

Screening goes digital in Ferrara, Italy

In 2000, the Department of Diagnostic Imaging and Interventional Radiology of Ferrara's ASL (local health authority) decided to switch to digital and IT solutions for all radiology workflows. Today, all diagnostic imaging, including mammography screening, has transitioned to digital.

Giorgio Benea, Department Director says: "Using digital technology for breast cancer screening has allowed us to multiply and decentralize the facilities that offer this type of examination (eight facilities in the province of Ferrara). Logistically speaking, we were also able to group the four doctors that perform preliminary readings together under one roof to ensure high levels of clinical competence".

The entire process uses a portfolio of equipment and services from Carestream Health. They use KODAK DIRECTVIEW CR systems with the CR Mammography Feature, a KODAK CARESTREAM PACS solution for image and preliminary reading management along with 5 MP diagnostic workstations, a CARESTREAM RIS module fully dedicated to screening activities, in addition to the KODAK Mammography Computer-Aided Detection (CAD) System.



Giorgio Benea, Department Director, Department of Diagnostic Imaging and Interventional Radiology at Ferrara hospital.

"These Carestream Health tools," he continues, "have completely automated our mammography screening, not only for image management, but also with regard to the patient clinical care process: all patient data and administrative aspects are handled by the system from A to Z. This aspect is extremely important in the sensitive area of breast cancer screening."



Winning a challenge for women's health

Says Professor Vincenzo Lattanzio, director of SARIS (Servizio di Radiologica Senologia), breast screening service at the CRRP (Centro di Riferimento della Regione Puglia), referral center for the Puglia region, "The transition to digital technology represents a challenge for the radiologist. Nowadays he or she has to be capable, with the help of radiology technicians, of making the

"Today's digital systems provide consistent high quality (equal to film-based imaging), while generally reducing the doses of radiation a patient receives."

—Vincenzo Lattanzio

equipment produce digital images that share the merits of analog ones, but must also aim to push further. In fact, thanks to the extreme versatility of the systems and to the development of image processing software, it is possible to obtain plastic images that capture the half-tones and adjust and fine-tune the contrast. From this point of view, the formation and refinement of the image appear truly fundamental."

Commitment to training

Carestream Health Italia has collaborated with the Italian School of Senology (SIS) for over ten years to promote the key role that training plays in producing high-quality mammography images. The Carestream Health Technology and Innovation Center (T&IC) in Genoa provides SIS students with the most sophisticated technology and equipment available to allow them to become familiar with the characteristics and gain hands-on experience in using Carestream Health mammography solutions.

Dr. Elsa Cossu, Radiologist Mammographer at the "Tor Vergata" University Hospital in Rome and lecturer at SIS explains, "The study of breast diseases is a particularly complex field of medicine because each breast has its own complex shape and structure. In this regard, digital technologies provide undeniable advantages over film-based systems, as image processing operations are more flexible. However", she continues, "the diagnostic 'confidence' gained through using digital imaging may, at times, lead us to miss details that indicate pathology. As a result, lessons learned from film-based imaging must not be forgotten. Training and professional refresher courses are vital for breast care oncologists as well as radiologists to keep up-to-date with constant advances in technology."

"The collaboration between Italian breast care facilities and Carestream Health Italy", says Dr Cossu, "offers important tools for training, based on knowledge sharing and a shared philosophy called 'TEAM' (Together Each Achieves More). In the Carestream Health T&IC at Genoa, students receive hands-on training using the most advanced technologies in a well-balanced relationship between theory and practice.

Working side-by-side with Komen Italia to fight cancer

The "Tor Vergata" University Hospital has also established a fruitful working relationship with Komen Italia, a not-for-profit organization and a forerunner in the fight against breast cancer.



Dr Cossu explains. "To provide national screening coverage, we use a mobile unit equipped by Carestream Health that allows us to perform approximately 50 mammograms per session of about eight hours. Our medical and technical personnel are extremely satisfied not only with the high-quality imaging provided by our Carestream Health equipment, but also by the system's incredible flexibility. It is able to meet all our requirements and resolve all of the special difficulties presented by mobile screening activities. On several occasions, especially during the *Race for the Cure*, we also had the opportunity to experience first-hand the timely and considerate assistance provided by Carestream Health's service professionals."

"Carestream Health tailors its products and services to meet clinical imaging requirements by providing experienced service professionals who train clients to produce 'perfect' images and resolve day-to-day problems to keep systems running at peak performance. After just the first year of our working relationship I was impressed by the professionalism and rigor of the Carestream Health personnel. These are rare qualities that aren't seen in many companies."

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