

Case study

Stigliano Family Practice

Located in Hermitage, Pennsylvania, Stigliano Family Practice provides care to approximately 300 patients a week ranging in age from two weeks to 100. Staff consists of two physicians, three nurses and four clerical and billing personnel. The practice provides general family medicine and additional care such as osteopathic manipulation, EKGs and vaccines.

“In the medical office today, we’re in a sea of change,” states Cindi Sadowski. “There is a never ending wave of new insurance changes and state and federal mandates and guidelines each year. Without the help of a vendor who closely tracks what’s going on in the medical field and stays on top of insurance code changes, it’s difficult to stay a step ahead. A major benefit of our current software is that only clean claims can be submitted. This feature allows an increase in confidence regarding cash flow and budgets. Also, billing that formerly took half a day, now takes a half hour.”

CHALLENGES

From its founding in 1992 by two brothers, Richard and Randy Stigliano, the Stigliano Family Practice used medical office and billing software. However, to remain compatible with insurers and Medicare and Medicaid, the practice had to change software. In addition, they wanted to increase efficiency and cash flow and stay current with insurance changes.

SOLUTION

MEDENT from Community Computer Service met the requirements of Stigliano Family Practice. They began using MEDENT Practice Management in 2005 and EMR in December, 2008.

“With MEDENT, we’ve seen a dramatic increase in cash flow, and claims that previously took 10 to 14 days now take only three.”

Cindi Sadowski, Office Manager
Stigliano Family Practice

Prior to using MEDENT, the billing office would bill twice a week and send statements twice a month. "Billing used to take half a day," explains Cindi. "Now it takes half an hour. I've written a new job description for the billing assistant since she is no longer needed in billing."

"Using the old billing system, if there were any errors in the claim, there could easily be a delay of a month," states Cindi. "It would take 10 to 14 days for the claim to be returned and we would then have to resubmit it. A major benefit of MEDENT is that it won't let you submit an inaccurate claim. The system actually identifies the problem."

Cindi has been pleased that while Community Computer is located in New York, the company stays on top of all insurance code changes, even those specific to the state of Pennsylvania. "If one is not on top of code changes, it can have a dramatic impact on income," explains Cindi. While PQRI is not yet mandatory, it's great to know Community Computer is in the forefront, monitoring changes. In the future there will be penalties for practices that do not meet certain quality standards, and there will be incentives for those who do."

"With MEDENT, we've seen a dramatic increase in cash flow and turn around time," states Cindi. "The turn around time with a good company previously was 10 to 14 days. Now it is three. With other companies the turnaround time could easily be 30 to 45 days. Now it is two weeks."

As of May, 2009, five months after Stigliano Family Practice began using MEDENT EMR, the practice is using approximately 80 percent of the new software. "We see a lot of kids," explains Cindi, "and we have templates set up for every age. The templates are a definite benefit. They include everything needed to meet documentation guidelines and can be modified to the doctor's specification if necessary."

"We're proud to be in the forefront with e-prescribing," states Cindi. "Now when someone calls in for a refill, the new capabilities simplify the process and eliminate two to three calls. Before when a refill request came in, the front office person would get up to locate the chart and wait for a doctor to come out of a room. Now the person simply types in a prescription request which the doctor reviews on his computer. When it's authorized, the patient can pick it up at the front office or it can be sent directly to the pharmacy."

The Stigliano practice is interfaced with the lab at the regional hospital. "Lab requests are entered directly into the computer," describes Cindi. "There is a code on the request so that when the lab work is completed, the result goes automatically to the patient's record. Turnaround is very fast. For example, blood work done at the hospital in the morning often is in the patient's chart by afternoon of the same day. It benefits the patient, and there's no filing."

Recently, we've begun using the Disease Management (DM) capabilities in MEDENT," explains Cindi. "The DM capability helps providers to focus closely on certain areas of patient care. Lists pop up for various diseases. It saves time and keeps the documentation in order. With DM, as in every area, Community Computer has an expert to help if you get stuck."

RESULTS

Cindi states that one of the most significant ways MEDENT has impacted the Stigliano practice is in an overall increase in efficiency. It has helped streamline what staff does and enable them to learn something new to address other areas of the practice. Efficiency in the billing office has freed up one full-time employee.

“MEDENT has increased our confidence in the practice,” states Cindi. “The medical office is in a sea of change, and we’re competent to ride the wave using Community Computer as a lighthouse. We’re confident because they’re ahead of us. In past years, we had to update the system with new codes for the coming year. Now Community Computer sends a CD which does the updates. It has made my life easier. It’s freeing.”

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