



Case Study: How George Washington University Medical Faculty Associates Addressed Patient Confidentiality and Physician Convenience



Every major laptop manufacturer offers models with fingerprint sensors to establish a user's identity

Overview

George Washington University Medical Faculty Associates (MFA) in Washington, DC is a 300-physician multi-specialty practice affiliated with, and the primary teaching practice of, the George Washington University School of Medicine.

Doctors and staff were becoming increasingly frustrated with having to remember and periodically reset their passwords in order to meet security requirements.

MFA staff utilize Allscripts's Enterprise Electronic Health Record (EHR) Solution to organize and secure their patient records. MFA turned to Allscripts for advice on how they could provide a more convenient and secure alternative to the password system for their physicians and staff to use for accessing patient records.

The Solution

In May of 2007, Allscripts successfully integrated BIO-key's fingerprint identification software into the Enterprise EHR Solution at MFA to protect access to patient medical records.

Allscripts now offers the BIO-key's fingerprint ID software as a more secure, convenient option to passwords as part of its Enterprise EHR Solution.

Now doctors simply place their finger on a reader to establish their identity when they sign into the EHR software, sign physician's notes, prescribe controlled substances, and to gain access to patient data protected through the "break glass" feature of Enterprise EHR.

BIO-key's software immediately reads the fingerprint and matches it against a database of authorized users' fingerprints. Only when the match is successful can the clinician then gain access to the EHR. The entire process takes less time than it takes to type in a password and is far more secure.

"BIO-key not only enhances the security of our Electronic Health Record but it delivers superior accuracy and works with every major fingerprint reader," said Glen Tullman, Chief Executive Officer of Allscripts. "By embedding fingerprint biometrics in our solutions, we're fulfilling our promise to provide the highest possible level of security for patient records, while also making it as convenient as possible for our physicians to use."

Conclusion

With BIO-key's fingerprint identification software:

- *Privacy of patient records is vastly improved*
- *Doctors quickly and conveniently access needed information*
- *System security is enhanced.*

"Fingerprint identification guarantees that each patient's private medical information remains private. While passwords can be shared, a doctor's fingerprint cannot."

"Our physicians are focused on patient care. They complain about the inconvenience of constantly resetting and remembering passwords. Using their finger to access information is not only considerably more convenient but also more secure than passwords, allowing us to ensure that only authorized staff can access patient records."

Praveen Toteja, Chief Information Officer for George Washington University Medical Faculty Associates