

Advanced Health Care Implements EHR System to Improve Patient Care and Boost Revenue

At a Glance

Organization

Advanced Health Care, PLC
Arlington, Va.

- Internal medicine practice
- 2 physicians
- 3.5 full-time employees
- Active patient population of 3,000, with 40% of patients on Medicare

Solution Spotlight

- Practice Partner

Critical Issues

- Improving the quality of patient care
- Increasing productivity

Results

- Increased average daily visits by 10%
- Increased annual revenue by \$40,000 without additional staff
- Made measurable improvements in patient care:
 - Coronary heart disease patients on a lipid-lowering prescription increased from 58% to 95%
 - Hypertensive patients with a well-controlled blood pressure increased from 45% to 84%
 - Diabetes patients undergoing the microalbumin/creatinine test to evaluate kidney function increased from 4% to 85%
 - Male patients more than 40 years old on antiplatelet medication rose to more than 60%

Advanced Health Care, PLC, struck the perfect balance between enhancing revenue and improving patient outcomes when it implemented an electronic health record (EHR) system in 2001. Since then, the practice has increased the use of preventive care treatments for chronically ill patients, boosted productivity, and raised annual revenue by \$40,000 per physician — all without the need for additional support staff.

Challenge

In 2000 Advanced Health Care searched for ways to improve its quality of care and operational efficiencies. The practice was aware that a large percentage of its patients was not receiving the care necessary to manage such chronic conditions as diabetes and hypertension. Closing this gap in care seemed challenging because the practice had only two physicians and limited support staff.

Answer

Advanced Health Care decided to implement an EHR system to improve care quality and boost productivity. “The financial benefits were important, but our primary objective for integrating an EHR was to improve the quality of care we provide to our patients,” explains Dr. R. Michael Amedeo, the physician leading the

IT implementation. “The ability to instantly access critical patient information and improve patient compliance with prescribed therapies really sold us on the need for an EHR solution.”

Advanced Health Care selected McKesson’s Practice Partner® EHR system, a fully integrated EHR, medical billing and appointment scheduling software. (Practice Partner version 9.2 from McKesson is a CCHIT CertifiedSM product for CCHIT Ambulatory EHR 2006 and 2007.)

According to Dr. Amedeo, the Practice Partner system was easy to implement, with no impact on patient volume during implementation. Throughout the first three months, the lead physician focused on training staff and customizing the system to meet the practice’s needs. Since Advanced Healthcare decided to build its EHR database gradually, existing patients’ medical information was entered into the system at the time of their visit, with staff scanning and uploading key paper documentation into their medical records later. New patients were immediately given a medical record.

Results

Advanced Health Care made productivity gains across its business with the Practice Partner integrated EHR system, which automates all the

Case Study

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R. Michael Amedeo, M.D.
Advanced Health Care

clinical functions of the practice. Staff members now focus on core tasks rather than tracking and managing paper charts. Physicians spend more time with patients and have instant access to patient information, ensuring that they make informed clinical-care decisions.

The integrated EHR solution saves Advanced Health Care administrative time with reduced keystrokes for task completion, improved document management, and more effective scheduling and billing. The Practice Partner system interfaces electronically with Advanced's clinical reference laboratory. As a result, new lab results are electronically posted to a patient's medical record. Staff members no longer have to file paper lab reports. Instead, they scan information not received in electronic format directly into the patient's medical record. Since Advanced Health Care physicians can access the Practice Partner EHR system from the local hospital, it is easier to make rounds on patients because physicians can review and update their records electronically.

The Practice Partner solution has given physicians at Advanced Health Care the power to improve

patient outcomes. Customizable health maintenance templates automatically alert doctors of overdue lab tests and medications for patients with particular conditions. Practice Partner progress note templates contain patient-specific reminders on overdue health maintenance items, providing a convenient reminder during the visit. Reminders also appear when staff members open a patient's chart, providing a prompt to complete recommended therapies when the patient visits the office.

Dr. Amedeo states Advanced Health Care tracks and manages patients better and has improved care since implementing the Practice Partner system. For example, the percentage of diabetes patients who underwent the microalbumin/creatinine test to evaluate kidney function increased from 4% to 85%.

"Making these quality improvements has not come at the expense of productivity. In fact, we have enjoyed a boost in productivity since the implementation of the EHR system," says Dr. Amedeo. "We have been able to see more patients and increase annual revenue by an estimated \$40,000 per physician without the need for additional office staff."

McKesson Provider Technologies
5995 Windward Parkway
Alpharetta, GA 30005

<http://www.mckesson.com>
1.800.981.8601

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