

A woman in purple scrubs is adjusting a patient on a CT scanner. The patient is lying on the table, and the woman is standing next to the machine, touching a control panel. The background shows a clinical setting with shelves and equipment.

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Healthcare

DoseWise

Dose management doesn't have to be daunting: **A look into WellStar's dose management program**

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WellStar Health System is the largest health system in Georgia, with 20,000 care team members across 11 hospitals, 225 medical office locations, outpatient centers, health parks, a pediatric center, nursing centers, hospice and homecare. We are known nationally for our innovative care models, which focus on improving quality and access to healthcare. Staying ahead of the curve in technology has enabled WellStar to be leaders in both the diagnosis and treatment of an array of health conditions.

Most recently, WellStar has taken an innovative approach specific to radiology, namely our radiation dose management program – of particular importance since we have more than 20 CT scanners in action.

Initially, WellStar had a manual program for dose management based on extracting reports from our RIS and EHR systems – which was both very time consuming and inefficient. Across our many care locations, we perform more than 175,000 CT scans each year. Monthly radiation dose reports of more than 1,000 pages long had to be reviewed. It would take me more than a week out of every month to review and analyze the data. Despite the best of intentions, it was very challenging to run an efficient dose management program with a manual process.

We knew we could do much better and decided to implement the DoseWise Portal from Philips to help automate our dose management program. DoseWise is a web-based solution that collects, measures, analyzes, and reports patient and staff radiation exposure. The solution provides me with a more streamlined, efficient way to review data around dose exposure and staff activities. Now I can review and analyze monthly data in a couple of days rather than a week or two.

Since automating our dose management program, we've seen many benefits, including:

› **Tools for easy comparative analysis:**

DoseWise provides easy-to-read charts and graphs, which simplifies my data analysis and comparisons. This was difficult to do manually due to transposing large amounts of data and numbers between Excel spread sheets. The time necessary to perform the required review has decreased immensely.

› **Improved issues management:**

The dose management platform allows access to data on a daily basis. I can keep up with the notifications, review them more quickly and respond faster to any issues that may arise. It also allows for easy identification of discrepancies in protocols or practices across the system and identifies any outlying radiation doses across all scanners. I am able to assess and compare the radiation doses to the regulatory radiation exposure levels based on individual patient populations. This ultimately enables any dose management issues to be addressed more quickly and effectively.

DoseWise helps identify areas that have potential for radiation exposure reduction and enhanced dose optimization. The DoseWise Portal provides numerous benefits to our radiation dose management program. It aids in compliance with regulatory standards; helps in system-wide conformity in the utilization of appropriate techniques and protocols; helps identify areas that may benefit from process reform.

Dose management is an area attracting significant attention from regulatory organizations, hospital leaders, clinicians and patients. With the continued focus on quality standards and emerging Joint Commission regulations, the emphasis on dose management will continue. Regulations are requiring providers to comply with more stringent dose management practices and reporting procedures. Now is the time to move from a manual program to a software-enabled automated system to manage exposure risk. The shift is not painful – and is certainly a welcome change from pouring over endless EHR report pages!

