

Case Study: Grand River Hospital K-W Health Center

Address verification ensures postal matches and speeds claim processes.



With QAS, Grand River Hospital has improved its statistical and mail accuracy by 80%.

Situation

Incorrect addresses collected during patient registration translated into valuable time and money wasted for Grand River Hospital (GRH). Returned or delayed patient bills and care information as well as rejected statistical submissions required administrators to manually research and update records, taking their attention away from higher value projects.

Solution

Grand River Hospital integrated QAS Pro address verification software with their corporate registration application. Patient contact information was then verified in real-time during the admissions process to ensure timely post-care communication, claim processing and accurate data submissions.

Results

With QAS Pro, GRH registers patients faster and more accurately. More accurate contact data has reduced the costs associated with returned mail and the time spent manually researching and communicating with patients to update their addresses.

About Grand River Hospital

With 475 beds, Grand River Hospital is one of Ontario's largest community hospitals.

Their facilities care for residents of the Waterloo-Wellington Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) by providing services that include, but are not limited to, 24/7 medical and surgical services, cancer care, rehabilitation, and diagnostics.

GRH registers patients from a variety of facilities and departments; the major access points being the Emergency Department, Cancer Centre, Ambulatory Clinics and Diagnostic Imaging. Once registration is complete, patients go on to receive care and their information is stored for follow-up.

Contact Data Complications

Prior to implementing address verification, GRH ran monthly reports

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to ensure that all postal information was valid and to match postal and residence codes. Inaccurate codes would then have to be manually updated.

With over 500 pieces of returned mail per month, each representing a medical bill, GRH recognized that a considerable sum of money was not being collected and statistics were not being reported accurately.

Their inquiry into the situation showed that inaccurate addresses were being collected through several different registration scenarios, including mistaken postal code entries and recent change of addresses.

These errors directly affected the hospital's ability to collect from patients without a valid healthcare card or from patients whose care exceeded their provincial coverage. GRH also found that bad patient addresses indirectly resulted in rejected statistical submissions not being resolved.

Further fueling GRH's bad debt concerns were issues surrounding slow moving registration processes. GRH mobilized to find a front-end address verification solution that would ensure timely mail delivery and expedite their admissions process.

Real-Time Verification Solutions
Grand River Hospital integrated QAS Pro with their patient database to

validate addresses in real-time against Canada Post's data file. The software was rolled out to the Emergency Department, Ambulatory Care, Diagnostic Imaging and Cancer Centre, the main sources of patient entry.

With minimal training necessary, administrators were quick to realize the time savings of Pro's address typedown engine. For example, the patient's address is verified and then automatically entered into the database with fewer keystrokes.

GRH also uses QAS Pro to update patient change of addresses, an important component which affects provincial statistical submissions.

Recognizing GRH's Returns

Jenny Gastmeier, Health Information Coordinator at GRH, explained that, "We used to see a great deal of incorrect postal codes that we would have to correct prior to clinical data submission. [Now with QAS] the reduction of errors is very evident and on some QA reports, we can see no postal code errors."

With accurate postal information, Grand River Hospital has significantly reduced its returned mail and rejected claim volumes, freeing staff resources for other projects.

Additionally, registrars can more efficiently move through contact registration so that patients receive the care they need faster.

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- Jenny Gastmeier, Health Information Coordinator, Grand River Hospital

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