

Case study

OMNI Orthopaedics

From its five offices in northeast Ohio, Omni Orthopaedics provides a broad range of services including orthopaedics, physical medicine and rehabilitation, podiatry, rehab psychology and physical and occupational therapy. The practice also has an ambulatory surgery center and provides MRIs and durable medical equipment. With 13 full-time physicians and 26 clinical staff ranging from physician assistants to cast technicians, Omni serves more than 1500 patients a week.

“Since implementing EMR, we’ve become fully paperless,” states Ray Zinicola, Omni’s Administrator. “We’re more efficient and productive and have decreased hard costs. Also, a value you won’t find on a balance sheet is that with MEDENT from Community Computer you always deal with people you know you can trust.”

CHALLENGES

With its old billing and scheduling software, OMNI Orthopaedics found that responding quickly to patient calls, efficiently managing the surgery scheduling process and getting 500 faxes a day into the right patient record or correct employees’ hands was very difficult and time intensive. Omni wanted to become paperless, increase the user friendliness of their systems and have complete control of accounts receivable.

SOLUTION

After a multi-level evaluation process, in 2003 OMNI Orthopaedics implemented MEDENT Practice Management and EMR from Community Computer Service. The software was CCHIT CertifiedSM in 2006 and 2007.

“Using EMR will be even easier with the implementation of MEDENT V17 and the Vista operating system. Physicians will be able to use voice to navigate MEDENT.”

Karen Haley, Systems Coordinator
OMNI Orthopaedics

As part of the implementation, OMNI completely revamped their office systems. They got 90 new PCs, Lifebook wireless pen computers for the physicians, multiple new servers, sufficient disk capacity for image storage and all new networking.

With MEDENT software, a patient's record can be accessed by all employees simultaneously. Doctors can access patient records from their homes so that when they are on call, they can look at the patient record and avoid a trip back to the office. Images are handled completely electronically so that the 500 faxes received each day never go to paper. Any image, including photographs, can be scanned into the system and routed to the patient's chart.

OMNI uses MEDENT's voice notes as well as the point and click Doc Gens technology which allows physicians to select from a Medical Content Library customized for the practice and for each doctor. "Doctors can document in a way suited to their level of comfort," states Ray Zinicola. "Some make extensive use of point and click and others use voice notes or a combination of the two. Also, some doctors complete their notes while with the patient, and others finish in the doctors' area between patients."

"Before EMR, there was a seven to ten-day backlog of documents whereas now most documentation is completed on the day of the patient visit," explains Karen Haley, Omni's Systems Coordinator. "Administrative staff don't have to wait for information. Billing is done more quickly and surgery can be scheduled sooner."

With information in the system faster and all staff able to access patients' records simultaneously, ONMI has been able to reduce the surgery scheduling process by three days. This has had a tremendous impact not only on efficiency but also on patient satisfaction. In addition, OMNI is able to respond much more quickly to patients who need medical advice. With EMR, a triage note is entered in the computer, the nurse is alerted and the doctor can respond from anywhere using his Lifebook. While it could take as long as four to eight hours to get back to a patient using the old system, now it typically takes about two. And if a patient calls with a question, support staff can quickly access the information they need.

"Becoming fully paperless has been especially rewarding in physical and occupational therapy," describes Karen Haley. "Frequently patients are seen three times a week and therapists have three or four documents to update at each visit. In the past there would be stacks of charts and often the handwriting was difficult to read. With EMR, documents are all timely and readable."

"Our experience with Community Computer has been excellent," states Ray Zinicola. "The owners are highly committed. They care about the product and they're intimately involved with the practices using their system." Karen Haley has been especially pleased that Community Computer's owners solicit suggestions and clearly consider practices true partners. "Being able to call Community Computer for any problem that occurs – whether it be hardware, software or networking – has been a huge benefit," states Karen. "There's no finger pointing."

RESULTS

With MEDENT, ONMI Orthopaedics has become more efficient and productive and they've decreased costs. The number of non-clinical staff needed to support the practice has dropped by about 30 percent, and collections has gone from 27 days to less than 21. In addition, patient care is better in that medical advice is provided more quickly and questions answered faster. Yet physicians' time in the office is shorter since there's little or no documentation to complete after the last patient leaves.

OMNI has tighter control over accounts receivable because the reporting is vastly superior. For example, to determine account detail under the old system more than one report had to be run. With MEDENT, many reports are interactive and it's possible to drill down to display detail as needed.

"The tight integration of the MEDENT modules has made a huge difference in terms of implementation and ease of use," comments Ray. "And using EMR will be even easier with the implementation of MEDENT V17 and the Vista operating system," adds Karen. "Physicians will be able to use voice to navigate MEDENT."

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