

Monarch Transforms Siemens Healthcare Reports into In-Depth Data Analysis for Chester County Hospital

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Chester County Hospital (CCH), located in West Chester, PA, is a 259 bed acute care hospital, providing an array of inpatient and outpatient medical/surgical services. Like many hospitals across the U.S., CCH contracts out some of its healthcare information system needs to an outside data processing firm. CCH also recently joined a host of hospital finance departments that now use the power of Monarch to access and analyze data quickly, without complex database programming.

FROM STACKS OF PAPER REPORTS, TO EXCEL-READY DATA

“Siemens Healthcare (formerly SMS) is our legacy I.T. vendor that provides an enormous amount of data,” says Paul Vanore, VP, Finance for CCH. “But getting at the data to perform data analysis used to be very difficult. Like all hospitals, we need timely and easy access to financial and operational data for effective management and cost containment.”

“One option was to simply work with the vast number of standard text reports (flat files) we receive on a regular basis,” Paul explains, “but printing and working with these huge reports is very cumbersome. We also receive some of our data as relational databases, but they require trained SQL programmers from our IT department to perform ad hoc queries.

“Neither working with paper reports nor burdening the IT staff for help with relational databases fulfilled our data needs,” says Paul. “But there is an alternative: Monarch.”

“Like most hospitals, our finance team does not have a programming background, but do have an excellent knowledge of Excel

spreadsheets. With Monarch, our finance staff can get at Siemens Healthcare data to create reports and work with it effectively, on their own, without programming and without placing an additional burden on our IT department. Monarch also lets us easily analyze the data and export it to Excel, enabling us to provide managers and directors with the timely data they need to manage CCH.”

BUSINESS PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT, WITHOUT PROGRAMMING

In Monarch's simplest form, Monarch is a “report mining” tool, which lets users easily transform any report into live data for easy export into Excel. But CCH has taken its success with Monarch to an impressively high level. Using the powers of Monarch Pro, CCH has also developed integrated systems for expense analysis, labor productivity analysis, and cost accounting.

For example, Monarch enables CCH to report and proactively manage expenses. “Our A/P reports from Siemens Healthcare contain a wealth of data, but are difficult to read and work with,” says Paul. “But Monarch again comes to our rescue by enabling us to extract data from our reports, and then analyze and report on outstanding A/P expenditures by department. Each department manager is aware of his or her purchases during the month. For example, if a manager ordered a particular service contract, they know how much it is and when it was processed. Monarch helps CCH stay on top of expenses and contain costs.”

“CCH's payroll reports are also very difficult to read and work with,” says Tony Esposito, CPA, Director of Financial Operations for

“Monarch has saved CCH time, money, and countless reporting headaches, all while leveraging our existing investment in our Siemens Healthcare System.”

CCH, “but Monarch still easily mines the data. For example, we use Monarch to transform our complex Labor Distribution Report into a data table, within Monarch. We then use Monarch Pro’s ability to merge [lookup] that data with separate Excel files with period and year-to-date budget data for each cost center and position code. The end result is a detailed actual versus budget analysis distributed to each department head shortly after the payroll run.”

CCH has taken its labor analysis to a level even higher still. “CCH, aided by outside management consultants, defined staffing benchmark statistics for each department, to define what each department’s labor productivity should be,” says Tom Boyle, a technical consultant who led this project within CCH. “Monarch Pro helps us combine data from Labor Distribution Reports, Payroll Registers and our database of agreed-upon benchmarks, for our productivity analysis.”

“The end result is CCH is not only keeping track of staffing budget variances, but also measuring the effectiveness of each department’s staff,” adds Tony. “CCH can now compare each department’s actual labor activity with that department’s unique measure of service. This high level of analysis simply would not be possible without Monarch.”

IN-DEPTH INSIGHT TO HEALTHCARE DATA, WHILE SAVING TIME, MONEY, HEADACHES

Paul, Tony and Tom all agree that Monarch has allowed the Finance Department at CCH to take control of its data at the source level, without programming, saving time and money, including avoiding the need to acquire additional complex specialized healthcare systems.

“It is my experience that hospitals tend to buy specialized systems to solve specific needs, such as productivity management,” says Paul, “but such systems tend to require a lot of FTEs (Full Time Equivalents) to run. Plus, these specialized programs are something of a ‘black box;’ we are not sure exactly how they work. The data such systems deliver is often perceived as being suspect.

“But with Monarch, we understand where the data has come from, and how it is being used. We at CCH are much more comfortable and confident working with our Siemens Healthcare reports ourselves with Monarch.

“Monarch has enabled high-level analysis and in-depth insight to our data, enabling CCH to actively, effectively manage operations. In the process, Monarch has saved CCH time, money and countless reporting headaches, all while leveraging our existing investment in our Siemens Healthcare system.”



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