



Better quality of outpatient care with Digital Pen and Paper

FACTS

Customer: The German charitable health-care association Diakonie-Pflege Verbund Berlin gGmbH.

Challenge: To speed up data collection and processing, so that care workers can spend more time on care and less on paperwork. The customer also wanted to improve the accuracy of patient records.

Solution: The new solution is provided by the Anoto partner Allpen and is based on Anoto Digital Pen and Paper technology. With the solution, forms can be printed on demand directly from the electronic patient record with only a mouse-click. All data is captured by pen and paper and is available just in time in an electronic documentation and archiving system.

Benefits: User-friendly solution. Faster data capture and accounting process means that care workers can save a couple of working hours every day. More up-to-date patient case books lead to improved medical treatment with fewer errors. Paper copies can be kept. A higher level of care and patient security is achieved because family or emergency doctors have a possibility to get information from the electronic patient record.

“Caring for people means spending time with them. With Anoto Digital Pen and Paper technology, Allpen has given us a solution that allows our care staff to concentrate on looking after patients instead of being tied down with bureaucracy.”

Karl-Martin Seeberg, General Manager of Diakonie-Pflege Verbund Berlin gGmbH

Health and social care work is often a race against limitations such as time, cost cutting and large amounts of paperwork. Bringing food to elderly people, taking care of their household and providing nursing or geriatric care are rather time consuming activities. However, these are often overshadowed by accounting and administrative work that has to be done by the care staff in addition to the previously mentioned activities. So, what should be in focus and centre of this work can easily become secondary: the time to care for people. In order to enable its care staff to enhance its work processes, Berlin's charity healthcare association, Diakonie-Pflege Verbund Berlin, had to find new ways of supporting its care staff in its everyday work.

In the course of daily work, not only does a multitude of patients have to be cared for and be visited. Also, a multitude of data has to be transferred into the patient management system after each patient visit. When it was being done manually, it was time consuming, susceptible to errors and often not very up-to-date, since notes were sometimes transferred first the next day. A solution was therefore needed for automatically capturing and processing the data.

Making it a lot better without changing so much

Due to legal requirements, a paper copy of the care documentation always has to be given to the patient. This ensures transparency of the care staff's diagnosis for the patient and is also an important factor in the process of establishing a faithful relationship between care staff and patients. Due to this fact, the new solution for data capture had to allow a paper copy to be kept.

Before choosing a digital pen and paper solution, Diakonie-Pflege Verbund Berlin tested a PDA solution. However, it was not accepted by the staff due to its complexity and because of the need to adapt working procedures to the technology. In addition, battery life time, handling and practicability did not meet the minimum requirements of the staff.

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The new solution – how it works

Finally, Diakonie-Pflege Verbund Berlin was introduced to a digital pen and paper solution by the Anoto partner Allpen. The solution consists of a digital pen and paper with Anoto's dot pattern that can be printed out either as a care form or deployment transcript that lists the care staff's activities during the course of the day.

Diakonie's care staff collects data at people's homes with the digital pen. The data is stored in the pen and can be transmitted to a PC via a docking station at the end of the shift. The entries can be opened e.g. as a PDF file in the Document Management System for further processing, or be made instantly available to the Medical Review Board of the Statutory Health Insurance Funds for reviewing.

Benefits with the new solution

Anoto Digital Pen and Paper technology proves its worth in the day-to-day reality of outpatient care. The ease for the care workers at Diakonie-Pflege Verbund Berlin was instantly recognizable. The digital pen and paper solution was easy to implement, since no training was required and the workflow did not have to be changed.

As the solution enables fast, almost error-free data capture and a much quicker execution of the accounting process, the care workers at Diakonie-Pflege Verbund Berlin can now save a couple of working hours every day. What was a matter of additional hours at the end of a day's shift is now a matter of minutes only.

For Karl-Martin Seeberg, the General Manager of Diakonie-Pflege Verbund Berlin gGmbH, the use of digital pens plays an important role in further improving the quality of the organization's outpatient care: "Caring for people means spending time with them. With Anoto Digital Pen and Paper technology, Allpen has given us a solution that allows our care staff to concentrate on looking after patients instead of being tied down with bureaucracy."

Another beneficial aspect is that the patient records are always up-to-date, since no delay occurs in transferring the field data into the document management system. This way, if a doctor or other member of the care staff looks in the patient records, he can see for example if a patient has received his medicine

or experienced any particular symptoms. This leads to improved medical treatment with fewer errors.

Furthermore, the solution fully complies with legal requirements as it enables care workers to retain paper forms for verification and record keeping.

At the moment, 166 pens are being used at the Diakonie stations in Berlin and there are plans for further implementations in the Berlin areas.

Partner profile:

Allpen Gesellschaft für Systementwicklung mbH was formed in 2004 with the goal of drastically simplifying and comprehensively optimizing companies' documentation processes using digital pens, thereby supporting enterprises in improving their documentation and information management processes. With its consulting, system development and services divisions, Allpen concentrates on individualized digital pen and paper systems that are based on Anoto technology and distributed in cooperation with a large number of partners.

www.allpen.de

Customer profile:

Diakonie-Pflege Verbund Berlin gGmbH is the federation of various Diakonie care stations in Berlin. Founded in 1991, it serves as the organizational centre and head and oversees eight stations all over Berlin which altogether employ more than 600 care workers.

www.diakonie-pflege.de

Anoto Digital Pen and Paper technology

A digital pen looks and feels like a normal ballpoint pen. However, it contains an integrated digital camera, an advanced image microprocessor and a Bluetooth® transmitter. Any paper can be used with a digital pen, if the Anoto dot pattern is added to the layout before printing the paper. The Anoto dot pattern consists of numerous black dots that can be read by the digital pen, but are almost invisible to the naked eye. The pen reads the pattern and registers what and where the user writes.