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Orthopaedic Associates of Wisconsin selects a GoldSeal™ MR system for a brand new full-service facility.

Collaborative, comprehensive and creative solution for prestigious grand opening

In moving to a brand new facility, Orthopaedic Associates of Wisconsin could have simply relocated its 10-year-old fully functional 1.5T GE MR system.

Instead, the practice opted for a replacement GoldSeal™ refurbished system. The cost-effective equipment and logistics package included applications training, a one year warranty and a comprehensive post-warranty service agreement.

The GoldSeal system was installed in May 2016, on schedule and at a cost well below what the practice had projected. The transition to the new 90,000 square foot facility was coordinated so that the practice experienced only a two-day gap in MR imaging. Since installation, the system has performed without unplanned downtime, and the MR technologist and 14 orthopedic surgeons report significantly better image quality than with the previous system.

“It was very well coordinated and orchestrated by people who have done this many times. Everything was delivered right on schedule or ahead of time. The GE team knew the answers to the questions before I even asked them.”

Mark Smith
Chief Administrative Officer

Long history

Orthopaedic Associates of Wisconsin, based in Waukesha about half an hour west of Milwaukee, was founded in 1962 and is the state's largest independent provider of orthopedic specialty medicine in the state. It serves a growing area, providing a clinic, therapy facilities, surgery center and MR imaging suite that together see more than 90,000 patient visits a year.

Its fellowship-trained board-certified and board-eligible physicians offer subspecialties in hand and upper extremity, spine, arthroplasty, joint reconstruction, sports medicine, and foot and ankle surgeries. They use progressive treatment techniques with the aim to restore patients to their highest possible levels of functioning.

Physician assistants, nurses and other health professionals complement the physicians, helping patients post-injury and post-surgery. Overall growth is projected at 5 to 7 percent per year, according to Mark Smith, Chief Administrative Officer.

In moving to the new building, the practice sought to replicate conditions at the previous facility. “Our physical plant design, with no offices, requires the orthopedic and other physicians to interact, communicate and counsel on patient cases, new techniques, surgical developments, and trends in medicine,” says Smith. “We can be highly responsive to patients with everything in the same facility. We can treat patients in an extremely expeditious and effective manner.”

Asset Relocation or a Replacement GoldSeal System

8 weeks out	7 weeks out	6 weeks out	5 weeks out	4 weeks out	3 weeks out	2 weeks out	1 weeks out	GO LIVE	1 week over	2 week over	3 week over	4 week over	5 week over
Locate MR and modify facility for removal		MR Deinstallation		Transport MR		MR Installation at new facility			Relocation – more risk/harder to control				
GoldSeal – Less risk/schedule success				Install GoldSeal				Modify old facility to remove MR		MR Deinstallation		Transport MR	

Choosing MR technology

As the practice looked at moving its existing MR system, Dan Foster, a GE MR Product Sales Specialist, offered the alternative of a replacement GoldSeal unit. That approach meant saving the cost of deinstalling and transporting the existing unit as well as the cost of an interim MRI service. GE offered a substantial trade-in allowance on that unit and attractive pricing on the GoldSeal system with the software upgrade.

The GE Healthcare GoldSeal process refurbishes MR and other imaging systems that have acceptable and documented service histories. Units are refurbished in GE facilities to original specifications and performance using original-equipment parts and the latest software releases. Finished systems are delivered with a same-as-new warranty. The contract package includes site planning, installation and support documentation.

Smith notes that GE personnel shared the MR installation schedule with him and were instrumental in a smooth transition to the new building. “It was very well coordinated and orchestrated by people who have done this many times,” says Smith. “Everything was delivered right on schedule or ahead of time.”

“They knew the answers to the questions before I even asked them. GE worked very closely with our general contractor to make sure both were on the same page. The contractor mentioned many times how easy it was to work with GE, how quickly they responded, and how willing they were to make accommodations during the process.”

Excellent imaging

The GoldSeal unit’s operating platform is similar to the previous system. “We had nearly 10 years’ experience with it,” says Smith. “It is very conducive to orthopedics; our surgeons and radiologists were very confident and comfortable with it. We’re happy with the quality of the images and the speed with which we can move patients through. I would rate the unit as on par with a certified pre-owned Mercedes-Benz. It has absolutely no issues.”

Typically, about 10 patients are imaged per day, five days per week. Tammy Kleppe, the Chief MR Technologist, shares her experience. “The new system is easy for us and I appreciated the new coils, music system and patient comfort accessories. We can keep up with our patient schedule. For the patients, they are not waiting

for their scans, which tends to alleviate their stress and concerns about recovery. I feel confident that if we need something in the future that GE will help us with advanced software, coils or training.”

Kleppe found the transition to the new system easy. A GE application specialist visited the site to provide the necessary training. “There wasn’t a lot to learn,” Kleppe says. “All the protocols transferred over from the previous system. We basically adjusted the protocols to make them faster. It was a very smooth transition. With the HD package in the new system, the images are outstanding.”

Proactive service

The GE service contract helps ensure that the MR system is always available to image patients, Smith and Kleppe agree. “The service agreement is something I wouldn’t do without,” says Smith. “Our service engineer has no equal. He’s responsive and constantly on the lookout for us. The service is done promptly and regularly.”

“First and foremost in his mind is making sure we don’t disrupt patient care. He’ll come in at off hours, in the early morning or after we close, and do whatever is needed to accommodate us. He has a wonderful relationship with Tammy and everybody else in this organization. It’s nice to work with someone and feel as though they have your back.”

Smith had similar praise for the GE project management team: “They were very willing to be creative and look at multiple options. They never put themselves first. They always put us first.”

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