AGFA HealthCare

The Home advantage

Enabling clinical efficiency and resource optimization with remote radiology reporting.

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The Home Advantage. Enabling clinical efficiency and resource optimization with remote radiology reporting.

Interview

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"As more and more healthcare organizations seek to improve clinical efficiency and leverage resource pools, remote reporting becomes a key contributor for success."

By enabling remote reporting, the radiology department can better optimize the radiologist's time and improve the delivery of care. Report turnaround time is sped up, enabeling institutions to meet their operational service level agreements.

For the radiologists, remote reporting gives an opportunity to add value and increase their visibility as key members of the care continuum. It also provides a level of convenience and concistency many appreciate: being able to work from home occasionally, or even regularly.

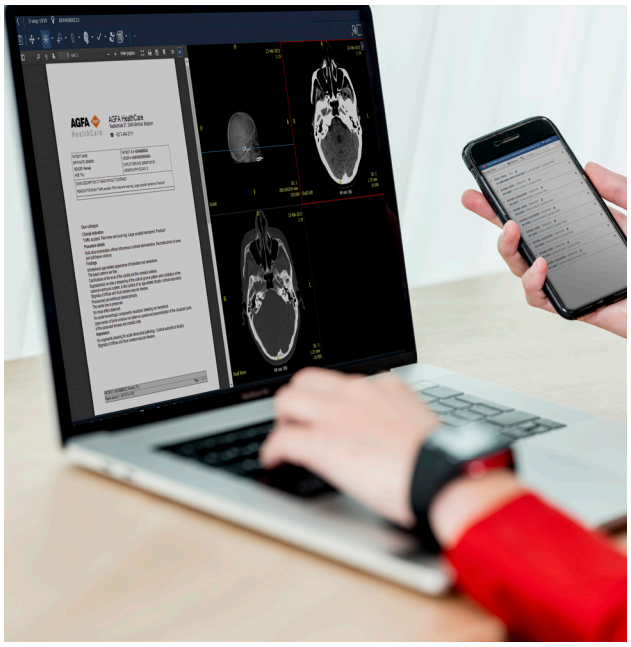
24/7

Ultimately, by offering 24/7 response, remote reporting supports the delivery of improved patient care. One very real example is for stroke reads. A patient comes into the ER, possibly having had a stroke. We know, for example, that the faster a treatment such as tPA is given, the better the patient prognosis. With remote reporting, a radiologist can read the images and provide a preliminary response quickly.

Creating the 'in-hospital' reporting workflow, at home

To truly optimize the possibilities of remote reporting, radiologists need to have the same experience remotely as in the hospital. Agfa HealthCare's Enterprise Imaging provides both technical and workflow-generated models to support efficient, convenient and high-quality remote reporting.

Among the key factors that determine the quality of the remote reporting experience for radiology are bandwidth and latency. Even when people contract with their internet service providers for higher bandwidth, the contracted bandwidth often does not fully reach their homes. So with Enterprise Imaging, Agfa HealthCare is working to mitigate latency and bandwidth constraints.



> “Enterprise Imaging enables radiologists to transform their remote location to behave like a local workstation in performance, workflow and user experience.“
>
> **Bob Craske**

The ‘quick and dirty’ mobile read

The needs from a remote reporting solution vary based on how the radiologist wants to use it. One use model is the radiologist who wants the flexibility to give a STAT reading of images using a mobile device: when, late at night, a colleague needs a fast ad-hoc reading or second opinion, or for the stroke read example from before. The complete workflow – full report, etc. – can be completed at the hospital the next day.

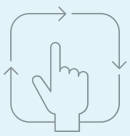
The full ‘home office’ experience

But what about when the radiologist wants to complete the full imaging workflow, from home? This means reading, reporting, signing, etc. In this case, the radiologist is looking for an identical diagnostic desktop, performance, workflow, etc., as at the hospital. This is where latency and bandwidth are critical influencers on user experience.

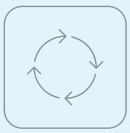
While the radiologist wants to get as close as possible to the hospital environment, at home, IT wants a solution that is secure and easy to deploy. Enterprise Imaging tackles these seemingly distinct desires in several ways.

Radiologist-selected workflows

With Enterprise Imaging's remote diagnostic desktop, the radiologist has the flexibility to make choices about how the workflow is driven, to get the experience he or she prefers: for example, choosing between manual or automatic download of studies.



With the manual option, the radiologist simply selects a study from the list, and elects to download it to the local cache. Once this copy is downloaded, the radiologist's work is no longer subject to the limitations of latency and bandwidth.

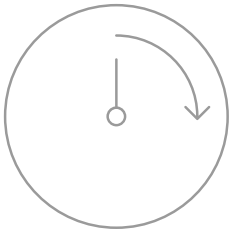


With the automatic option, the system progressively downloads and caches studies in the background, while the radiologist is already working. That means the radiologist can move on to each study on the worklist without experiencing latency or bandwidth issues. Performance is as good as, or even better than, a local area network.

In both cases, the radiologist can select 'clear caching at logout' to make sure the cache is emptied at the end of the work session, ensuring patient privacy is protected.

A workflow that drives the tasks

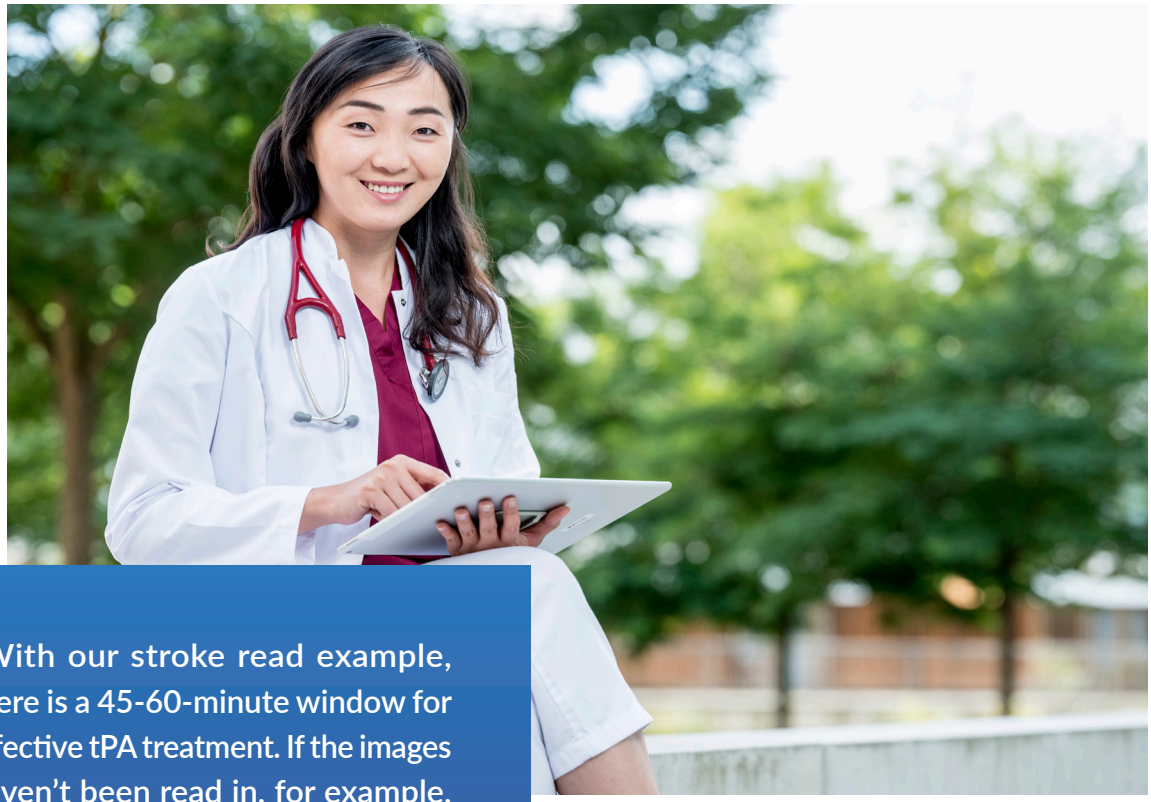
The radiologist can fine tune the workflow when accessing studies and select optionst such as applying lossy or lossless compression to active and prior exams, all with just a few clicks on the configuration screens.



Another issue that crops up with remote reporting, is how to inform the radiologist when a critical, or high-priority, task is suddenly added to the workflow. With the rules-based engine, the Enterprise Imaging workflow can be set up to monitor the imaging activities, and keep the radiologist informed of what needs to be done, by immediately driving the tasks to the radiologist's worklist.

In a traditional PACS, the query system reaches out every 10 minutes or so to the database to ask if new critical studies require action. That means delays of 9 minites or more in being aware of a STAT activity.

However, with Enterprise Imaging's remote diagnostic desktop, there is an immediate publication of new tasks Critical tasks are highlighted and prioritized, while Enterprise Imaging can also follow up on them, based on determined rules.



"With our stroke read example, there is a 45-60-minute window for effective tPA treatment. If the images haven't been read in, for example, 10 minutes, Enterprise Imaging can escalate the task in the workflow, to make sure it is addressed quickly."

Bob Craske

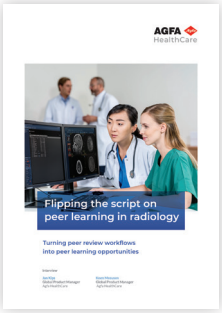
Enabling a flexible, mobile future that can improve the delivery of patient care

Being able to work from home offers a lot of possible advantages, for everyone impacted. Enterprise Imaging enables radiologists to transform their remote location, so that it behaves just like a local workstation at the hospital, using the same desktop application.

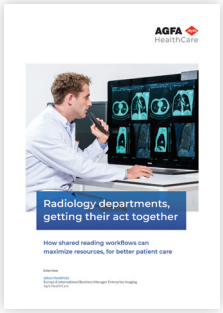
Agfa HealthCare continues to build this vision, based on customer feedback, to extend the availability of functions through mobile applications and to enhance collaboration, by enabling a truly shared reading workflow.

Contact your Agfa HealthCare representative for more info

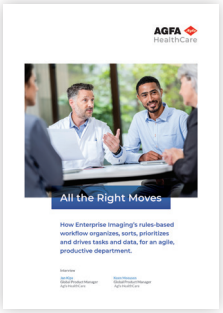
More Expert-interviews



Peer Learning



Shared Reading Workflows



Rulles-based Workflow

Data Migration

Enterprise Imaging Platform

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