

# Case Study



## At a Glance

### Organization

University Health Network  
Toronto, Ontario

- Toronto General Hospital
- Toronto Western Hospital
- Princess Margaret Hospital
- Beds: 710 beds
- Active medical staff: 1,000
- Outpatient visits per year: 800,000
- Clinic visits per year: 950,000

Shared Information  
Management Services  
Toronto, Ontario

- The information management and technology partnership among nine healthcare organizations in the greater Toronto area

### Solution Spotlight

- Clinical Professional Services
- Consulting Services
- Horizon<sup>WP</sup> Patient Portal

### Critical Issues

- Access to consistent health information
- Access to community resources and programs
- Communication between patients and providers
- Patient satisfaction
- Rising healthcare costs

### Results

- Improved access to reliable information and education materials
- Enhanced patient satisfaction and caregiver communication, represented by average of five portal visits/30 minutes per session each month
- Generated IT savings by sharing \$1.2 million in portal resources

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Empowering Healthcare

## University Health Network Provides Patients with an Innovative Window across the Continuum of Care

Patients can face many disconnects while receiving care for chronic diseases across multiple settings: in the hospital, during rehabilitation or with complex continuing care. University Health Network needed to give patients a window into their personal health record, providing them with reliable educational content so they could become more engaged in their own care. With the help of the Shared Information Management Services Partnership, the organization deployed an innovative patient Web portal to offer a unified view of data across the spectrum of care — enabling patients and their families to navigate the healthcare system more effectively and improve the overall care experience.

### Challenge

The Breast Cancer Survivorship (BCS) program at University Health Network's (UHN) Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto, Ontario, wanted a portal that would provide patients with the opportunity to become more active in their own care. The portal would support the organization's strategy to improve access to services, facilitate discussions with providers and provide secure access to health information.

"Patients needed a way to find reliable, relevant information about their condition," says David Wiljer, director of Knowledge Management and Innovation for UHN's Princess Margaret Hospital. "Some patients surfing the Web cannot find relevant information. We wanted to provide them with the information they needed, when they needed it."

### Answers

Clinicians from UHN's BCS program teamed up with staff from Shared Information Management Services (SIMS), a shared information management and technology service that supports the IT needs of UHN and eight other healthcare organizations in the Toronto area. Together, the groups sought to identify the special needs of breast cancer survivors, who also piloted the portal.

The patient portal uses McKesson's Horizon<sup>WP</sup> Patient Portal application and its existing modules as the underlying technology platform. McKesson's Clinical Professional Services helped define hardware and infrastructure requirements, upgrade existing systems, and install the product. McKesson Consulting Services helped SIMS build custom modules that streamlined content administration and provided enhanced portal functionality.

As the portal began to take shape, the SIMS Partnership had a broader plan in mind — use this technology framework to provide similar services to other patients, such as those with diabetes and chronic kidney disease, who were also in need of disease management services.

"Consumers are transforming healthcare," says Lydia Lee, executive director of SIMS. "Patients want to be more engaged in their care — and our patient portal provides a single touch-point that unifies the continuum of care. It also enables us to leverage the technology to address other disease conditions."

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**Lydia Lee**

*Executive Director, SIMS*

*University Health Network*

The Diabetes Portal provides consolidated, consistent educational materials for our nine-member partnership,” explains Lee. “Sharing resources ensures patients are not confused by receiving different materials at each setting of care.”

For the next phase of development, the patient portal is reaching out to other regional healthcare groups, called Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs). The Chronic Kidney Disease project will include information and interactive tools for patients receiving predialysis treatment at UHN and Grand River Hospital. The Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN will provide strategic feedback.

## Results

Patients using the Web-based application are sharing their experiences with other BCS patients. A research study is under way with BCS patients to measure pre- and post-conditions of patients, evaluating the effect of the portal on outcomes and patient satisfaction. Diabetes patients are also providing feedback. To date, results include:

- 130 breast cancer patients are enrolled and using the portal
- Patients spend an average of 30 minutes on the portal per visit and log on five times per month

- Significant IT cost savings throughout the partnership by sharing \$1.2 million in portal development services

By using the portal, patients can access:

- Educational material tailored to their condition
- Community resources
- Community events calendar
- Personal medication and health profiles that they can create and maintain
- Personal appointments calendar
- Test results with explanation of high/low scores
- Care schedules
- Personal diary
- A message center with information based on their demographics and health interests

“Sometimes patients are reluctant to participate in studies, but we have patients asking us to be a part of this one,” says Wiljer. “So we expect to quickly meet our goal of 250 patients in the study. When patients gain access to information that is clinically relevant to their condition, they can become active participants in their care.”

**McKesson Provider Technologies**

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