

Case study

Daniel A. Castellani, M.D., P.C.

Located in Williamsville, New York, the Daniel A. Castellani, M.D. practice serves patients 16 and over with a variety of neurological issues. Dr. Castellani also does medical legal work involving extensive independent medical evaluations (IME). The practice sees 25-30 patients and does three to four IMEs each week. Staff include Dr. Castellani, his wife Cindy who is nurse and office Manager, and a secretary.

“The benefits from EMR have exceeded our expectations,” states Cindy Castellani. “We’re saving money and time and providing better patient care quicker while spending more time with patients. And with e-prescribing we no longer worry that the pharmacy might misread our handwriting. Also, we spend less time in the office. Dr. Castellani is able to review and edit patient narratives and do IME reports from home, and I’ve been able to reduce my time by one-fourth.”

CHALLENGES

Founded in 1965, by the mid 2000’s the practice found paper had become unmanageable. However, in viewing records from other doctors using EMRs, Dr. Castellani resisted because he saw it as critical for his practice that he be able to capture in the EMR the patient’s history and the nuances of their condition with a full narrative report. MEDENT EMR had the capability he required.

SOLUTION

In mid 2007, the Castellani practice added MEDENT EMR to its existing MEDENT Practice Management software from Community Computer Service. The software was CCHIT CertifiedSM in 2006 - 2008.

“As a small patient practice, we are still saving money with EMR. Reduced salary and benefit expenses alone will pay for the EMR in less than two years.”

Cindy Castellani, Office Manager & Nurse
Daniel A. Castellani, M.D., P.C.

"The change to EMR was painless," explains Cindy Castellani. "As a specialty practice we see some patients only one time. Therefore, we scanned in records by the appointment schedule. We save so much time in no longer needing to pull charts, no longer needing to revise transcribed reports using paper, and no longer needing to make copies of reports to mail out to referring physicians. Now the secretary provides Dr. Castellani's transcribed narrative reports to him electronically. He makes edits on his laptop, and with a click, the report is sent to multiple physicians involved in the patient's care.

The Castellani practice uses Community Computer's service for the creation and mailing of patient statements because it's cost-effective. They also use MEDENT's e-prescribing. "Patients love it," Cindy describes, "and what was prescribed is immediately documented in the patient's record." If a patient calls after hours, the Castellani's prescribe from home. They can access the patient's records quickly and be reminded of why and what was prescribed several months earlier.

"Before using e-prescribing, we had an instance where a pharmacist misread a drug name," states Cindy. "The patient was given an incorrect drug, resulting in a very bad outcome for the patient. With e-prescribing, we don't have to worry that the pharmacist might misread the provider's handwriting." Also, the practice routinely uses the Drug-Drug Interaction capability in MEDENT. Cindy explains, "With so many drugs, it's not possible to be familiar with every one."

Cindy believes that the practice has improved documentation in patient records because it is much easier and less time consuming. "We now use triage instead of sticky notes," she explains. "We can document while we are talking to the patient instead of later searching for the patient's chart. Now during the patient visit, Dr. Castellani orders imaging studies or writes prescriptions from his laptop, and everything is documented automatically in the record."

"We know doctors who have gone through two EMRs," states Cindy. "When doing the IME studies, we compare other doctors' notes using other EMRs with ours using MEDENT. We conclude our documentation is over and above that of those who use other EMRs."

The Castellani practice uses MEDENT's patient education tools which enable the provider to click from their laptop and then hand the patient the printed material as they are leaving the office. What was given to the patient is automatically documented in the EMR.

In the two days the office is not open, calls are forwarded to the Castellani's home. "If a patient calls, we are able to immediately access the patient's record," describes Cindy. "I'm able to bill, schedule and pass triage. We're able to immediately fax a patient's record while still on the phone with another physician. Time is money. We are more efficient and more money is saved."

"Community Computer's tech support is excellent," exclaims Cindy, "and our overall experience with them is absolutely phenomenal. I'm confident about the future of MEDENT knowing that Community Computer is always integrating new functionality and has a clear vision for the future."

RESULTS

MEDENT EMR has had significant impact on the Castellani practice including saving money and time, providing better patient care quicker, and with e-prescribing, relieving worry about a pharmacist misreading a provider's handwriting. Also, with immediate access to patient records and practice information from their home, the Castellani's are able to spend less time in the office.

The practice was able to reduce staff by one full-time person as a direct result of EMR. "The reduced salary and benefit expenses will pay for the EMR in less than two years," states Cindy.

"With the release of Dragon in MEDENT V18, we will begin to use Vista laptops, and Dr. Castellani will use speech recognition for narratives," comments Cindy. "We'll continue to save money with our EMR."