

## Case study

# Valley Diagnostic Medical Center

From a single location in Ramsey, New Jersey, Valley Diagnostic Medical Center provides primary care services to 300 to 350 patients a week. Serving patients from age 16 through the elderly are three full-time and one part-time physician. Medical assistants and front office staff are cross-trained to perform a variety of roles. With a total staff of 21, the practice has an in-house lab and also performs tests such as bone density and heart monitoring.

“We have 11 standard Plan Packages in MEDENT EMR,” states Barbara Shanks, Office Manager for Valley Diagnostic Medical Center. “There is one for each insurance company to ensure that when a physician orders a specific test or makes a referral that it meets requirements for the patient’s insurance. The doctor simply needs to order the test or make the referral and the Plan Packages keep all of the complexity straight.”

### CHALLENGES

Founded in the 1960s by a physician who has since retired, Valley Diagnostic Medical Center currently has two managing physician partners, Dr. Richard Lucanie and Dr. Steven Nickles. In 2004, the practice moved from the rudimentary software it had used previously to MEDENT Practice Management due to it being more modern, user friendly and easier to submit claims. When the practice decided to implement an EMR in 2011, because of one physician’s preference for Apple, Valley Diagnostic Medical Center chose a Mac-based system. They used it for three months with disastrous results.

### SOLUTION

In 2012, Valley Diagnostic Medical Center implemented MEDENT EMR.

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Barbara Shanks, Office Manager  
Valley Diagnostic Medical Center

Valley Diagnostic Medical Center uses three outside labs in addition to its own in-house lab. All of the labs have a direct interface with MEDENT. Valley Diagnostic's physicians use MEDENT's Point & Click technology, documenting the patient visit while they are with the patient. When the office visit is over, the progress note is complete. Physicians use e-prescribing and the associated drug alerts, drug-drug interaction and drug-allergy interaction capabilities. They graph some lab results such as those for Coumadin and cholesterol and use MEDENT's Disease Management (DM) formulas. The practice runs DM tracking reports to identify patients for preventative follow-up, and when doctors open the patient chart for an office visit, they are alerted if the patient is due for a particular test or procedure.

"Before we implemented EMR, we used paper Face Sheets for each insurance company to ensure that when a physician ordered a specific test or made a referral it met requirements for the patient's insurance," explains Barbara. "We now have easier-to-use, electronic Face Sheets which we refer to as Plan Packages. We have 11 standard Plan Packages. There is one for Medicare, one for Aetna and one for each of the other insurance carriers. The physician is able to focus on their notes and what the patient needs rather than on which lab is approved for a particular lab test or which physician is approved in a given specialty by the patient's insurance carrier."

"We also broke the Plan Packages up by diagnostic group. For example, there is an ophthalmology package. Within the ophthalmology package are listed items such as meds, diagnostic codes and referrals for eyes which are determined by the rules and regulations of the patient's insurance company."

"Our in-house lab performs basic lab work such as chemistry panels, thyroid panels and PSA testing," continues Barbara. "Lab tests which require more elaborate analysis such as those for Lyme disease are routed to one of our outside labs. This means that if a patient presents with symptoms of Lyme disease, the doctor simply needs to order the test and the Plan Package routes the lab request to the outside lab approved by the patient's insurance. The Plan Packages keep all of the complexity straight."

Valley Diagnostic Medical Center has been part of an Accountable Care Organization (ACO) with Medicare since 2012 and has met all of the reporting requirements. In addition, in January, 2014, the practice became a Patient Centered Medical Home for Blue Cross/Blue Shield. "It's possible to submit reports manually for Medical Home," states Barbara, "but since the data which needs to be reported is routinely captured in MEDENT, all that I needed to do was to send the requirements to MEDENT's Support staff. They developed a report which I now create monthly in MEDENT. It works easily and well. MEDENT Support created another report which identifies the patients who have appointments the subsequent week, and an alert is entered in the patient's record if they are due for a particular test."

"We began doing Meaningful Use Stage 1 in 2012. This year we're doing Stage 2 and will attest at the end of the year. I've found doing Meaningful Use pretty easy. We check the MEDENT Dashboard, and all of the data required is captured as part of our ongoing use of MEDENT. The reports are easy to do, and

MEDENT Support is so helpful. I know of others who go crazy doing Meaningful Use.”

Since January, 2014, Valley Diagnostic has been using MEDENT’s N2N sharing, a.k.a. The Direct Project. In the spring of 2014, Valley Diagnostic will be trained by MEDENT’s trainers on the MEDENT Patient Portal. The practice has been collecting e-mail addresses and has mentioned the portal to patients in anticipation of going live shortly after the training. “We were very pleased with the training MEDENT provided when we transitioned to EMR,” states Barbara. “I’m confident the portal training will be well organized and the implementation as painless as possible.”

Barbara believes that MEDENT has enabled them to become more efficient and that patient care is better. “With the use of Plan Packages, patients aren’t getting billed because insurance rules weren’t followed,” explains Barbara. “There are no lost charts. There is much less running around, and workflow is more streamlined both for staff and physicians. Doctors have all of the information right in front of them. If they are at home and receive a call from a patient, they can dial up the office and review the patient’s record. Patients are given a printout at the end of their visit. They have information they can refer to and don’t have to rely solely on their memory.”

“Our experience with MEDENT has been excellent,” states Barbara. “After our disastrous experience with the EMR before MEDENT, we know what a good experience is. Compared to physician groups that use other vendor’s software, MEDENT’s Support is outstanding. They are very responsive, knowledgeable and on top of things. MEDENT is ready when others weren’t such as with ICD-10.”

## RESULTS

MEDENT has enabled Valley Diagnostic Medical Center to become more efficient and improve patient care. The Plan Packages implemented in MEDENT EMR free physicians to focus on the patient rather than the complexities of insurance rules and regulations. Attesting for Meaningful Use and becoming a Patient Centered Medical Home have been done with relative ease.

“Future goals are to complete Stage 2 of Meaningful Use and implement the Patient Portal,” states Barbara. “Also, we want to extend our use of MEDENT, particularly with Patient Centered Medical Home.”