

## Rockland healthcare providers learn how to go paperless

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PEARL RIVER - Local healthcare providers last night got a glimpse of what a paperless practice might look like and how it could increase the quality of their patient care.

The Rockland Business Association sponsored a "Healthcare Technology Forum" yesterday at Dominican College featuring medical professionals in the area who use new technology.

Kathryn Reed, executive director of Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center, was one of four speakers. She discussed her husband's small family practice in New Windsor, N.Y., which she said was completely digitized.

Reed displayed a touch-screen computer tablet that nurses and doctors use to take notes and view a patient's medical record.

"One of the biggest benefits is it eliminates the loss of documentation," she said. "If this tablet were to get lost or broken, we would just go to another computer that had Web access."

The tablets also save time because they offer drop-down menus and other options that let staff members take medical histories quickly and efficiently, she said.

Joan Neumann, a member of the business association, said the technology should be integrated in her father's nursing home.

"The nurses there really don't have enough time because they're always so busy writing out charts," she said. "It's ridiculous."

Kathy McDonough, an informatics nurse at Bon Secours Health Systems, discussed a bar-coded prescription system.

The program has been implemented at Good Samaritan Hospital in Suffern for the past three weeks, said Michael Schnieders, executive vice president and administrator at the hospital.

With the system in place, anyone dispensing medication to patients must scan their wrist IDs, medical records and the actual drugs to ensure the right patient is receiving the right medication and dosage at the right time.

"The drawer will not open unless everything, even the time, matches," he said, referring to the cart where medication is stored.

Other speakers at the forum were Evan Kaminer, a partner with Hudson Valley Radiology Associates, who spoke about new picture archiving and communications systems; and Brian Phelan, chief executive officer at Imaging on Call, who discussed the new technology teleradiology, which is the digital transmission of radiologic images.

Ramesh Ubriani, a pediatrician who has a practice in West Nyack, said he came because he was interested in switching from paper medical records to electronic ones.

"It'll definitely increase the efficiency of the office," he said, "and prevent the chances of medical errors."

Barry Krane of Krane Financial Services in Montebello also was there for research, but for a much different purpose.

"To see what technologies are leading the way to better patient care, which companies provide that technology and whether that'll be a good fit for some of my clients to invest in," he said.

Yesterday's forum was organized by the business association's technology initiative, which is co-chaired by Les Neumann and Howard Reis.



Kathryn Reed of Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center holds a touch-screen computer tablet at last night's forum that nurses and doctors use to take notes and view a patient's medical record. (Original publication: March 9, 2007)