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M.D. Anderson Dropping SIS for Picis

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As this newsletter was going to press, we learned that the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston has decided to switch from Surgical Information Systems for its operating room management software to Picis CareSuite OR Manager.

SIS announced in late 1999 that it had landed M.D. Anderson, a major achievement considering its reputation as one of the best cancer centers in the country. SIS is used to schedule about 28 operating rooms and for case cart management, but only five years after being invited in, the Alpharetta, Ga., vendor is being shown the door.

The reason is that M.D. Anderson wants to have a totally integrated system for perioperative management, says Thomas Feeley, MD, head of the division of anesthesiology and critical care.

M.D. Anderson is already using CareSuite for anesthesia documentation, preoperative assessment documentation, and post-anesthesia care unit documentation. But the software from Wakefield, Mass.-based Picis is incompatible with SIS, Feeley says, and a suitable interface is not available. "The only way to get an integrated system was to replace SIS with Picis OR Manager," he tells us.

SIS is "a perfectly reasonable system," he says, but the overriding issue was one of compatibility. Information from the two systems could have been put into a data warehouse and then extracted, he acknowledges, but that would not be as straightforward a solution as changing out the SIS system.

The conversion is expected to be completed by the second or third quarter of 2005. Feeley says becoming a 100 percent Picis shop will simplify the surgery scheduling process and allow surgeons to book cases online, "which I think will be a major advantage for us."

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