Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Data Storage Strategies: Ask The Right Document Management System Questions

Look for ease of setup and integration in your paperless system.

Most facilities are going paperless to keep up with EMR requirements, as well as to save on storage space. If you are considering going paperless, take the time to research several programs, experts say. Here are some things to look for:

The company that makes the product should be stable and financially solvent. You don't want to buy a program, only to find the company is out of business in a few years and unable to provide you with service and updates.

Setup should be easy. It should not require a lot of new programming, physical changes to your office, or take a lot of computer time away from employees. Installation, debugging, and any customizations should be less than a week or two.

The company should provide adequate training to key personnel. At least one person from your organization should learn all the features of the program, so that she can instruct employees how to best use the new system. Ongoing support should be readily available.

It should integrate easily with your organization's other software. This is especially important for being able to share documents across different departments (e.g., payroll and HR) and transfer information easily between programs.

Look for a web-based program. This allows easy access by authorized personnel via your organization's intranet. The program should have strict security protocols.

Discuss cost. Find out how the company prices the product. Is it per user license, or some other fee structure? How are updates priced? Are there fees for training or customer support?

Consider what your organization's future document management needs may be. For example, can this program be customized to meet the needs of other departments when they eventually become paperless?