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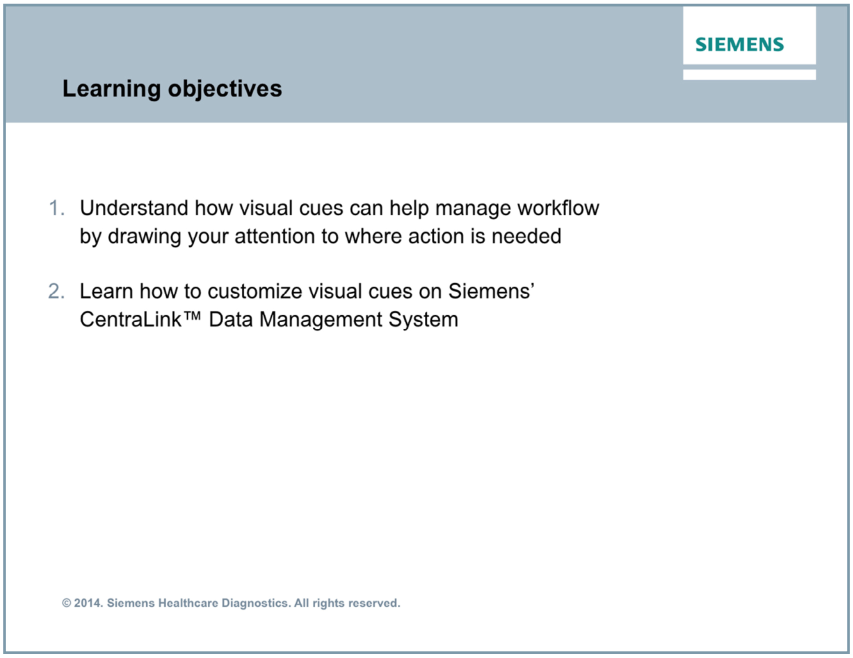
CentraBytes

Workflow: Sample status management and filters

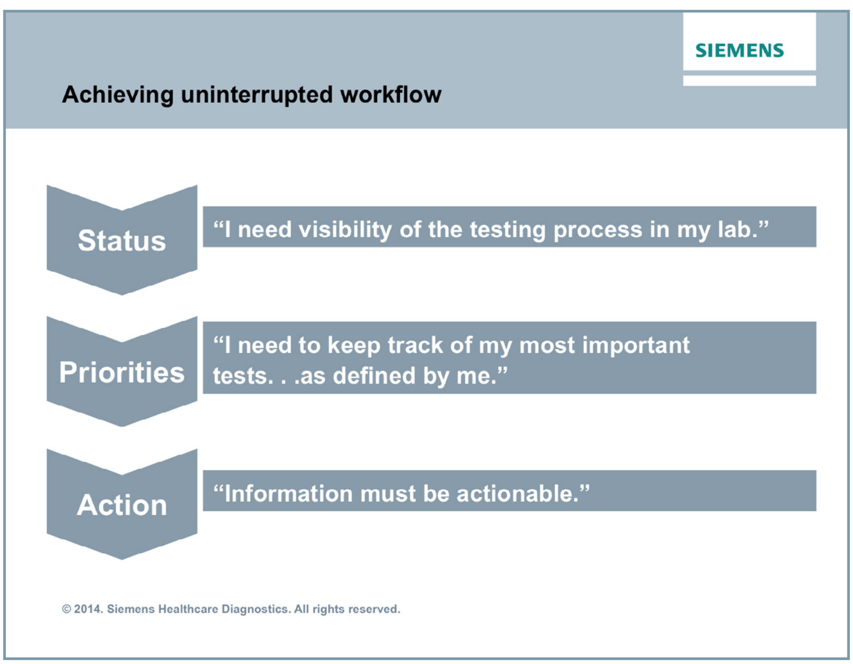
Welcome to CentraBytes, a monthly tutorial on how laboratories around the world are applying the power of Siemens' CentraLink™ Data Management System to improve workflow and quality.

Our topic today is the use of visual cues to make workflow monitoring simple and efficient.

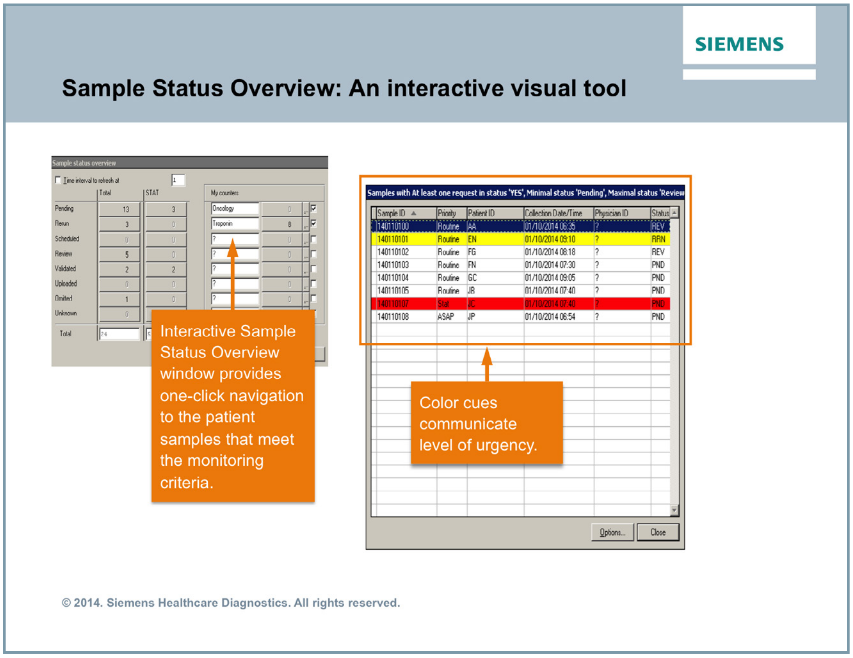
Answers for life.



We will show you examples of how visual cues can help you manage workflow by directing your attention to where action is needed, and how you can customize visual cues on the CentraLink system to meet your lab's specific needs.

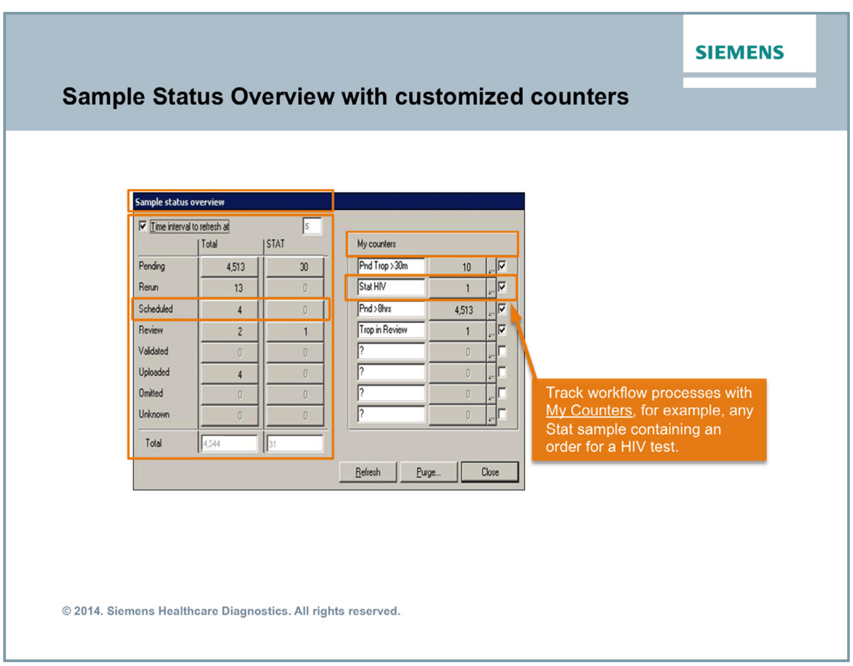


In today's busy lab environments and with the demand to deliver quality test results on time, you need a simple and efficient way to keep track of your testing process to see where the critical tests and samples are, when you need to take action, and what you need to do.



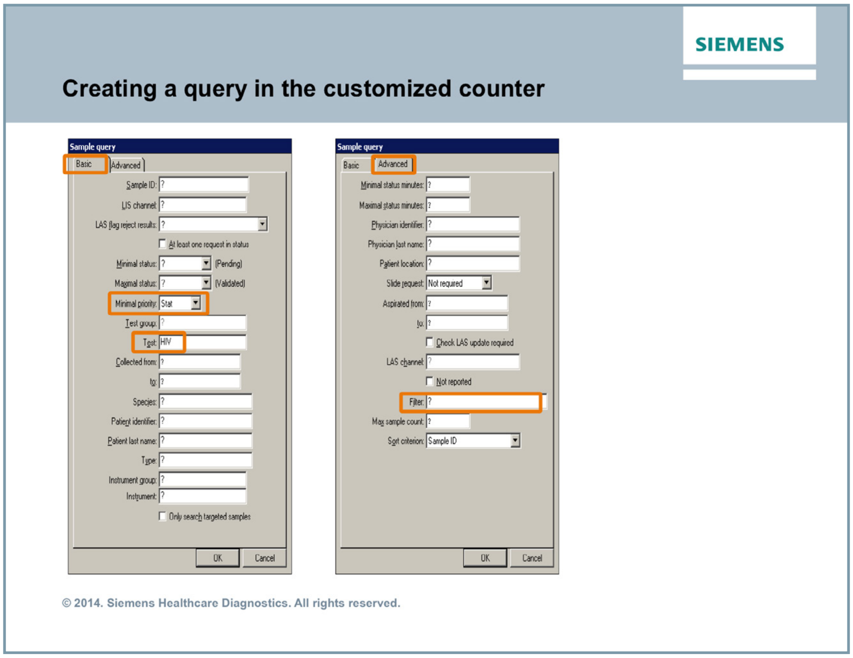
Visual cues allow you to immediately recognize the items that require attention and the level of urgency. For example, the "Sample status overview" window in the CentraLink workspace gives you key information at a glance. You can see which samples need your attention and click to see more details, all based on criteria you set.

Notice the use of the color red to highlight the Stat patient sample. It lets you know at a glance that this is the one sample that needs your attention the most. You set the criteria, and you choose the colors.

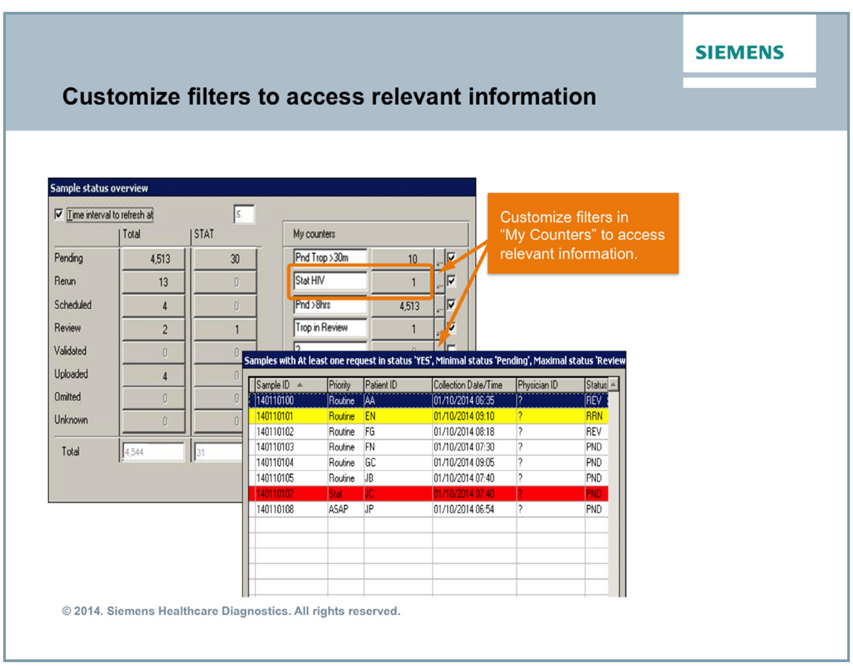


Your "Sample status overview" screen is your dashboard. If the dashboard shows a zero, you know there is no need for action. Once a number appears, click to see more details and take action accordingly. You can also define the interval time when information is automatically refreshed, the minimum being one minute.

On the right side, the section called "My counters" allows you to customize your monitoring criteria by creating filters. How would you create a filter? It's very easy. On the "Sample status overview" window, click on the box with three dots to open up a "Sample query." Choose from the options to define your filter conditions.

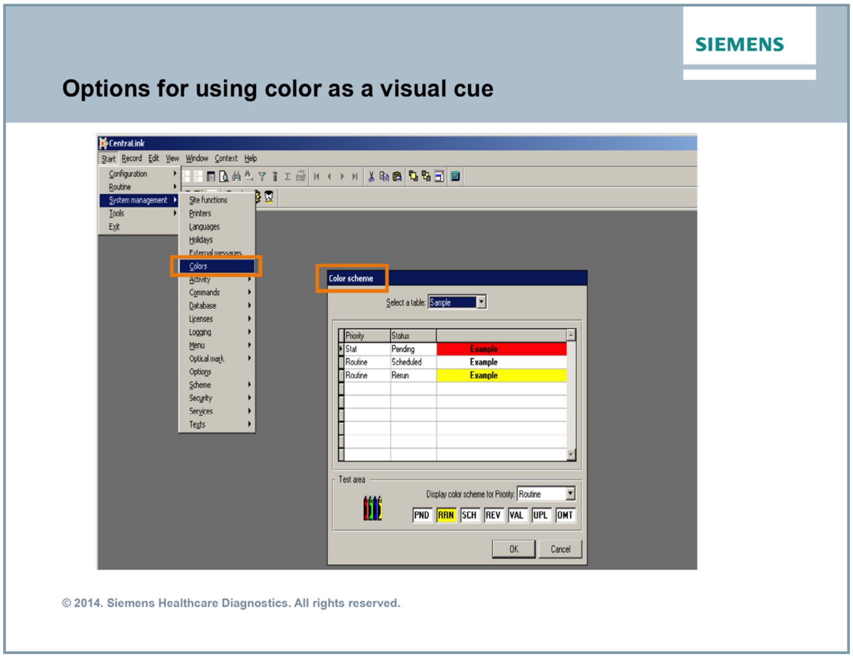


In this example, we are interested in samples that contain an order for an HIV test and have a priority of Stat. To do this, we go to the “Sample query” window. We find and set the “Minimal priority” drop-down menu to Stat. Next, in the “Test” field, specify the HIV test. Another more advanced query that your local specialist can configure for you is to implement a script in the “Filter” field on the “Sample query” window to allow you to monitor any samples that contain a Troponin test that is in “Pending” status for more than 30 minutes.



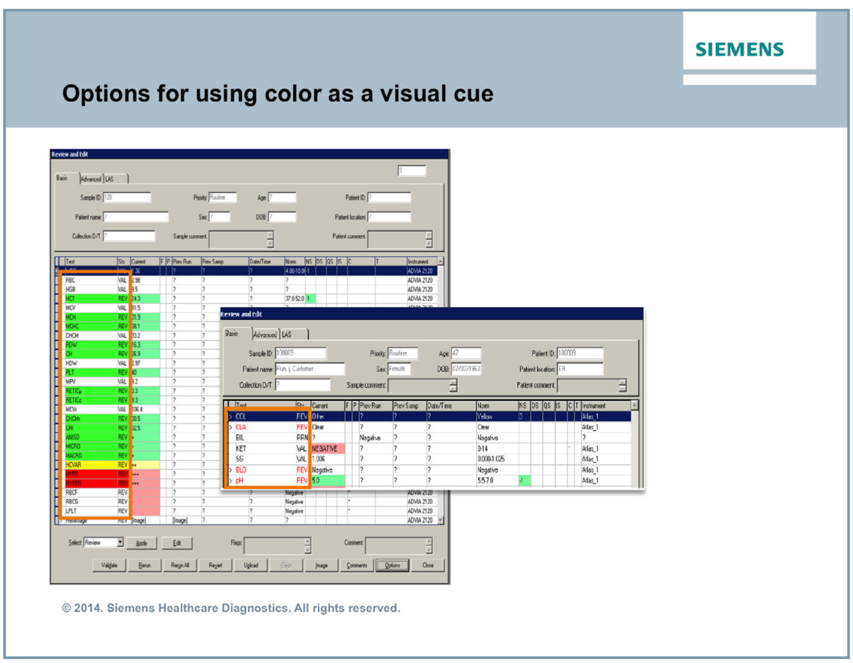
Finally, type in a short descriptive label for the “My counter” monitoring filter.

The counters in the normal “Sample status overview” window are interactive, so you can see anything that has a value greater than zero. If you put your mouse on one of the counters and click on it, you will open a browser window listing the samples that meet the criteria defined by that filter.



Let's take a look at how you can customize colors on CentraLink.

First click on "Start" and choose "System management." From the drop-down options, select "Colors." Choose your colors from the color scheme, based on a combination of priority and status.



Another example is the "Review and Edit" window when viewing the results on a particular patient sample. You can customize and color code the results based on the severity assigned, for example, based on the result range or based on associated instrument flags.

You can also choose to color coordinate the test mnemonic or the test name to match the severity of that result. Another option is to color coordinate only those results that are held in review. So in this instance, instead of a background color, we assign a font color (red) to names of the tests that require review.

The overall benefit from visual cues is that they give you a more efficient review of the testing process and where you need to take action.

As you can see, visual cues are a powerful way to make workflow monitoring simple and efficient. And it's easy to customize these cues to your lab's specific needs.

Feel free to download a copy of this presentation to share with your colleagues. Most importantly, practice is key. Start by testing some of the ideas we shared with you today.

Thank you.

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