

Case study

FLH Medical

From offices in Waterloo, Geneva and Penn Yan in the New York Finger Lakes and from a fourth location in Syracuse, FLH Medical staff serve over 1400 patients a week. Eighteen full-time physicians and 12 nurses provide a mixture of primary and secondary care, including family and internal medicine, orthopedic surgery, urology, pulmonary care, physiatry and nephrology. An additional ten part-time physicians staff the practice's urgent care service. In total, FLH Medical has a staff of 102.

"With MEDENT, physicians in multiple specialties are able to look at the same record," states Kurt Koczent, Administrator for FLH Medical. "They all have the same clinical information. This completeness enables better quality of care and better educated patients. We're at the leading edge with the Patient Portal and Meaningful Use. By late 2011, we expect to receive reimbursements from Meaningful Use for all of our providers and be certified at Level 3 as a Patient-Centered Medical Home."

CHALLENGES

FLH Medical was established by Finger Lakes Health early in 2009. With the purchase of several existing practices, it grew from zero to its current size. The initial practice used MEDENT Practice Management and EMR from Community Computer Service. Key considerations in retaining MEDENT are its reporting capability, billing and receivables, look and feel of the patient record and adaptability to the needs of the different practices.

SOLUTION

FLH Medical uses MEDENT's Lab Results Clearinghouse, the Point and Click Doc-Gens technology and

"Community Computer's partnerships with Dragon speech and Healthbanks have enabled us to significantly reduce costs."

Kurt Koczent, Administrator
FLH Medical

Medical Content libraries tailored to each practice. Their EKG, vital signs and spirometer medical equipment is seamlessly integrated with MEDENT, as is their Dragon speech recognition software. "Based on cost assessment using annualized visits and average cost of transcription," explains Kurt, "the practice will save over \$107,000 in 2011 due to the speech recognition software."

Most of FLH Medical's physicians document the patient visit while with the patient. The practice uses e-prescribing and the associated drug alerts, drug-drug interaction and drug-allergy interaction capabilities. The referral process goes smoothly between PCPs and specialists within the practice in that all have access to the same patient record including current medications and lab results.

Kurt believes that FLH Medical's physicians see the same number of patients with EMR as they would without it. "However, with e-records, the physician has more detailed information, and we can better educate patients," comments Kurt. "At the end of a session, the patient is handed a Clinical Visit Summary which includes diagnosis, prescriptions and instructions. It's unlike the past where a patient was handed a stack of prescriptions and recent lab work and may not remember why the meds were prescribed or what the physician told them about their condition."

FLH Medical has established a Medical Practice Governance Committee. The committee's focus is to maximize the quality of care by using the Disease Management (DM) capabilities in MEDENT such as graphing of lab results, meds and vital signs together in a flowsheet and using the DM formulas and outcome tracking reports.

"We use the MEDENT Patient Portal," continues Kurt. "When patients are registered for their visit, they are given a Patient Portal username and password. Overall, this has been well-received by patients, and providers report patients use the Portal to update their medical history and review their lab results. The Portal was easier to set up than expected. We were surprised and pleased that the implementation was easy, and there were few hiccups."

"When we first started looking at establishing a website, we found that some vendors quoted a development fee in the range of \$30,000. I thought that was high and then learned from Community Computer about Healthbanks, a website development firm which integrates with MEDENT. For a fraction of the cost, we were able to get a website which includes the Patient Portal and content ranging from physician photos, medical education and insurance information to audio and video advertising. It also has links to our Facebook and Twitter pages, as well as to UTube."

"We're moving forward with Meaningful Use. We just applied for Meaningful Use dollars for four of our primary care physicians, and we're scheduled to complete our attestation by September. There are ten criteria which must be met. Currently, all providers can go on to the system and see their numbers. We expect all providers to go to "green", and we expect to begin getting reimbursement by the end of 2011."

The practice has been pleased with its overall experience with Community Computer. "I can't imagine it being a better experience in terms of follow-through and commitment to the practice," states Kurt. "They are really ahead of and on target with the rest of the industry."

RESULTS

"For me, one of the most significant ways MEDENT has influenced the practice is that we do not use paper," explains Kurt. "It's a game changer. When a new physician joins the practice, from "Day One" there is no paper record."

"MEDENT has enabled us to provide better quality of care. Better detail in the medical record allows for safer care. Also, physicians can connect from home via a secure portal. This has a positive impact on their quality of life. The physician can have time with his or her family and if needed get back onto the system from home to complete the day's work or get a head start on the following day."

"With EMR, there is a thinner staffing model. For example, no one is hired to pull records, and in new construction we do not need to incur the cost of medical record rooms or the storage cost to keep records for the mandated seven years. There is an increase in clinical space and more space to care for patients."

Kurt refers to Malcolm Gladwell's writings on adoption of the e-record, mentioning that with the paper record we never know who may have viewed the record. "With the e-record, there is a log and the log shows precisely who has accessed the record and when. Also, with paper records sometimes a physician is required to see a patient with no information about the patient because the record can't be located. This problem doesn't exist in the world of MEDENT."

"From an administrator's perspective, it's a joy to see how MEDENT is evolving to be ahead of the curve. I look forward to collaborating with Community Computer to use the new capabilities and applications they are developing. We strive to be one of the early adopters."

