

Case study

Chimahosky Internal Medicine

Located in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, Chimahosky Internal Medicine provides adult primary care to patients ranging in age from 18 to the very elderly. The practice is staffed by one physician and two medical assistants and serves approximately 150 patients a week. By the end of the year, Chimahosky Internal Medicine plans to attest for Meaningful Use.

“With MEDENT EMR, the ease of handling healthcare information is phenomenal,” states Dr. Jeffrey Chimahosky, D.O. Patient information seamlessly flows in and flows out with a click. Finding information quickly at the point of care makes it possible to improve patient care, and we are much more efficient and productive than we would be using paper.”

CHALLENGES

Chimahosky Internal Medicine was founded by Dr. Chimahosky in 2010. Having used paper charts in previous practices and being aware of trends toward electronic, Dr. Chimahosky decided to go with EMR from day one. Friends who were local physicians recommended MEDENT. When Dr. Chimahosky saw MEDENT, he was impressed with its many options as well as its ease of use, accessibility and user friendliness. He was confident that other potential doctors and staff would be able to use it. Rather than immediately implement a full practice management system, Dr. Chimahosky decided that initially he would use an offsite billing service.

SOLUTION

Chimahosky Internal Medicine implemented MEDENT EMR from Community Computer Service in 2010 and Practice Management in the summer of 2012.

“With paper charts, we saw a patient every 20 minutes. With EMR, I’m able to see a patient and complete my progress note every 15 minutes.”

Jeffrey Chimahosky, D.O. and founder
Chimahosky Internal Medicine

Chimahosky Internal Medicine uses the Lab Results Clearinghouse. When Dr. Chimahosky started his practice, he knew he wanted to use LabCorp and was pleased to learn that MEDENT's interface is compatible. Lab results are pushed through into MEDENT, and he can compare current results with previous results in MEDENT's graphs, and easily incorporate the information into patient letters. Dr. Chimahosky uses MEDENT's point and click DocGens technology and the Dragon speech recognition system to do progress notes. "I like that with point and click I can easily set up my own defaults and get rid of the features I don't need," states Dr. Chimahosky, "and I especially like the Dragon capability which enables me to look at the note as I am speaking and make any changes."

The practice uses e-prescribing and the associated drug alerts, drug-drug interaction and drug-allergy interaction capabilities. Dr. Chimahosky also uses MEDENT's flowsheets to graph lab results, meds and vital signs and frequently uses the graphs with patients. "I find that seeing changes in flowsheets has a big impact on patients," explains Dr. Chimahosky. "Often I include in the graph labs such as blood sugars, and vitals such as blood pressure and weight."

Initially Dr. Chimahosky documented patient visits after the visit was completed. Since glancing at a laptop to point and click breaks eye contact with the patient, he was concerned that documenting during the visit would detract from his interaction with patients. Gradually he integrated documenting the visit into his interaction with the patient. "I start my progress note before I see the patient, noting, for example, that at the previous visit I prescribed a new medication. When I'm with the patient I point and click to enter information about any side effects. As I proceed with the visit and exam, I point and click and use Dragon. Now I complete 75 percent of the progress note before the patient leaves the room. In two to three minutes, while the patient is getting lab work or making another appointment, I complete the note." This enables staff to hand the patient their Clinical Visit Summary, which includes instructions on prescribed meds, any specific medical information on the patient's condition and the time of their next appointment.

"With MEDENT the ease of handling healthcare information is phenomenal," explains Dr. Chimahosky. "Information goes into the patient chart – whether faxes from a specialist or images from a colonoscopy -- and out of the system either electronically or by fax with a simple point and click. Finding information quickly makes it possible to improve patient care. For example, if the patient had an X-ray and a consultation with a specialist at the hospital, the information is right at my fingertips. All information, from the blood sugar to previous pneumonia, is all together and immediately accessible at the point of care."

"Documentation is more thorough because it takes less time," continues Dr. Chimahosky. "You can dictate a longer, more complete note and more information can be passed out to patients. Without electronic records, information on a patient's condition had to be photo copied. Now it can be pulled up with a couple of clicks. Recently I had a patient diagnosed with West Nile Virus. With a click I was able to access a medical website and print out information for the patient. The doctor is much more productive and the patient experience is much more patient-friendly."

With MEDENT EMR, Dr. Chimahosky has been able to see more patients than in earlier paper-based practices. "In the previous practices, physicians would see a patient every 20 minutes," describes Dr. Chimahosky. "Now I see one every 15 minutes. Also, with the scheduling in Practice Management, if there have been cancellations, it's easy to quickly fill the appointment time from the waiting list. With paper it was rarely doable."

"My overall experience with Community Computer has been excellent from the get go. I've never had any computer crashes or lost information. The MEDENT system is reliable, from the hardware to the back-up to the system support. The training included was more than we actually needed, and the trainer was very knowledgeable."

RESULTS

Dr. Chimahosky believes that the most significant way MEDENT has influenced his practice is in ease of handling information. Patient information, whether fax or electronic, seamlessly flows in and flows out with a click. It is immediately accessible at the point of care.

"We are more efficient and productive than we would be with paper, and our costs are lower," states Dr. Chimahosky. "Without file cabinets and paper charts, rooms are nice and airy." The practice has not needed to hire staff to file and pull charts and has virtually no expense for paper. Dr. Chimahosky has been able to see more patients and provide informed, quality, patient-friendly care.

In the near future, the practice will implement the Patient Portal. Dr. Chimahosky wants to increase electronic referrals and information sharing with other local specialists who also use MEDENT. He also wants to do more with MEDENT's Disease Management formulas and is considering using the MEDENT system to call patients to remind them of their appointments.

"I've read some of the case studies on the MEDENT website," comments Dr. Chimahosky. "If I were new to MEDENT, I wouldn't realize that the experience of actually using MEDENT goes beyond what anyone can say in an interview."