

Support clinician mobility, desktop virtualization, and freedom from hard-wired dictation stations with PowerMic™ Mobile

Challenge

- Improve access to dictation stations
- Support virtualized EMR deployment
- Support clinicians' desire for mobility

Solution

- Implement PowerMic Mobile for use on clinicians' personal smartphones

Results

- Improved physician satisfaction amongst pilot group
- Freedom to connect and dictate at any workstation with microphone access for voice-driven clinical documentation
- Greater physician mobility throughout the hospital, clinics, and home

Enhance access to desktop clinical documentation with a single mobile solution

Meridian Health is a premier provider of health services to patients in Ocean County, New Jersey. As a not-for-profit health care organization, Meridian Health has consistently been rated among the top-performing health systems in New Jersey for clinical quality, and for the past five consecutive years has been named one of the FORTUNE “100 Best Companies to Work For.”



“During our pilot, PowerMic Mobile increased clinician mobility throughout the day and let our physicians complete their patient notes on any available hospital workstation as soon as they met with each patient, without the need to find an open, dedicated dictation station.”

Matthew Klein
Physician Application Liaison, Meridian Health

Committed to providing the best possible care to their patient population, part of their mission is to “seek innovative solutions, technologies, and partnerships.” Recently, the organization worked with Nuance to launch the PowerMic Mobile solution.

Meridian’s physicians access their EMR through dedicated workstations that are located strategically throughout the hospital facilities. Many of these workstations also feature Nuance speech-recognition technology with a hard-wired PowerMic II microphone—what Meridian refers to as “dictation stations.” These workstations are outfitted with hard-wired microphones and provide physicians with complete dictation control and the ability to navigate through the EMR.

Matthew Klein, Physician Application Liaison for Meridian Health, shared some of the challenges they had encountered with the dictation stations: “We found that the PowerMic II wasn’t always physically located at the workstation. Or, if the device had become unplugged, a physician would sometimes need support in properly reconnecting the microphone to the application.”

To solve these and other challenges related to EMR virtualization workflow, Nuance developed PowerMic Mobile, an app that offers the same functionality of the PowerMic II, but through the user’s iPhone or Android smartphone. At Meridian Health, the Nuance team worked with Klein’s team to roll out the application to a pilot group of 20 physicians.

How PowerMic Mobile works

Healthcare organizations subscribe to PowerMic Mobile and their physicians simply download the iPhone or Android application, enter their username and password, and start dictating. Their smartphone automatically pairs with the desktop dictation station and presents the user with customizable buttons on the phone’s screen that mimic a traditional hard-wired PowerMic II.

The smartphone’s microphone captures the audio and inputs it directly into the desktop Nuance speech recognition solution, functioning just as the PowerMic II would.

Supports the transition to virtual desktops

PowerMic Mobile is specifically designed to support virtual environments. The solution bypasses the complexity of configuring thin or zero client deployments by transmitting audio and button presses to a virtual desktop. The ease-of-use and XenDesktop support are just a few of the benefits that Meridian Health recognized during their PowerMic Mobile pilot. As part of their PowerMic Mobile implementation, Meridian Health was able to configure a single virtual image to pair with the Nuance app and, as a result, made the virtual desktop available to all pilot physicians across the organization. This virtualized deployment, paired with simple app distribution via the App Store and Google Play Store, has significantly simplified the rollout of PowerMic Mobile with Dragon Medical Network Edition.

20-physician pilot to prove solution’s potential

Klein says the organization hand-selected the initial group of 20 physicians to receive PowerMic Mobile. “We invited our heaviest speech recognition users to take advantage of their previous experience and participate in the initial rollout. Once they had signed on to the project, we worked with Nuance to create the accounts and notify the physicians of what they needed via email,” he says.

Then, the Nuance team “worked with us to make sure all the physicians were fully configured and trained. Setup was quick and easy and the physicians were comfortable with the mobile app shortly after beginning to use it,” Klein continues. The pilot allowed Meridian Health to fully evaluate the solution in order to assess its current and future value to their physicians and administrative staff.

Easy-to-use application holds potential to improve mobility throughout the day

Meridian's pilot group physicians have found the mobile app to be simple and easy to use. "Among the most active PowerMic Mobile users, we found they had the potential for more mobility throughout the day and could complete their patient notes as soon as they met with each patient, without the need to find an open, dedicated dictation station," says Klein. "Rather than completing rounds and then locating a dictation station, physicians realized they could meet with one patient and complete their notes on any available hospital workstation while the information was still fresh, before moving on to the next patient," he continues.

Physicians also appreciated that it was easier to work from their home offices. The app enabled them to begin dictating directly into the EMR, without the need to either own or configure dedicated hardware. "Because we're using Dragon Medical Network Edition, our team was able to help the pilot group of physicians get up and running at home with Nuance speech recognition, where they could further maximize their day-to-day productivity with the new mobile microphone app," notes Klein.

When a dictation station was available with a hard-wired PowerMic II, Klein says many of the physicians showed a preference for the mobile solution, using their own devices to dictate. "Occasionally, it did come down to how much battery life remained on the clinician's phone, as well as other factors," he comments, "which is why having the PowerMic II available at a variety of dictation stations will likely continue to be critical. It's important for us to have both options open."

Reduce reliance on hard-wired devices and improve application administration

Although Klein believes that a combination of hard-wired devices and mobile devices are necessary for a fully successful speech recognition solution, "we did have fewer worries about hardware. It became less important for us to ensure that every dictation station met minimum requirements for the hardware. And we anticipate not having to spend as much time managing equipment and our dedicated dictation workstations."

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