Convergence of Clinical Engineering and Information Technology

August 24, 2006

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CE & IT Convergence

- History of Clinical Engineering
- Trends in technologies
- Why convergence is necessary
- How to make transition
Hospitals began engaging (employing or contracting) clinical or biomedical engineering in the 1970s as a consequence of:

- proliferation of and reliance on increasing complex medical equipment
- popular reporting of medical equipment related safety issues ("electrical safety")
- advent of JCAH (now JCAHO) standards regarding need for routine medical equipment testing …
- prospect of federal regulations
Historically

On the advent of clinical engineering (30-35 years ago), it was primarily thought of as a “maintenance” function … i.e., something like 90% of CE activities were:

- inspection & pm (i.e., checking function & safety)
- repairs

Consequently, clinical engineering was typically associated with:

- Maintenance Dept
- Facilities or Plant engineering
CE Model has changed

Discrete Equipment Management

- Management & Consulting Services
  - Inventory Management
  - Safety
  - Regulatory & standards compliance
- Support Services
  - Testing, Inspection, Preventive Maintenance
  - Repair

Technology Management

- Management & Consulting Services
  - Inventory & Asset Management
  - Strategic Planning
  - Quality & Safety
  - Regulatory & standards compliance
  - Vendor management
- Support Services
  - Education (technology users & CE staff)
  - Help Desk
  - Installation & Integration
  - Upgrades
  - Testing, Inspection, Preventive Maintenance
  - Repair
Today Typical
Clinical Engineering Program
Organization by Function / Roles

- Technology Consultation, Project Management & System Planning
- Emerging Technology Review, Pre-Acquisition Evaluation, Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) & Life Cycle Cost Analyses
- Education & training
- Compliance (government, accrediting authorities)
- Device Tracking (Hazards, Recalls)
- Incident Investigation
- Contract/vendor management

- Installation & configuration
- Inspection
- Preventive Maintenance
- Calibration
- Repair

- Communications (client interface)
- Bookkeeping
  - Accounts Payable & Receivable
  - Payroll & Benefits Management
- Correspondence
- Filing
- Data entry
- Reporting

Healthcare Technology Management (Clinical Engineering)
Program Manager (Dir of Clinical Engineering)

Clinical Engineers
Biomedical Equipment Technicians
Administrative Staff

Safety Committee
Typical CE Staff Qualifications

- Biomedical Equipment Technicians (BMET)
  - Associate Degree in Technology (AA) or higher, Military or Manufacturer Training
  - Certified Biomedical Equipment Technician (CBET) …
  - Specialties: General Biomedical, Laboratory, Medical Imaging
  - Rankings: Level I, II, III … higher level reflects more experience, education and/or specialization

- Clinical Engineers (CE)
  - Batchelor or Masters of Science Degree in Clinical or Biomedical Engineering
  - Certified Clinical Engineer (CCE)

- Director of Clinical Engineering
  - Clinical Engineer
  - Master’s in Business Administration … or business education
Trends - Changes in Medical Technology
Moving from Discrete Devices to integrated “Systems”

- Medical devices and systems are being designed and operated as special purpose computers ... more features are being automated, increasing amounts of medical data are being collected, analyzed and stored in these devices.

- There has been a rapidly growing integration and interconnection of disparate medical (and information) technology devices and systems where medical data is being increasingly exchanged.
Trends – Integration of Medical Technologies

Integrating medical devices facilitates

- access to, comparison and analysis of rich set of clinical data from variety of sources that can be used to provide preemptive care
- automatic charting of data to the electronic medical record (EMR)
- closed loop systems … i.e., outputs from diagnostic devices (e.g., heart rate monitors & pulse oximeters) affect inputs on therapeutic devices (e.g., infusion pumps)
- patient alarm management
- asset tracking (i.e., RFID)
- remote device management
  - monitoring data flow integrity & continuity
  - error code monitoring & remote diagnostics
  - software upgrades
Trends in Medical Technology Integration

Recently a large integrated health delivery system began a plan to integrate its 300,000 to 500,000 medical devices

- physiological monitors
- vital signs monitors
- electrocardiographs
- infusion pumps
- ventilators
- blood gas analyzers
- smart beds
Increasing Common
Integrated Medical Technology Systems

Integrated medical systems whose function includes
- store & permit retrieval of physiological data & images
- permit remote viewing of stored data/images by physicians & clinicians
- chart information automatically to the EMR

Examples of these integrated medical systems
- Database servers (physiologic monitoring)
- Cardiac Cath Lab & Diagnostic Cardiac Ultrasound
- Endoscopy
- Surgery Video
- Cardiology Archiving
- Labor & Delivery Archiving
- Picture Archiving (PACS) for Imaging
- Laboratory Information
- Pharmacy
- Alarm
Significant Medical Device Industry Trends

Medical Devices Increasing Deployed Over Diverse Networking Environments

- Body Area Networks (BAN)
- Personal Area Networks (PAN)
- Local Area Networks (LAN)
- Wide Area Networks (WAN)
- Internet

August 2006
Additional Drivers Leading to CE-IT Convergence

- Information Security – data integrity, availability & confidentiality (e.g., HIPAA, CyberSecurity)
- Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE) … prelude to the digital hospital
- Patient Safety
- Telemedicine
- Increasing application of
  - RFID (radiofrequency identification)
  - DICOM
  - IEEE 802.11x / WiFi
  - Bluetooth, Zigbee
  - IEEE 11073 (medical instrumentation bus)
  - WMTS
Significant Medical Device Industry Trends and Implications

- The number of integrated & networked medical device systems is rapidly proliferating.

- And our dependence on the clinical information maintained and transmitted by systems for effective & timely diagnosis and treatment is likewise increasing.

- This dependence on integrated systems can have major implications on our ability to deliver patient care and on our business operations if those systems should fail.
Need for CE-IT Convergence

Evolution of Critical Gaps

Integrated medical device systems often come in “under the radar” as they

- grow up from within clinical departments by connecting existing individual medical devices and networking them to servers
- are acquired as new medical device systems without full consideration given to their inherent vulnerabilities and the implication of their failure on continuity of patient care

“A system here … a system there …”

A recent, preliminary inventory revealed that our organization now has at least 65 medical system servers and given trends in technologies and our organization’s needs that number will likely double in the next 12 to 24 months.
Integrated Systems are particularly vulnerable to Single Points of Failure (SPOF)

An SPOF is any part of a system (e.g., person, component or device) whose individual failure will cause the entire (or a substantial portion of the) clinical system to fail.

Network servers and related infrastructure components are a likely SPOF for a variety of clinical systems.
Inevitability of Convergence

Convergence of Integrated Technologies

Historically
- Patient Safety, Compliance, Testing, Repair

Historically
- Business, Finance (Billing), ADT

Historically
- Telephone, Paging

Medical Technology

Information Technology

Telecommunications
Clinical Engineering Mission = Information Technology Mission

To apply engineering, technical, and managerial expertise to the identification, acquisition and support of safe, effective, and economical technology as needed by this institution for patient care, teaching, research, and community service.
Obstacles to CE-IT Convergence

- **Clash of cultures**
  - **CE** is patient centric
    - structure is geared toward response time in minutes/hours
    - emphasis on patient safety
    - innovation
  - **IT** is systems centric
    - structure is geared toward response time in hours/days
    - emphasis on integrity of data & processes
    - rules

- **Different and *(sometimes)* Conflicting standards**
  - **CE**
    - JCAHO (Environment of Care’s Medical Equipment Management standards)
    - FDA
  - **IT**
    - JCAHO (Information Services)
    - NIST
Traditional Differences Between Medical & Information Technologies

- IT Systems
  - MISSION CRITICAL

- Medical Devices & Systems
  - LIFE CRITICAL
Mission Critical

Activities, processing, etc., that are deemed vital to the organization's business success or existence. If a Mission Critical application fails, crashes, or is otherwise unavailable to the organization, it will have a significant negative impact upon the business.

Examples of Mission Critical applications include accounts/billing, customer balances, ADT processes, JIT ordering, and delivery scheduling.
Biomedical Technology Systems

Life Critical

Devices, systems and processes that are deemed vital to the patient’s health and quality of care. If a Life Critical system fails or is otherwise compromised, it will have a significant negative impact on the patient’s health, quality of care or safety.

Examples of Life Critical systems include physiologic monitoring, imaging, radiation therapy, and clinical laboratory systems.
Issues to Overcome
Cultural “Disconnect” between Clinical Engineering & Information Technology

Clinical engineering characteristics

- Early clinical engineering programs were formed with a disproportionate focus on maintenance … as consequence were lumped in organizationally with other hospital maintenance functions
- Subsequent developments are leading to more “enlightened” clinical engineering programs taking on responsibility for managing processes associated with technology selection, integration, training & service
- “Patient centric” approach
Issues to Overcome
Cultural “Disconnect” between Clinical Engineering & Information Technology

Information technology characteristics
✓ Historically business, finance (billing) and ADT
✓ Focusing on maintaining integrity of data flow and processing throughout their information systems
✓ Data, process & “systems centric”
Key Challenges leading to Convergence

- In today’s highly “connected” environment, medical technology can only be addressed by bringing the expertise of both professions together in a team effort.

- Both professions need to coordinate their efforts and develop solutions at the industry as well as the local (e.g., hospital) level.

- Increasingly, effective coordination is leading to the formal integration of departments and a crossing over of skill sets.
Challenges to Overcome

- Complacency
- Turf
- Culture
- Ignorance
As an ever-increasing percentage of biomedical technology integrates or networks with computer components, a synergistic relationship is possible and desirable between healthcare IT and the Biomedical / CE programs.

Synergies come from

- Biomedical / CE’s intuitive understanding of the medical device – patient dynamic and the
- IT personnel’s understanding of computer hardware and information processing concepts.
Moving toward Convergence

As long as CE/Biomedical and IT departments remain separate entities

- Establish regular lines of communication and cooperation at their management and technical levels. Biomedical and information technologies are inextricably entwined and only grow more so.
- Cooperate to ensure that technical issues do not “fall through the cracks,” that new technologies are effectively adopted and supported, and that there is appropriate cross-training between staff

As CE and IT departments merge into a Technology Management Service …

- Identify overlaps & gaps in skills, resources, technologies
- Fill gaps as necessary, realign skill sets, resources & technologies
- Cross-pollinate (i.e., learn from each other)
One Approach toward Convergence
Coordinator for Clinical Systems Integration & Infrastructure Support

Key element of a solution .. Description of new function …

- Maintains current inventory of networked and integrated medical systems (including catalog of services, features, interconnections)
- Coordinates security management process including risk (e.g., criticality & probability) and vulnerability analysis and related documentation associated with interconnected/integrated medical systems
- Coordinates with stakeholders a process to prioritize, develop and implement plan to manage/mitigate identified risks associated with interconnected/integrated medical systems by applying appropriate administrative, physical & technical safeguards
One Approach toward Convergence
Coordinator for Clinical Systems Integration & Infrastructure Support

Description of new function (continued) …

- Maintains the integrity of FDA approval for interconnected/integrated medical systems
- Works with stakeholders to insure effective deployment, integration, and support of new medical systems into legacy systems and non-medical elements of the organization’s information infrastructure.
  - Works to assure systems are deployed into an optimum (i.e., secure & supportive) environment.
  - Continually reviews system components to determine which are obsolete or otherwise no longer adequately supportable and then
  - Plans for and implements component upgrades/replacement in a timely manner.
One Approach toward Convergence
Coordinator for Clinical Systems Integration & Infrastructure Support

*Description of new function (continued)* …

- Identifies and manages appropriate software upgrades, security patches and anti-virus installs for interconnected/integrated medical systems according to industry best practices.

- Conducts Root Cause Analysis (RCA) and Failure Mode Effects Analysis (FMEA) on incidents involving integrated medical systems and reports findings to appropriate stakeholders for follow-up action.

- Monitors and adopts industry “Best Practices” to insure integrity, availability & confidentiality of data maintained and transmitted across interconnected and integrated medical systems.

- Educates stakeholders on security and other implications associated with the proliferation of interconnected and integrated medical technologies.
One Approach toward Convergence
Coordinator for Clinical Systems Integration & Infrastructure Support

Stakeholders the new function / role works with …

- Informatics (including network support, disaster recovery)
- Clinicians (system users including physicians, nurses, technologists, etc)
- Medical system manufacturers/vendors
- Risk management
- Information Security
- Medical procurement
- Clinical engineering
Gartner Research

A well-known & respected research group that advises clients on predicted implications of IT-related trends in a variety of different industries (e.g., financial, manufacturing, healthcare, etc)

A recent (Nov ’05) prediction (controversial) “By 2009, 50 percent of healthcare providers will move biomedical device management under the CIO”
“By 2009, 50 percent of healthcare providers will move biomedical device management under the CIO” … Gartner Research (Nov ’05)

Key Findings:

- Biomedical devices increasingly require network support and interoperability with electronic medical record systems.
- Potential network vulnerabilities and infrastructure demands of biomedical devices must be anticipated and managed.
- Progressive convergence of biomedical device planning and support within the office of the CIO is inevitable; executive management needs to orchestrate a smooth transition.
“By 2009, 50 percent of healthcare providers will move biomedical device management under the CIO” … Gartner Research (Nov ’05)

Market Implications:

- Biomedical device management needs to be included within the CIO's strategic, purchasing and operational oversight. Biomedical devices use embedded computer technology and often require network access.
- Too often, IT becomes involved after the fact, when a problem surfaces.
  - The inability to scan or patch a device is a vulnerability, and biomedical devices can add to the demand for widespread network accessibility and bandwidth.
  - The extensive interoperability of biomedical devices with electronic medical record systems is a second trigger for convergence.
- Electronic medical record systems can reduce documentation time by capturing data directly from medical devices. The electronic medical record system is also an early warning device that can fire critical trend alerts based on if-then logic and complex multivariable algorithms with biomedical devices as key data sources.
- When biomedical device – electronic medical record problems arise, clinical users shouldn't have to know whether it's the device, the interface, the network or the electronic medical records system to call technical support.
Technology’s Limitations

"Nurse, get on the internet, go to SURGERY.COM, scroll down and click on the 'Are you totally lost?' icon."
Questions?

Thank You!

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