



AUSTRIAN HOSPITAL DIGITISES PATIENT RECORDS TO IMPROVE AGILITY AND EFFICIENCY

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**Gertrude Eggl, Head of Transcription Services and Archives, Pyhrn-Eisenwurzen Klinikum Kirchdorf,
Oberösterreichische Gesundheitsholding GmbH**



CHALLENGE

Determined to improve access to medical records, Oberösterreichische Gesundheitsholding GmbH wanted to replace paper files, resource-hungry processes, and overflowing archives with a more reliable and efficient digital service.



SOLUTION

Iron Mountain® provided a one-stop service for patient information lifecycle management, ensuring secure full chain of custody throughout all collection, transportation, digitising and shredding processes.



RESULTS

Healthcare professionals securely access patient files through HIS (hospital information system), anytime, anywhere. There's less risk of records being damaged or mislaid. Once scanned, original documents that once were stored for up to 30 years can now be safely destroyed, further reducing management effort and costs.



2.5 million

digital images already produced



High satisfaction

among medical staff and doctors thanks to the high level of service



Correct assignment

of all documents, only random checks on completeness necessary



Legally compliant and ISO-certified digitization

integrated into internal processes

MANAGING PATIENT INFORMATION ACROSS FIVE CLINICS AND EIGHT SITES

“When a file was prepared for archiving it had to be glued and stapled. Each time it was recalled it would have to be separated, taking care to not damage the contents, before resealing and returning the file.”

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CHALLENGED BY PAPER RECORDS AND MANUAL PROCESSES

Inefficient archives

Located across five clinics and eight sites in Upper Austria, Oberösterreichische Gesundheitsholding GmbH (OÖG) provides comprehensive inpatient and outpatient services. Successful treatment depends on quick and complete retrieval of examination results along with medical transcription and archiving services, ensuring patient records are updated and made available with the latest notes from doctors and therapists.

To optimise information management, OÖG became an early adopter of digital records. Nearly 20 years ago, things were very different. “Everything was kept in paper form, spread across different storerooms,” says Gertrude Eggl, head of Transcription Services and Archives at Pyhrn-Eisenwurzen Klinikum (PEK) Kirchdorf, who is also coordinator of all transcription services and archives at Oberösterreichische Gesundheitsholding GmbH. “You needed real inside knowledge to select the right room and then locate the correct file.”

Overflowing files

Under Austrian law OÖG is legally required to hold patient records for up to 30 years, putting increasingly crowded archives under even greater pressure.

Preserving information was another concern. “When a file was prepared for archiving it had to be glued and stapled,” adds Eggl. “Each time it was recalled it would have to be separated, taking care to not damage the contents, before resealing and returning the file.”



Legally required to hold patient records for up to 30 years



MERGING PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL PATIENT INFORMATION

“Now, I cannot imagine doing things differently.”

**Gertrude Eggli, Head of Transcription Services and Archives,
Pyhrn-Eisenwurzen Klinikum Kirchdorf,
Oberösterreichische Gesundheitsholding GmbH**

ONE FULLY MANAGED SERVICE

Preparing the ground

OÖG consulted with Iron Mountain® to develop a long-term solution for scanning and classifying documents included within patient files: from creation and retention to secure destruction. PEK Kirchdorf decided to only continuously digitize new patient files. Archived records were kept in paper form and are reduced through annual checks against retention schedules.



Robust processes and quality control

PEK Kirchdorf implemented an end-to-end digital solution from Iron Mountain. Crucially, it ensures secure full chain of custody including collection, transportation, imaging, and shredding. “Now, I cannot imagine doing things differently,” says Eggli.

Once a week, archived files are picked-up and transported in lockable boxes by security-vetted staff. To date, Iron Mountain has produced 2.5 million digital images, 140,000 alone for PEK Kirchdorf. Digital documents are classified, for example, by department and document type. The process ensures a quality document listing all the criteria that a file must meet before it can be handed over for archiving. A holding-wide sorting guideline prescribes how documents are to be classified and lists any exceptions, either in general or relating to individual hospitals of OÖG.

“At Iron Mountain’s suggestion, we developed a database to identify whether a file is located on the ward, in the archive, in processing or at Iron Mountain,” says Eggli. “This means that we know the status of a file at all times, significantly reducing search time. And we now also use the system to quickly find a paper record during the time between a patient being discharged and the file being digitized by Iron Mountain.”

 **2.5 million digital images produced so far**

EXPEDITING AND ENHANCING CLINICAL DECISION-MAKING

"We actually no longer receive calls from doctors looking for a digitally archived document."

**Gertrude Eggl, Head of Transcription Services and Archives,
Pyhrn-Eisenwurzen Klinikum Kirchdorf, Oberösterreichische Gesundheitsholding GmbH**

Greater agility and efficiency

Information flows much faster. Authorized healthcare professionals can access patient records from anywhere, securely and in compliance with GDPR and DSGVO (Datenschutz-Grundverordnung) requirements. Historical information from previous patient stays and specialist areas can be recalled very quickly.

"In our department, acceptance was very high right from the start," recalls Eggl. "In fact, one of our doctors recently moved to another hospital run by another operator and remarked how chaotic things were and how they could always find everything when back here. So, we are clearly on the right track."

Controls and digital capabilities reduce the likelihood of documents being lost or damaged significantly, which improves data security and compliance. "The number of incorrectly classified documents is extremely small, and we actually no longer receive calls from doctors looking for a digitally archived document," adds Eggl.

Time, cost, and space savings

"Iron Mountain scans and returns our files, usually within a few days," says Eggl. "After a month they contact us to check there aren't any issues and confirm permission to destroy the originals."

Productivity has improved with less time spent on administration and searching for files. Outsourcing to Iron Mountain compared to developing an inhouse digital solution proved to be financially more beneficial by the time extra staff, storage space and expensive scanning equipment were factored in.

"I am glad I have Iron Mountain," concludes Eggl. "When there are questions, they are always answered quickly. I never feel anything is left hanging. They have never let us down."

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 **Preparation and scanning of paper documents in a weekly cycle**

 **2.5 million digital images already produced**

 **24/7 secure access to patient information**

 **Significant time, cost, and space savings**

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CHALLENGE



SOLUTION



RESULTS