

# BENCHMARK BRIEFINGS

kardexremstar

## SITE

Union Medical Center  
Chicago, IL

## APPLICATION

Medical Records Storage

## EQUIPMENT

Lektriever® Electric Lateral File (ELF)

## SUMMARY

Saved 79% Floor Space While Storing the Same Number of Files



By installing a Lektriever ELF, Union Medical was able to regain 79% of their floor space virtually overnight while storing the same number of files.

## Union Medical Center Regained 79% Floor Space While Storing the Same Number of Files

With over 22,000 patient records Union Medical Center faces the challenge of keeping their records organized, on-site, and easily accessible. By using an Electric Lateral File (ELF) system from Kardex Remstar, Union Medical Center was able to store their files more efficiently allowing them to recover previously used floor space.

Union Medical Center is one of the largest medical centers for union employees in the Chicago land area. With over 200 new patient records each month the storage system Union Medical was previously using to store patient records was quickly running out of space. "Purging files was not an option," explains Union Medical Administrator Renata Strzalka, RN. "We are required to keep all adult medical records for a minimum of 6 years since their last visit and we must keep all children's medical records until they reach age 21 or up to 6 years after their last visit, whichever is longer."

By installing a Lektriever ELF, Union Medical was able to regain 79% of their floor space virtually overnight while storing the same number of files. The old system required 160 square feet of floor space. The ELF requires only 34 square feet of floor space and provides the same file capacity. In fact, Union Medical was able to remove the drop down ceiling tiles and pick up another 3 inches of space to the structural ceiling.

"We investigated shelving, rotary files, cabinets, mobile shelving and other storage systems, but they can only use the space that a person can reach, and even they require bending, walking, searching and reaching which gets tiring during the course of the day, said Strzalka. "The ELF is the only file system that uses otherwise wasted space and brings the files to us at waist height...a perfect fit of form and function." The same filing capacity found in the ELF would have otherwise required five times more floor space if lateral filing



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are quickly able to find the chart number they are looking for.

The Electric Lateral File is ergonomically designed to deliver the records at a 39-inch high work counter eliminating bending, stooping and reaching. "The Lektriever ELF is easier to use than any other system we investigated because the records come to you at waist level and there is virtually no need for training. You don't have to bend down or find a stool to reach up, which allows us to be more productive during the work day and less tired when we leave" Strzalka said.

**"The ELF is the only file system that uses otherwise wasted space and brings the files to us at waist height..."**

cabinets were used, "We need our records on-site and available,"she stated.

Existing patient records were loaded into the new unit moments after it was installed. "Employees in the records department were pulling files immediately, there was no training needed," said Strzalka "The unit has been in constant use since it was installed."

Union Medical Center sees over 300 patients a day, each patient needing their medical record pulled for their appointment and returned. Depending on the patients medical history some files can be several inches thick.

To find a record the employee looks up the patients name, social security number or chart number in the computer system. The system provides the employee a terminal number that corresponds with a carrier or shelf number on the Lektriever ELF. The employee simply pushes the required numbered button and the unit rotates to present the correct shelf level. The employees



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