

Local spotlight

Digital medical record shift gets Meritel's help

■ **Company creates methods for secure, accessible electronic medical information.**

By Neal Haldane
Special to The Detroit News

CANTON TOWNSHIP

The Meritel Group sees a lot of opportunity helping medical professionals create electronic health records for their patients.

Momentum for developing electronic medical recordkeeping appears to be increasing. Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services accepted standards related to electronic health records.

"The acceptance of these standards provides impetus for our industry to move quickly toward secure, accessible, nationwide health information exchange, which will ultimately benefit the delivery of patient care," said Joyce Sensmeier, vice president of the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society.

A recent report from the society urged the United States to do more to streamline and digitize medical information.

"Information about health is no more sensitive than information about personal finances, yet we can go to any ATM across the globe and obtain information from our home bank," the report stated.

"The world has communicated and created standards for interoperability in the banking industry. We should do no less in health care."

The Government Accountability Office also recently recommended additional privacy safeguards since the information will be shared with numerous people and organizations.

To help doctors and medical personnel navigate from paper to digital records, the Meritel Group offers its information technology expertise, said Kalyan Sennerikuppam, president.

"We become their technology partner," Sennerikuppam said.



Brandy Baker / The Detroit News

Meritel Group President Kalyan Sennerikuppam looks over the shoulder of Jerica Mack as she scans patient records into a computer at the Harper Professional Office Building in Detroit.

"Electronic health records will become a standard, positive solution for the medical health care industry."

With its eight U.S. employees and six programmers in India, the Meritel Group can serve as a consultant for clients on information technology projects or completely manage their IT needs, he said.

In addition to the medical community, the Meritel Group has partnered with nonprofit companies, construction firms, architects, engineers and those in the legal profession to improve their IT systems and processes.

By focusing on these industries and small- to medium-sized businesses, Sennerikuppam said his company has become proficient with the technology demands and solutions that work in those areas.

"Every industry uses technology differently and there is a learning curve to learn how the industry uses the technology and how adaptable

Meritel Group

- **What:** Information technology and process management consulting
- **Headquarters:** Canton Township
- **Other offices:** Cleveland, Cincinnati, Toledo and Hyderabad, India
- **Employees:** Eight in the United States, six in India
- **Information:** www.meritelgroup.com

they are to that technology," he said.

The firm already operates offices in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Toledo and Hyderabad, India, and would like to open new locations in Ohio, Michigan, Kentucky and Pennsylvania.

The company also plans to increase its programming staff in India so it can provide lower-cost and more robust technology solutions to its clients, Sennerikuppam said.

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