Case study
Lamb Family Practice

Located in Batavia, New York, one full-time physician, a physician assistant, a medical assistant and two nurses provide family practice and osteopathic services each week to approximately 200 patients, ranging in age from newborns to the elderly. Additional staff at Lamb Family Practice include a practice manager and a receptionist.

"With MEDENT EMR, the status of preventative work and results of the last consults are quickly available," states Anna Lamb, D.O., Physician and Founder. "Prescription refills are done with a click, and documentation becomes quicker all of the time because the system learns for each practitioner. In a 15-minute office visit, I spend far less time writing and more time talking with the patient than when I used paper. I'm able to show patients lab results in a flow sheet and discuss progress. It's a very efficient visit."

CHALLENGES

As a physician, Dr. Lamb had experienced the frustration and time lost searching for information in paper charts. For her own practice, she was determined to start with an EMR from day one. Dr. Lamb sought recommendations from other physicians both locally and at conferences. It was important to her that the system both meet the needs of her practice and be easy to use.

SOLUTION

MEDENT Practice Management and EMR from Community Computer Service was up and running before Dr. Lamb opened her doors in November, 2004.

"With paper charts, I saw about 20 patients a day. With EMR, I see 28 to 30. All information can be seen from a staff's workstation, and space for charts is not an issue."

Anna M. Lamb, D.O., Physician and Founder
Lamb Family Practice

There was no need to allocate office space for paper charts. No personnel had to be hired to file and locate patient records. Since Dr. Lamb had not used an EMR previously, she was pleased that she and her staff were able to quickly and easily use MEDENT. "When we started submitting claims electronically, we weren't sure how it would work," explains Dr. Lamb. "We quickly learned we got paid in 14 to 21 days."

Lamb Family Practice uses Community Computer's service for the creation and mailing of electronic patient statements. They use MEDENT's Lab Results Clearinghouse which enables results from lab tests to be automatically routed to the patient's chart from ACM Labs in Rochester. Results from their EKG equipment, which is directly connected to MEDENT, also go automatically to the patient's chart, as do those of their recently acquired spirometer.

The practice uses the point and click DocGens technology, and they have a large Medical Content Library tailored to the practice. "If we want any additional tailoring, it's easy to adjust with simple edits," describes Dr. Lamb. "We use e-prescribing, and we graph lab results in a flow sheet and use this directly with patients to show progress or for patient education."

Dr. Lamb uses a laptop computer and documents during the office visit. "With EMR, I've been able to become more efficient. I spend far less time writing than when I used paper. I'm able to spend more time talking with the patient. Prescription refills are done with a simple click. Documentation becomes quicker all of the time because the system learns for each practitioner. Not all systems are that way."

"In the past with paper charts, I would see about 20 patients a day. The difficulty was seeing at a glance information such as when labs had been last done. Time was spent looking through pages of the paper chart. Now I see 28 to 30 patients a day. It's not nearly as painful. I can easily see the status of preventative work – when the last mammogram or lab work was done and what results of the last consults were. Patient care is better and it reduces the visit time. I can find information quickly and take care of a lot more things in a 15-minute visit."

"We've been able to manage office work flow better," continues Dr. Lamb, "and EMR has absolutely decreased costs. In a paper office, people are walking around filing and looking for charts. With EMR, needs are managed quickly and efficiently. All can be seen from a staff's workstation. The work flow is very efficient and all goes through the system. Also, because of the way MEDENT logs everything, it's easy to check whether staff follow-up is done in a timely manner."

Dr. Lamb states that one of the most significant ways MEDENT has impacted the practice is that of communication with patients. "We are able to mail X-ray and lab results to patients in a timely manner because the results can be easily inserted into letters built into the MEDENT system. Patients really like this. Also, recently with the Avandia issue, we were able to pull up a list of patients using the medication or any combination of medications and then easily print letters to mail to them."

Lamb Family Practice uses MEDENT's Disease Management formulas and has been working with IPRO, a leading healthcare quality evaluation and improvement organization. "We've focused on colon cancer, pneumonia, flu and mammograms," explains Dr. Lamb. "IPRO data from the last year show those using MEDENT are doing well in meeting the benchmarks for management of chronic disease."

Dr. Lamb describes her overall experience with Community Computer as wonderful. "I'm very happy with the system. It's very customizable. It's a very nice choice for a small practice like mine. MEDENT has also worked well for larger practices in the area."

RESULTS

MEDENT has had significant impact on Lamb Family Practice in a number of ways, including improved patient communication, greater efficiency and decreased costs.

"I'm eager to get the next MEDENT update because of two particular capabilities it will contain," states Dr. Lamb. "The Patient Portal will seamlessly connect our practice website to the EMR, making Internet communication with patients easier. MEDENT Mobile will enable me to more easily work when I'm at conferences. As patients increasingly get more involved in their care, the greater connectivity will be invaluable."