

### **Covenant Health:**

*Building on Success*

*Covenant Health is based in Knoxville, Tennessee, and provides comprehensive services throughout Eastern Tennessee. It is comprised of six acute care hospitals and a psychiatric hospital. Approximately 8,000 people are employed by Covenant Health and its member organizations. Working together with approximately 1,000 affiliated physicians, these healthcare professionals deliver quality care to thousands of patients throughout Eastern Tennessee.*



### ***The Challenge***

The story behind Covenant Health and its incremental expansion of the Fusion Suite™ is typical in the healthcare industry. Each time one bottleneck is eliminated, there are new ones uncovered downstream where other systems can't handle the load. What sets Covenant Health and Dolbey apart from the norm is the scalability of the Fusion Suite, which has offered new solutions that eliminate these obstacles.

### ***The Solution***

The first phase of Covenant's journey involved replacing its multiple aging dictation systems with one central system to offer greater growth and consolidation of transcription services. After a few years of significant success with Dolbey's voice processing system, Covenant determined that its transcription module was inadequate for its new centralized transcription services, which relied heavily on remote transcription. To remedy the situation, the health system chose the Fusion Text® solution. Once again, Covenant saw productivity gains and savings of over 20 percent, all while consolidating its transcription services for all departments under one system.

Another reason Covenant chose Fusion Text involved the health system's plan to launch a speech recognition initiative and its belief that Dolbey is the best in the industry. The first phase of this initiative was to move doctors into back-end recognition, starting with the HIM environment. After experiencing significant success in decreasing transcription costs in that area, Covenant quickly added radiology to back-end. Within a few weeks, the health system saw a 35 percent increase in the productivity of its radiology transcriptionists without any change in their routines.

As Covenant continued to expand the number of doctors covered by back-end, it realized even greater productivity results. Fusion Speech® powered by Nuance's SpeechMagic™ increased productivity so much that the health system's average transcriptionist was able to handle over 550,000 lines per year. In addition, more than one third of the transcriptionists



were editing and typing at over 700,000 lines per year. This increased productivity and efficiency was especially important since Covenant was in a growth phase and planning on acquiring several new hospitals.

The second phase of Covenant's journey involved the health system extending dictation and transcription services to two outside physician practices where the authors used either a phone or digital portable, and their voice files were processed through back-end speech recognition. In addition to providing a clear benefit to the new clientele, this step generates a profit that will lower the net cost of hospital transcription. For example, one large practice that may receive these services could add more than \$600,000 per year in revenue for Covenant.

Covenant recently launched a front-end recognition program and service for the physician practices it owns that were previously outsourcing in this area. The benefit to these practices is not only in the savings in transcription costs but also in document turnaround time. With Fusion Expert, a physician can still send something to transcription with only a press of a button, providing an option for those who are not yet prepared to do their own editing.

Fusion Expert is unique compared to other popular physician practice front-end software on the market today because it is a speech system that continually learns, regardless of who makes the edits. By capturing the office visits of the patients seen at Covenant facilities, the hospital system is also improving its HITECH Meaningful Use data collection, all while saving money.

### *Next Steps*

Next on the list for Covenant is pushing out front-end recognition to those departments and users within the hospital that will benefit from the "once and done" approach that exists within the Fusion Expert application. There are also plans to integrate Fusion Speech with the physician EMR system to use speech recognition for narratives. The end result will be continued decrease in per line costs, improved turnaround and greater Meaningful Use data collection - all with an incremental approach using investments that began seven years ago.

### *Results at a Glance:*

- Significant productivity gains and costs savings with every addition
- Turnaround times that are significantly below The Joint Commission requirements
- Overall departmental costs of .10 per line and dropping
- Achievement of Meaningful Use data goals
- Integration with other EMR systems

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an on-site demonstration:*  
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