

Structured reporting delivers value at Baptist Health South Florida

How PowerScribe 360 improves patient care and physician satisfaction with cohesive workflow and structured reporting.

Challenge

- Extremely high volume; 1.2 million imaging studies flow through this radiology department every year
- Need for simple workflow that's easy to use and helps address clinical questions
- Lack of major standardization across clinical reports

Solution

- Nuance® PowerScribe® 360 Reporting
- Nuance® PowerScribe® 360 Workflow Orchestration

Results

- Streamlined workflow creates greater efficiency for radiologists
- Standardized templates create clinically relevant reports with improved satisfaction for both radiologists and referring physicians
- Innovative processes and more efficient workflows lead to improved patient outcomes

Health system goes beyond image interpretation to affect the continuum of care

Baptist Health South Florida (BHSF) encompasses seven hospitals and more than 20 imaging centers throughout the Miami area. Every year, the 80-person radiology department performs more than 1.2 million imaging exams. This extremely high volume means the department must find cohesive solutions that help improve patient care and physician satisfaction, as well as optimize scarce resources—time, people, and funds—for the health system.



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Dr. Frederico Souza
Baptist Health South Florida

Dr. Jonathan Messinger, neuroradiologist and medical director of imaging informatics, and Dr. Frederico Souza, body and oncologic imaging, are two members of the clinical team undertaking improvement projects to help achieve these goals. As practicing radiologists, both have been involved in quality initiatives at BHSF.

“I’m interested in aspects of this work that go beyond image interpretation. We understand the importance of improving efficiency, ensuring the quality of our radiology reports, and the end goal of delivering the best possible product,” says Dr. Souza. “One of the things that’s become clear to us is that the quality of the report is greatly associated with how it’s structured—and that’s one way you can add value to the continuum of patient care.”

Structured reporting offers far-reaching benefits for radiologists and referring physicians alike. A standard list of items and organs to be assessed during each interpretation helps busy radiologists overcome interruptions and distractions to create consistent, high-quality reports that give ordering clinicians all the information they need, in an easily readable format, to develop an appropriate care plan. Especially in situations when a radiologist is not used to doing a certain type of specialty interpretation, the structured report helps ensure certain information is not overlooked. And in cases of cancer imaging, the structured report template means the radiologist can create reports that specifically address the detailed clinical questions the referring clinician needs.

For example, if a patient has an initial staging CT scan for pancreatic cancer, Dr. Souza explains, “There is specific information that needs to be in the report so the physician knows what to do next. Specifically, the surgeon wants to know the relationship of the tumor with adjacent organs, vascular structures, whether certain vessels are involved with the tumor or not, size and location of the tumor, and so on. All of that will determine if the patient is a surgical candidate or not, and it must appear in the report.” Dr. Souza used the advanced tools within PowerScribe 360 to develop structured reporting templates specific to cancer imaging studies.

As part of this process, he researched a wide range of templates available to radiologists to arrive at a series of report templates that meet the needs of BHSF’s radiologists and clinicians. “Although it seems like more information is always better, most referring clinicians have indicated that they don’t want to receive long reports. What they need is a straight answer to their clinical questions and to be able to find the information on the report easily, so they can make a plan and act quickly,” he notes.

PowerScribe 360 templates help radiologists overcome distractions throughout the day

Dr. Souza notes that with the structured reporting templates embedded within BHSF’s PowerScribe 360 Reporting solution, drop-down menus and tables make it simple to include the exact information needed in every report. “For example, when I see a pancreatic cancer

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case, I can call up my template and begin to populate the pancreas-related paragraphs automatically. I'll answer a series of yes/no questions, and when I'm through answering them, I have a complete report with little free text required. I don't need to use the mouse to click on options, which makes it more efficient,” he says.

Although Dr. Souza admits that some radiologists initially may feel that structured template reports slow them down, “with constant use, however, you get more familiar with and used to it. I would say that after two to three months of constant use, you see your speed catch up to where you were before, but your accuracy is significantly better. You're not forgetting to include the essential information, because the question to be addressed is embedded. PowerScribe 360 Reporting helps ensure your reports are reliable as you follow the to-do list, answering everything. When the case is finished, everything needed is there,” he notes.

The report templates are customizable within PowerScribe 360, allowing radiologists to change the order of the questions they need to answer; but the bottom line is that the group is following a template. “There are too many distractions in the day. The phone rings, and when you get back to the case, too often, you've forgotten where you left off,” says Dr. Souza. “But when you have the structured report—itemized by organ system, for example—when you go back to the case, the tab is blinking exactly where you left off, so you can pick up from there and move on.”

Referring clinicians find the answers they need quickly and easily with PowerScribe 360 reports

Dr. Souza explains that before the itemized, structured reports were available within PowerScribe 360, referring clinicians would print their radiology reports and highlight in yellow the important information, so they could later find it easily. Dr. Souza had previously done research on the added value of structured reports. The data collected showed that “clinicians indicate that the amount of time they dedicate to absorbing and extracting information from itemized, structured reports is significantly less. Two reports can give you the same amount of information, but one gives you an easy-to-understand snapshot so you get everything you need reliably, and the other can take ten minutes to break down and understand,” he comments.

Furthermore, Dr. Souza notes that incidental findings and answers to the most important clinical questions used to be buried in narrative text within the impressions. Now, the group has specific columns and paragraphs for incidental findings and provider recommendations, separate from the main clinical findings—a format that makes the essential information stand out.

In addition to gaining quality and consistency improvements from structured reporting, BHSF has deployed additional Nuance tools to make significant improvements in its operations and outcomes, incorporating innovative workflow management to make the radiologists more efficient.

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With PowerScribe 360 Workflow Orchestration, organizations such as BHSF can streamline workload distribution and prioritize studies, ensuring that radiology subspecialists receive in their worklist the most appropriate patient exams—based on their subspecialty and taking into consideration the level of acuity and urgency needed for each case. Dr. Messinger notes, “Workflow Orchestration allows me to create a real-time worklist that accommodates exactly what my specific responsibilities are at a given time, and the ability to easily modify that worklist on the fly as needed. For us, it really simplifies the process of balancing the workload appropriately, so we can all stay focused on reading the exams instead of searching for the next one to read.”

Looking ahead, Drs. Messinger and Souza note that they see tremendous value in structured reporting and efficient workflow management, and what they add to diagnostics and medical imaging. And they look forward to working with the teams at Nuance to continue finding solutions that help tell patients’ stories effectively.

To learn more about how Nuance Healthcare can help you improve financial performance, raise the quality of care and increase clinician satisfaction, please contact us at 1-877-805-5902 or visit nuance.com/healthcare.

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