

Bath Community Hospital Makes Advancements in Radiology Services

Announcing the addition of filmless picture archiving system (PACS), computed radiography and its newly upgraded radiography-fluoroscopy room.

Meeting the needs of patients beyond primary care has always been a challenge for rural communities. Financial and geographical barriers make it difficult to connect patients with specialists and the advanced diagnostic equipment often needed for services. Bridging the rural health care gap, however, is part of Bath Community Hospital's mission to improve community health, and with the latest addition in services, patients now have quicker access to specialists and diagnostic treatments, especially in emergencies.

BCH's new filmless picture archiving system (PACS) and computed radiography, has the capability to electronically store traditional x-rays for clearer, crisper viewing and the ability to transmit CT scans, x-rays, ultrasound and other types of diagnostic images, almost instantaneously, to radiologists, neurologists and other specialists. The new radiography-fluoroscopy room now accommodates people weighing up to 600 pounds.

"Diagnostic imaging is an important tool in diagnosing injuries and illnesses, especially for strokes and other internal injuries," says Debbie Lipes, Bath Community Hospital's CEO. "With quicker turnaround and access to specialists, we're improving patient care, especially in emergencies where quicker diagnosis often leads to a better patient outcome."

One example of how this technology makes a difference is in stroke emergencies, where seconds count. With BCH's new PACS and RP-7 Remote Presence Robotic System, a neurologist can quickly diagnose the type of stroke to determine the appropriate treatment from a remote location.

BCH's radiology manager and technician Jo Lamb, says that upgrading the radiography-fluoroscopy room was also important for emergency situations. "There have been times when we couldn't x-ray a patient because they were over the equipment's weight limit of 300 pounds. We had to send the patient by ambulance to another facility."

“We’re fortunate to have this state-of-the-art equipment at a small health care facility like Bath Community Hospital,” Lamb adds. “Most communities our size don’t have the advanced technology we have.”

The PACS and the RP-7 Robotic System were funded through a federal technology grant administered by the Virginia Department of Health. Bath Community Hospital was chosen to collaborate with Virginia Telehealth Network, VaLiance Health, the Central Shenandoah EMS Council, University of Virginia Health Systems, and other partners, to help small rural hospitals across the Shenandoah region diagnose ischemic stroke and administer the clot-busting drug t-PA in a more timely fashion through the use of tele-radiology. Funding for the new radiography-flouroscopy room was provided through generous community donations.

For more information about the new PACS, Computed Radiography or the new radiography-flouroscopy room, please call Jo Lamb, radiology manager at 540-839-7037.

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