and contract with Butler to interpret the studies. Previously, this required cardiologists to physically drive to the other facilities to read the exams. Additionally, STAT studies would often have to be deferred to another cardiologist group if the assigned physician was completing office visits off site.

“Our group is extended well beyond the front doors of the hospital, in some cases, 30 miles. The ScImage platform has provided us ability to provide services in these remote locations and still provide quality and timely reporting for studies performed at any one of our outpatient or in-patient facilities,” said the cardiology group administrator.

Secure Cloud-based image sharing capabilities and interoperability built into the ScImage platform enable BHS to upload and interpret diagnostic cardiovascular studies on patients performed at other facilities. Cardiologists have the ability to launch the PACs from anywhere and complete interpretations at anytime, including STAT studies. This allows BHS to provide services to remote sites without the expense and difficulty of setting up multiple cardiology PACS systems at each location.

“With the ScImage system, I can read from anywhere, in my office or at home, making it very efficient, timely and paperless,” said Dr. Prem Kumar, BHS Cardiologist.

According to Dr. Phillip Painley, BHS Cardiologist. “It’s serviceable and cost effective, I utilize the mobile platform frequently while on call and the report tools make delivery of studies more efficient.”

“By providing the diagnostic cardiology services at these smaller rural facilities, we help ensure that all patients have access to timely, high quality cardiac care,” added Raraigh.

“In turn, we continue to strengthen our relationships and receive referrals for high end cardiology services at our main campus. This investment has helped build our surgical and cath business and resulted in a strong downstream revenue for high end cardiovascular procedures.”

Raraigh attributes some of the success of Butler Health System Cardiovascular Services over the past several years to its partnership with ScImage.

“We have been able to improve workflow and efficiency, not just for our cardiologists, but for our entire staff and for our patients.

With the ability to get diagnostic testing done faster and generate reports more efficiently, we can treat and discharge patients faster and more cost-effectively. Based on ScImage’s ability to help us reduce report turnaround times, increase access and reduce costs for our cardiovascular services, Butler is now reviewing ScImage’s Enterprise Imaging solution to integrate radiology and other imaging services.”

“As we have grown, ScImage has grown with us. For more than 17 years, they have been more than a vendor, they have been our partner – small enough to be responsive yet big enough to get it done,” concluded Raraigh.