

Case Study



About Northern Hospital

Northern Hospital of Surry County provides a comprehensive array of services for patients in and around Mt. Airy, North Carolina. Its offerings span the full range from prenatal and infant care to geriatric care.

In 2004, Northern Hospital replaced all of its ultrasound equipment with LOGIQ 7 systems from GE. “We had reached a plateau with the old systems, and we needed a more modern platform,” explains Michael Leonard, Director of Imaging Services. “The old systems were very hardware-driven, and we needed technology that would be state-of-the-art well into the future. We first looked at simply upgrading our systems, then decided to do some further analysis and contacted GE. The sites we checked with that used LOGIQ 7 all gave it an A+ in reliability, plus we have successfully used GE service here for the past 25 years.”

The choice of ultrasound providers came down to three criteria: image quality, cost of ownership, and the service organization behind the equipment. “After a technology review, two of our senior sonographers felt strongly that the image quality of the LOGIQ 7 was superior to other systems in vascular imaging,” Mr. Leonard said. He continued, “We have a very seasoned ultrasound staff, and our radiologists have a high confidence in those folks. That was definitely a clinical nod in the direction of GE.”

“Our former vendor offered an upgrade — basically a box swap — however after analyzing the cost, we realized it was more beneficial to have three brand-new LOGIQ 7 systems with new probes. The LOGIQ 7 units also provided a superior software technology platform, and that was the second check mark for giving the nod to GE.”

When a hospital changes ultrasound systems, the learning curve for sonographers is often a concern, but not in this case, according to Mr. Leonard. “Our five sonographers were born and raised using non-GE platforms,” he says. “We initially replaced just two of our older systems and kept one, just in case we encountered training issues. But GE’s application team came in and got our sonographers up to speed quickly. It has been a smooth transition.

“The iLink diagnostics also made us lean more toward GE. It’s a great feature. You have service or application help at your fingertips, rather than waiting for somebody to call you back.”

The LOGIQ 7 systems will also support the hospital’s future transition to a filmless radiology workflow. “We have an internal network in place,” Mr. Leonard says. “We use RADWORKS from GE, which is DICOM compliant. We use it for color radiology functionality and basically everything else. The physicians read the majority of ultrasound images off their RADWORKS stations. We will be adding computed radiography and PACS in the future, so a plug-and-play solution was a must. That was not an issue with GE.”



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