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> David Korkowski
> Director of Laboratory Services
> Northeast Montana Health Services

Laboratory Assured Compliance Solutions™
Eliminates Gaps in Compliance

Multi-lab system utilizes LACS to standardize compliance

We sat down with David Korkowski of Northeast Montana Health Services to discuss the success of Laboratory Assured Compliance Solutions™ at his laboratory. He manages multiple laboratories many miles apart with much of the staff consisting of contracted technologists. He reached out to Kapios because his laboratory needed a simpler way to fill gaps in compliance.

The Challenge

Northeast Montana Health Services is comprised of two hospitals: Trinity Hospital in Wolf Point, Montana and Poplar Hospital in Poplar, Montana. Each hospital has a laboratory, but there is a 23 mile drive between them. David Korkowski is the Director of Laboratory Services, who manages the day-to-day operations of both laboratories.

On a normal day, Mr. Korkowski writes policies, supervises both locations and their more than 15 employees, orders supplies, and oversees the compliance of the laboratories. When dealing with two locations that are miles apart, this is a challenge. The best way to handle this is to operate as if it is one laboratory.

"I always try to look at ourselves as one. All the policies are written to encompass both facilities. That way, I do not have to deal with too many issues," David explains. "What we do at one place on a piece of equipment, we also do at the other location."

David is responsible for standardizing two

laboratories, but he does not have enough staff to have full-time employees. This issue of limited resources and trained employees is a concern many laboratories are facing across the United States. Because of this, many laboratories, including Northeast Montana Health Services, use traveling lab technologists who float between the laboratories and usually come in for 13 week periods.

The Need

Every day, the technologists in the laboratory run checks on the instruments to ensure they are working properly. The forms are kept in three-ring binders with holes punched in them. "You have to keep all these records in a book by the analyzer and you're using them day in and day out. The holes start to get frayed and sheets may fall out," explains David.

It is also a requirement from CLIA to store the forms for several years. "I hated that because I have a small space and when you have these large notebooks, where one year of data takes up an entire shelf, it just takes up too much space."
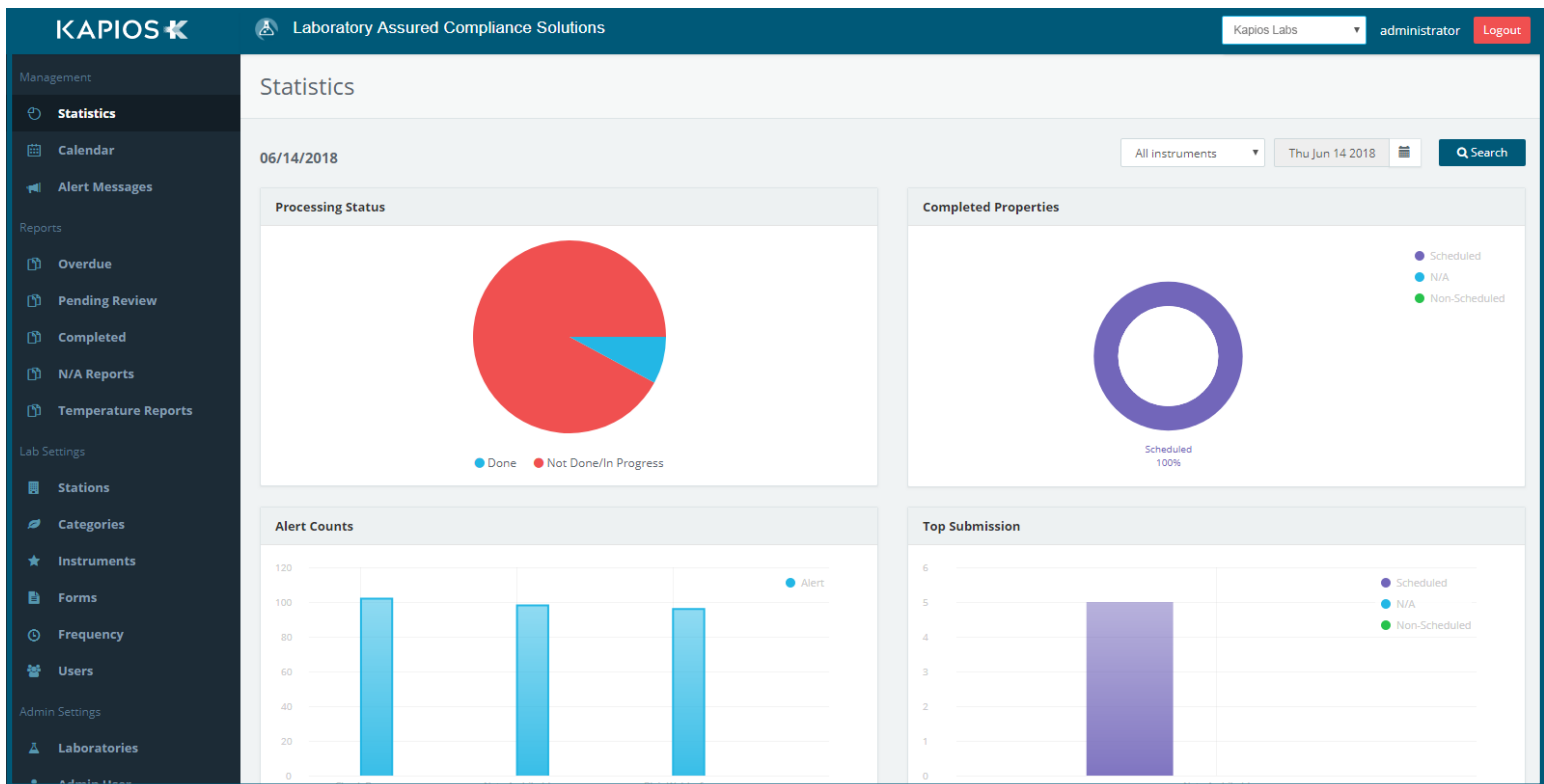
Frequently, checks would fall through the cracks. "We were always missing the quarterly reports because they're so far apart. If you forgot to write down when you did the check and when it was due again, things got missed."

When they were inspected by CLIA, they would need to pull down all the books and folders and go through each to show where tasks were checked off. "In my chemistry department, I have 7 or 8 different forms, so I'm going through all that to show them what they wanted and you always have that fear that if they missed it, you will have a blank hole there, and it's sort of glaring."

My main worry was that the staff wouldn't accept it. A few of them have been here for a long time, and they get in the habit of doing things a certain way. By the time we ended my three month roll-out, everyone was really comfortable with it. They saw how simple and user-friendly it really is.

David Korkowski
Director of Laboratory Services
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If a gap was found, the laboratory would need to show how they would improve for the next time, and demonstrate how they became compliant again.

Discovery of Laboratory Assured Compliance Solutions

"I was all set to deal with the limitations of my LIS not having a built-in digital checklist. So when I saw Laboratory Assured Compliance Solutions, I wanted it." David talked about how easy it was to get the software approved by the system and IT because "It was affordable, and I was able to show how it would help us to be better in our compliance." Northeast Montana's past two surveys prior to Laboratory Assured Compliance Solutions (LACS) had issues with their QC. David was able to show how LACS would eliminate that.

The Solution

A little over a year ago, David and the Northeast Montana Health Services said goodbye to paper forms in their laboratory and transformed their CLIA paper checklists over to LACS.

"It has been a great help!" David described how the solution allows for multi-lab management over multiple forms. "I have different forms for each lab, and then I'm able to go in there and review what's being done and what's not being done. If something is missed, I am able to send out lab audits."

One of his favorite parts of the software is the space saved on shelves and eliminating the worry of losing documentation. "I don't have to worry about losing anything because I have everything on a tablet."
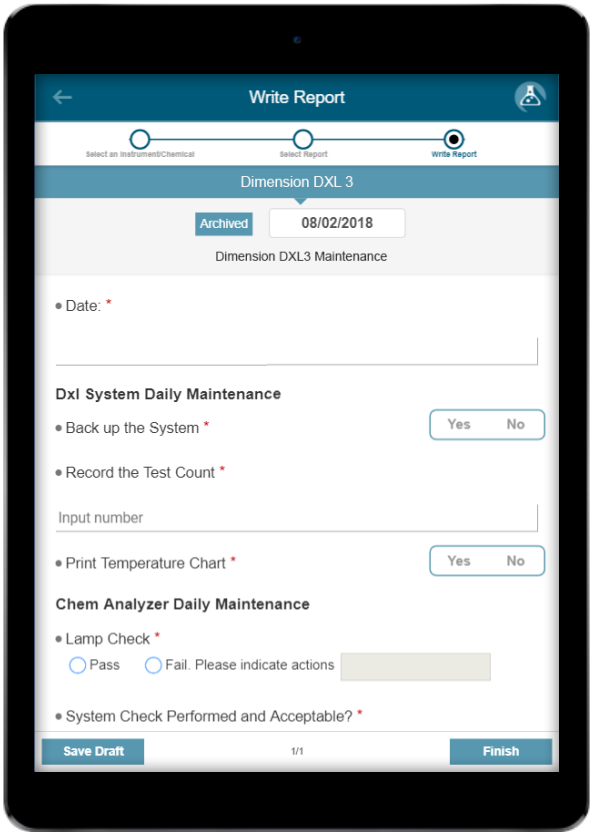
Onboarding

David decided to stagger the onboarding of his two laboratories and launch the larger of the two first. "I used a three month roll-out process where, in the first month, I encouraged them to start using the software in addition to still keeping record on paper and they did so sporadically. This really gave them a chance to get used to it."

"The second month, we did the same thing, but now we had started to go through and work out what forms were working. Then we updated forms as needed." David continued, "by the third month, I set a date and said 'by this date we are using it completely!' I had actually planned on doing paper and the software together for another month, but we had such good compliance. I went ahead and did the complete cross-over two weeks early."

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The second lab transitioned even faster because David and the technologist had customized a lot of the forms to their needs during the first launch. "We did about a three week rollout where they used both paper and the software in conjunction with each other." In a lab where many of the staff are travelers, David was surprised how easily they took to the software, and still continue to as new staff comes in.

Onboarding Plan		
1st Month	Recording everything on paper	Starting to integrate the app
2nd Month	Recording everything on paper	Starting to integrate the app and requesting feedback on forms
3rd Month	Two-week transition with paper	100% recording tasks on app
6 Months	Began roll-out at second lab - Month transition with paper	100% recording tasks on app

> Anytime change comes along, my employees are resistant at first, but once they started using Laboratory Assured Compliance Solutions more and more they really started liking it. Most everybody picked it up rather fast, it was so easy to go in there and mark tasks pass/fail, yes/no, then add a date.
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Acceptance of a New Process

The paper process has been the way compliance was always done, and change is hard. "Anytime change comes along, my employees are resistant at first, but once they started using Laboratory Assured Compliance Solutions more and more they really started liking it." He continued, "Most everybody picked it up rather fast, it was so easy to go in there and mark tasks pass/fail, yes/no, then add a date."

Over the past year, David and his team have learned new and exciting ways to use the software. His technologists have settled into a new workflow. "They use the 'Due Today' feature and are able to go through and see the tasks they have to get done, so we aren't missing anything."

Success of Laboratory Assured Compliance Solutions

"We're using LACS mostly for our maintenance checklists. Before LACS, we were always struggling with the quarterly forms because they're so far apart and if you forgot to write down what you did and when it is due again, things got missed. Now, with Laboratory Assured Compliance Solutions, we're able to put it in and it pulls up automatically when something is due."

Mr. Korkowski shared that since the implementation of LACS they have not missed any monthly, bi-month, quarterly, or even semi-annual maintenance.

"I've enjoyed the product; it did exactly what I thought it was going to do. I even found that I can

include some QC in there so that made it even better!"

LACS has many unique features, and for many labs, the sky is the limit for customization. David found that he was able to take a form where results were logged in blood bank and place that into LACS as well. He also found uses for it in rapid testing, "I was able to use it in rapid-testing, we were able to put in the software a date when QC was performed."

Final Thoughts

Having to maintain different books and log sheets for each instrument at each location is time consuming and frustrating. LACS has completely redefined compliance at Northeast Montana Health services. "It is so nice. We don't miss anything anymore; it's helping us to be better in compliance and doing what we need without missing it," David explains.

"Anyone thinking about giving it a try, the software will really surprise them; it makes things so much easier."

About LACS

It's a solution that was created in a laboratory just like yours, by people who really know the pains of regulatory audit obligations. Laboratory Assured Compliance Solutions (LACS) replaces paper logs in clinical laboratories with tablets to track scheduled instrument activity and notifies technologists with a chain of alerts until a required task is completed. LACS provides a centralized database to record and review equipment status, access records and run audit reports, all in real-time.

Learn more at https://www.kapioshealth. com/laboratoryassuredcompliancesolution. html

Schedule a Demo

To schedule a demo call 567-661-0772 or email us at info@kapioshealth.com. We have clinical engineers to help consult peer to peer as well.

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At Kapios, we create technology because it is our passion. When we saw the far-too-many obstacles standing in the way of our healthcare providers, we knew we could help. We began to share our passion and create solutions to reduce the challenges in our healthcare community. We are using our technological capabilities to allow them to do what they do best.

In the end, we hope our love for technology will make a difference in the lives of those who need it most.

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