

medavis in the Imaging Center Andernach

## Digitization as the Key to Independent Success

The economic situation for imaging centers is becoming increasingly challenging despite the steady rise in patient numbers. A lower remuneration, a significant increase in energy costs, and a shortage of medical specialists lead to a growing number of formerly private-run imaging centers succumbing to the pressure of large chains or investors, advertising cost reductions through synergies.

Dr. Annette Hentsch, Mr. Martin Jost and Dr. Fabian Müller consciously decided against this route and founded the Imaging Center Andernach based on their belief that these current challenges can also be overcome with a different approach: by implementing an intelligent digitalization concept. They chose medavis as the partner for their bold strategy and they were not disappointed.

As of yet, the team is still working in a makeshift facility in the parking lot of a large supermarket in Andernach, Germany. The three radiologists, along with the available MRI and CT of the Imaging Center Andernach are already operating at high capacity. Once the move to the newly designed premises is completed at the end of 2023, the workload of the three owners will most likely increase once again. „Nevertheless, we don't expect any waiting times for the patients who come to us,“ Fabian Müller is optimistic.

This is achieved thanks to the effective design of the workflows for admission, stay, and transfer of patients to referring physicians, which ensures that the focus of the imaging center is on the examination and thus on patient care rather than on administrative duties.

### Innovation Instead of Regression

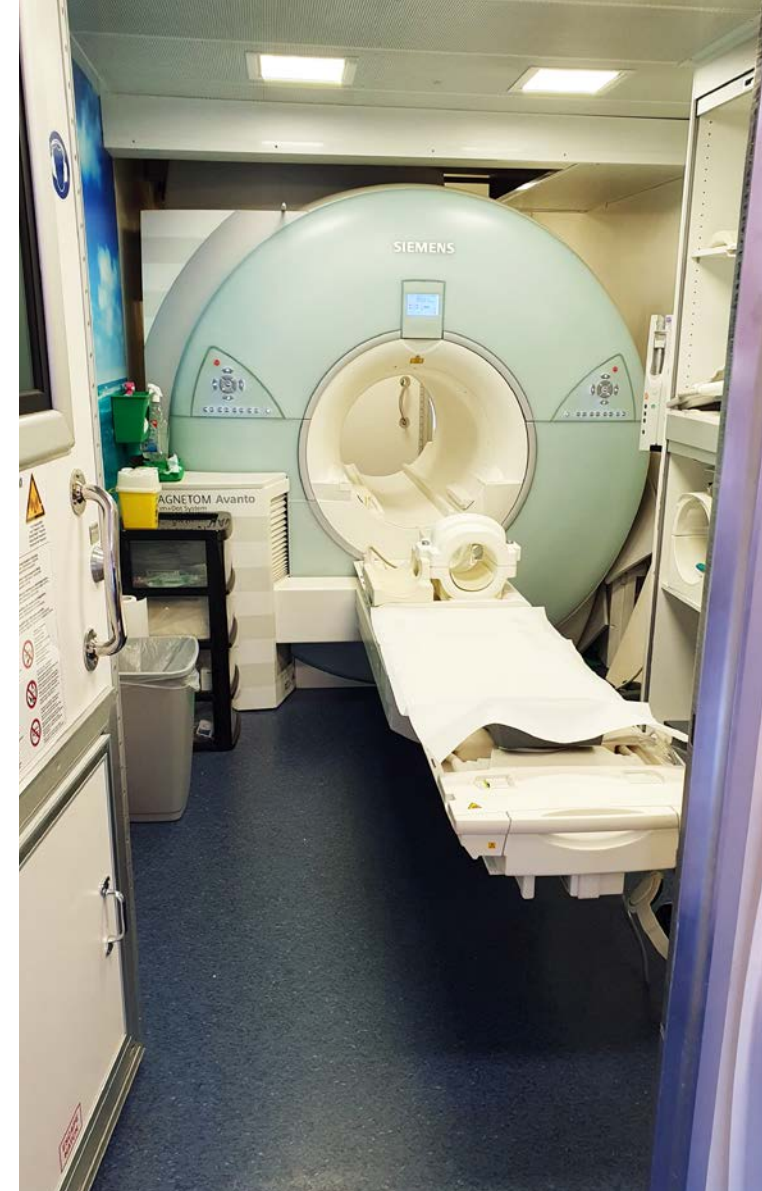
The three experienced radiologists have known each other for many years and have previously worked together at a different imaging center. They all share the vision of providing modern, digital, but most importantly, personalized care at the highest quality level while maintaining financial profitability.

„Imaging centers can counteract reductions in reimbursements by, for instance, significantly lowering the number of sequences. This approach may increase revenue, but the quality of the images will suffer as a result. This was certainly not the approach we wanted to take. **We all attach great importance to maintaining a high quality of examinations and evaluations, as well as a cordial working relationship. For this, we need state-of-the-art equipment and well-functioning IT solutions that help us work more efficiently.** We want to move with the times and act in a future-oriented fashion,“ Fabian Müller continues to explain the partners' goals.

His partner Martin Jost adds: „**Our digitalization concept also allows us to spend more time with patients because we have to do less documentation and paperwork.**“

### Paving the Way with the Patient and Appointment Booking Portal

What exactly does the digitalization concept at Andernach look like and how has it been implemented from a technical point of view? To put it briefly, all information relevant to treatment – referrals, reports, medical history forms, etc. – is made available and processed digitally. Moreover, additional digital contact points are in place before and after the actual visit to the imaging center, which shortens the patients' length of stay and optimizes the processes through good preparation and follow-up.



The patient portal portal4med and the appointment booking platform booking4med by medavis represent the pivotal points of this concept. Both solutions are embedded directly on the website of the imaging center, meaning that patients can book their appointments themselves from their personal computers.

During the scheduling process, patients are guided through a standardized questionnaire or medical history form and can upload documents such as referral slips or implant ID cards. Furthermore, if the referral slip includes a QR code, the data it contains is imported automatically; otherwise, it is entered into the booking screen. All data is then transferred directly to RIS and no longer has to be manually entered by an employee.





Therefore, patients no longer have to fill out any additional paperwork on the day of the appointment at the imaging center. **“Filling out forms on the home computer or smartphone has several benefits. It gives patients more time to reflect on the questions and search for the relevant documentation. On the other hand, they can also get help from relatives. We defuse the strenuous situation at the front desk and take the pressure off both patients and staff,”** says Fabian Müller.

Of course, not all indications and examination requirements can be mapped out in a standardized questionnaire. Appointments for complex examinations, such as cardiac CTs, are still scheduled over the phone. Patients are notified during the appointment booking process that they need to book the appointment via phone call in such cases. „It’s not that we don’t want to be approachable for our patients, but we would like to reduce the number of calls. **By the way, our patients welcome being able to make their appointments independently of our opening hours,**“ explains Annette Hentsch.

After the examination, patients receive an access code – either as a printout or via email – that allows them to access their examination records. Patients and referring physicians can use these access codes to log onto the patient portal, which is reachable via the website of the imaging center, to access reports, scans and other information.

Fabian Müller: **„We no longer send reports or letters in paper format and also do not give our patients any data carriers with their scans.** Some referring physicians initially insisted on the old-fashioned method of transmission because they were not accustomed to working with the portal. **However, we have been very consistent in this respect and in the end, even more analogue-oriented practices have realized that calling up the portal is faster than reading in a DVD.**

### Addressing the Shortage of Specialist Staff

Fewer phone calls, less time at the reception desk, less documentation work, and less manual data transfer: a vital advantage of a consistent digital workflow is the reduction of workload for employees.

„We have optimized our processes so that we can save on staff. And we have to, because radiology is facing a shortage of qualified workers. Radiology technicians are in short supply. Without digitalization, we would have to send patients home because we wouldn’t have enough staff to provide the care they need. **And of course we want to use the staff we have where their professional qualifications are in demand and as little as possible for administrative tasks. This was only possible thanks to the feature-rich solutions provided by medavis, because unlike other software solutions, medavis can be adapted extremely well to individual workflows,**“ all three radiologists explain in unison.

The customizability of the solutions can be emphasized by a particular functionality used at the imaging center. All examinations are saved in RIS and assigned to billing codes. This allows the billing process to start while the examination is carried out at the push of a button. “It took a considerable amount of time up front to add all the billing codes for each type of examination, but it was definitely worth the effort. Not only can we do without additional staff for accounting, but billing is also much more accurate, and the revenue structure has been significantly optimized. This, in turn, increases profitability. **We can therefore rightly claim that we were able to realize our vision of an independent, individual, and yet profitable imaging center thanks to digitalization,**“ concludes Fabian Müller, who was primarily responsible for the configuration of medavis RIS.



### Imaging Center

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