

Case study

Lancaster Medical Group

Located in Depew, New York, Lancaster Medical Group's two full-time physicians and four physician assistants provide services to patients ranging in age from six months to 100. The adult and family practice sees 1000 to 1200 patients a week and has a total staff of 23.

"MEDENT's Disease Management (DM) flowsheets, the DM formulas and the auto posting of lab results are incredible aids in medical decision making," states Tammy Cleary, Office Manager for Lancaster Medical Group. "and capabilities such as the Meaningful Use Dashboard and the Patient Portal help maintain quality of patient care and manage risk. With EMR, we have become more efficient and productive and have reduced costs. MEDENT keeps us up-to-date and at the cutting edge. We are confident we have rightly placed faith in the system."

CHALLENGES

Needing to stay in the office an extra four hours a day to complete paperwork, and spending \$25,000 annually on transcription costs, Dr. Kevin Cleary and Dr. William Kuehnling concluded in 2003 when they acquired Lancaster Medical Group that it was time to move to an EMR. They had successfully used MEDENT Practice Management in a previous practice. Since their existing billing data could be seamlessly integrated with EMR in Community Computer's "All-In-One" system, MEDENT EMR was the obvious choice for the new practice.

SOLUTION

In 2003, Lancaster Medical Group began using MEDENT's point and click DocGens technology together with some free-form entry. This enabled

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Tammy Cleary, Office Manager
Lancaster Medical Group

providers to complete patient notes while in the session with the patient. Lancaster Medical Group's providers no longer needed to spend extra hours in the office documenting patient visits or dictating notes to be transcribed.

"Prior to going to EMR, physicians arrived in the office at 4 a.m. to complete documentation in paper charts," explains Tammy. "They would begin seeing patients at 8 a.m. and continue until 5:30 p.m. when they would go home to their families. EMR has dramatically lessened physicians' time in the office and improved their quality of life."

"We were the first in Quest to use the Lab Results Clearinghouse," states Tammy. "The lab auto posting is amazing. It has had an incredible impact on patient care. Providers are able to pull up a patient record and see the results of lab work as soon as it's completed. For example, recently an Xray was performed at another facility at 9 a.m.. The Xray was read and results were back to the provider within two hours."

Lancaster Medical Group's EKG and vital signs equipment is integrated with MEDENT. "Providers are able to immediately see the results and graph results on their laptops," explains Tammy. "This aids in medical decision making. Also, if a provider wants a test repeated, they are able to make the request immediately without inconveniencing the patient. With diabetic patients, often providers use the DM flowsheets to graph the results of labs with vital signs and meds. The impact of med changes on the patient's condition is visually depicted and quickly obvious."

"We use the DM Formulas all of the time. We use the National Guidelines for disease management and are able to identify when a patient is due for a specific test or when a patient is over the acceptable threshold say for hemoglobin. Also, within MEDENT, we're able to flag patients who are scheduled for critical appointments. If the patient cancels, the provider is alerted and follow-up is initiated. It helps with risk management."

Tammy describes that when there was a drug recall of Avandia a couple of years ago, Lancaster Medical was able to run a report in MEDENT to show all of their patients who were on the drug, contact the patients and move them to another non-recalled medication, quickly and easily.

Lancaster Medical Group uses e-prescribing and the associated drug alerts, drug-drug interaction and drug-allergy interaction capabilities. "With the use of e-prescribing," Tammy comments, "patients have grown accustomed to having prescriptions filled within an hour and half. It's unlike the past when several phone calls needed to be made to get a refill or begin a new prescription."

The practice uses the MEDENT Patient Portal, and it has been well-received by patients of all ages and demographics. A number of Lancaster Medical's patients go to Florida during the winter and the Patient Portal has enabled them to make appointments and update their medication lists while there. "One of our patients had been hospitalized while in Florida," describes Tammy, "and placed on a number of expensive meds. Also, some of his other meds had been changed. Prior to coming for his appointment at Lancaster Medical, the patient

used the Patient Portal to update his list of medications, alerting the doctor of the changes. The Portal is a wonderful tool and incredible for the doctor.”

“We’re doing Meaningful Use and have put measures in the system to identify what needs to be completed during the visit. These serve as gentle reminders of measures needed for optimal patient care. It’s easy to do with MEDENT,” explains Tammy. “Without an EMR, it wouldn’t be possible to obtain the information.”

“Community Computer is well tuned to what insurance companies are doing and how medicine is changing. While they’re now in eight states, they are growing smartly. We love Community Computer. They’re very good to us. If we have a need which is a priority, they understand and get back to us quickly.”

RESULTS

MEDENT has enabled Lancaster Medical Group to become more efficient and productive and to reduce costs. More than one person at a time can access a chart, and there are no longer charts stacked several feet high. Documentation is more thorough, physicians spend fewer hours in the office, and the quality of patient care has been maintained in an ever changing medical environment.

The practice has decreased costs in a number of areas. Transcription costs are a thing of the past. There is no longer need for two full-time personnel to pull and file medical records, nor for someone to do extensive scanning of documents or posting of lab results.

“We’re continuing with implementation of Meaningful Use,” states Tammy, “and in the next couple of months we expect to be certified as a Patient-Centered Medical Home. With the changes in medicine, it’s good to know that with MEDENT we’re up-to-date.”

