What the medavis Referrer Portal Has to Do with Soccer
Valuable Sporting Qualities, but also Medically Suitable

The 1st FC Nuremberg is one of the most traditional soccer clubs in Germany. In its almost 120-year history, the club celebrated nine German Championship and three German Cup victories. Healthy players are the basis for good matches - and the medavis Referrer Portal also contributes to this.

Since 2016, the 310KLINIK and the club exchange x-ray images and reports in this way. “Before, we always had to transport a CD-ROM from A to B, which was very time consuming and difficult to accomplish over long distances - especially if time was of the essence during the hectic transfer business,” says Schaffarczyk.

Simple Due to Automated Processes
Of course, the Medical Care Center for Radiology and Nuclear Medicine does not only exist for the 1st FC Nuremberg. It has two sites, one at the 310KLINIK in Nuremberg and one at the hospital in Schwabach. Altogether they examine just short of 30,000 patients every year, two-thirds of them in Schwabach. “The hospital does not have its own radiology. Within a cooperation agreement, we carry out all radiological services for the hospital,” explains Schaffarczyk. At both sites, the Medical Care Center has almost 540,000 MRT, CT and x-ray examinations each year.

In collaboration with the referrers, the medavis Referrer Portal plays a central role, because an essential criterion is to stand out from the multitude of competitors. “Everyone has modern devices, everyone uses speech recognition, and everyone promises short reporting times. So how can we offer added value?” asks Schaffarczyk, Head of Billing and Controlling. “Our solution is the Referrer Portal which we use to make images and reports immediately available for the referrers.”

As soon as the player has left the MRI, the images are uploaded to the portal and the team doctor can see them - it does not matter if he is on the training ground or in his practice. The benefit is even clearer during season preparation: The club is at the training camp with the entire staff and team, but the athletic management works on the squad for the next season in Nuremberg. If players now come for sport fitness tests, Dr. Brem can instantly give his medical opinion on the player – more than 2,000 kilometers away.

Since 2016, the 310KLINIK and the club exchange x-ray images and reports in this way. “Before, we always had to transport a CD-ROM from A to B, which was very time consuming and difficult to accomplish over long distances - especially if time was of the essence during the hectic transfer business,” says Schaffarczyk.

The 1st FC Nuremberg and its team doctor Matthias Brem, M.D., have been cultivating a close relationship with the hospital 310KLINIK. “If, for example, the club wants to lend or hire a new player, the sports capability examination is carried out at our clinic,” says René Schaffarczyk, Head of Billing and Controlling at the Medical Care Center for Radiology and Nuclear Medicine. When players get injured, they will also be examined in the specialist hospital. In both cases, x-rays are usually taken. “Especially in case of injury, the images have to quickly be made available to Dr. Brem so that he can start treatment immediately in order to get the player fit as soon as possible,” emphasizes Schaffarczyk. “And this works brilliantly with the medavis Referrer Portal.”

In collaboration with the referrers, the medavis Referrer Portal plays a central role, because an essential criterion is to stand out from the multitude of competitors. “Everyone has modern devices, everyone uses speech recognition, and everyone promises short reporting times. So how can we offer added value?” asks Schaffarczyk, Head of Billing and Controlling. “Our solution is the Referrer Portal which we use to make images and reports immediately available for the referrers.” It is not unusual that the patient forgets to bring the CD-ROM with the images to the appointment at the general practitioner or specialist doctor. In this case the appointment cannot take place, which is not only annoying and ineffective, but also means a financial loss for the practice.
In addition, the medavis Referrer Portal is very easy to use and integrates seamlessly into the workflow of the Medical Care Center and the referring practices. “All steps are automated at our imaging center,” Schaffarczyk emphasizes. “As soon as the examination is completed, the images are sent to PACS for evaluation - and are also automatically uploaded into the Referrer Portal.” After reporting in medavis RIS, the radiologist releases the report and the text will be automatically faxed to the referring doctor and also uploaded to the patient’s records in the portal. All this runs automatically in the background.

The Referrer Portal also offers an overview of all images of a patient. In this way, the doctor can e.g. view the images side by side and compare pre- and postoperative images. If a fax with the report is no longer to be found, the practice can easily access the PDF document in the portal and save it in its own system.

**Successful Persuasion**

The introduction of the medavis Referrer Portal in the Medical Care Center was uncomplicated. “We informed our employees, showed them the system and emphasized the benefits,” Schaffarczyk looks back. “The fact that there is no change in the workflow and there is no extra work to be done contributed significantly to the immediate acceptance. The employees do not even notice that the Referrer Portal runs in the background.”

With the referrers, on the other hand, the portal was not an immediate success. The Medical Care Center hired employees to actively promote the solution at the registered doctors after a central circular letter. They then gave a short introduction and were the contact person for all questions concerning the Referrer Portal. “This had the positive side effect that we had more direct contact with our referrers and overcame the distance of the past,” Schaffarczyk is glad.

This is also true for the referrers: Keep it simple. As the Referrer Portal is browser-based, no software has to be installed. “This helps to overcome the first threshold, as practices do not like to run additional programs on their servers.” Only an internet connection and a browser in the current version are necessary to start. The doctor logs on to the portal and can access the information on his patients – which works on a PC, a tablet or a smartphone, whether iOS or Android. Another important point: The access is free of charge for the referrer.

**Fulfilled Expectations**

“Our expectations of the Referrer Portal have been fully fulfilled to this day,” René Schaffarczyk draws up an interim balance. Our first goal was to strengthen the loyalty of our referrers. This seems to be successful. “We can really see that some physicians have been much more stable in referring patients to us than before. In addition, we have been able to gain doctors that did not send their patients to us before.” This came even to the point where Schaffarczyk got phone calls from physicians who desperately wanted to use the Referrer Portal. In these cases, it was important for the Medical Care Center that the majority of patients was sent to their imaging center. “Because if a practice refers many patients, the doctors also have a benefit from using the portal - the more patients, the higher the benefit,” he adds. And according to his impression, they succeeded in increasing the satisfaction of the referring doctors with the medavis Referrer Portal.

In the long term, the Medical Care Center for Radiology and Nuclear Medicine would gladly do without sending reports via fax to the referrers. “For this we still have to invest a lot of energy to convince the referrers, as fax is still common practice,” knows René Schaffarczyk. “However, it is so easy with the Referrer Portal! I am confident that we will succeed step by step.” This has already been working at the 1st FC Nuremberg for many years. In this matter, the traditional club is less conservative than many doctors.