



## Case Study

# Community Care Physicians, Inc Albany, NY

## Allscripts Enterprise EHR (formerly TouchWorks®)

### BACKGROUND

Community Care Physicians, PC (CCP), is a physician-owned, physician-governed, multi-specialty medical group with more than 200 physicians and clinical providers, located throughout five counties surrounding the Albany, New York greater Capital District.

Over the last twenty-five years, CCP has grown from a single-specialty practice to one of the largest providers of multi-specialty medical care in the region.

The group's medical services include internal medicine, pediatrics, family medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, radiology, radiation oncology, laboratory, general surgery, urology, dermatology, physical therapy, podiatry, audiology, occupational medicine, urgent care, diabetic education and nutrition.

Serving more than 100,000 patients each year, an essential part of the group's vision for maintaining optimal health of its patients includes using information systems to deliver cost effective, innovative healthcare.

### OPPORTUNITY

Community Care Physicians credits its successful growth over the last 25 years to its flexibility and forward thinking in order to meet patient needs.

With today's patients demanding convenient, quality care and access to additional services for overall health improvement, the group saw electronic health records (EHR) as the next logical step toward enhancing the overall patient experience.

Initial goals for an EHR system were to:

- > Create an open-access free transfer of information among multiple services
- > Improve quality of care and patient experience
- > Improve physician productivity through better documentation and access
- > Streamline office systems through single record and automated functionality
- > Decrease overhead over time and support FTE savings
- > Enhance revenue through improved coding and office efficiencies

At the same time, Community Care Physicians' existing IDX Practice Management (PM) system was not meeting the group's needs and a new PM system to integrate with a new EHR system was next on the priority list.



*"Our relationship with Allscripts has been more of a collaborative partnership than a typical vendor-vendee relationship. They let us have a voice in how their products evolve."*

*Barbara Morris, MD, Chief Medical Officer  
Community Care Physicians, Inc*

### RESULTS:

- > Level 3 NCQA PCMH certification for 34 of 35 practices
- > Enhanced patient satisfaction
- > Instant access to patient records anytime, from anywhere
- > Decreased overhead through time and support FTE savings
- > Increased revenue through improved coding and office efficiencies
- > Faster and more accurate diagnoses and treatment plans
- > Pay For Performance incentives—e.g. Bridges to Excellence
- > Better coding and documentation (5-15% higher coding)
- > Clinical research capabilities
- > Incentives for payers
- > Quality Branding
- > \$2.5 million in Bridge to Excellence and other incentive payments

### ALLSCRIPTS

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### Community Care Physicians, Inc

The group needed a PM system that would not only integrate seamlessly with the chosen EHR, but also one with a user friendly front-end, the ability to verify insurance in real time and the capacity for automating registration via kiosks and patient portals.

#### SOLUTION

After evaluating various systems, Community Care Physicians began implementation of the Allscripts Enterprise EHR system in January of 2005, becoming the first and largest practice to use an EHR system in the Capital District. The go-live date was July of 2005 with version 10.2. After various upgrades, the group will soon upgrade to version 11.1.6.

With three years' success with Allscripts EHR under their belt, the group also selected Allscripts Enterprise PM and went live with the system in April 2009.

Enterprise EHR was implemented practice-by-practice every two weeks until all practices were live within 15 months. The group's implementation team provided full time support at each office as they went live. Providers and staff at each office received training five to ten days before implementation.

"The Allscripts build and roll-out team was excellent in working with us to design and customize the product for our organization," said Barbara Morris, MD, Chief Medical Officer for Community Care Physicians. "Allscripts listened to our providers to understand how the EHR system works in our specific situations and made enhancements from that input."

Paper charts has\ve been eliminated now that all of the group's providers utilize EHR for collecting, evaluating and documenting information regarding patient care. Information can now be shared in real time with the highest level of confidentiality.

Physicians can now instantly access imaging reports, consults and referrals from any location. And Surescripts allows the group to electronically transmit prescription information to pharmacies, with preloaded formularies and drug allergy alerts. All of this has enabled health care providers at Community Care Physicians to provide a more personalized care to their patients while continually enhancing health care quality as a whole in the region.

#### RESULTS

Most notably, EHR has enabled 34 of the 35 Community Care Physicians practices to receive NCQA (National Committee on Quality Assurance) certification at Level 3 as a Patient Center Medical Home (PCMH).

The PCMH model of care requires technology that allows for integration of information from multiple, diverse sources into a single system to support comprehensive medical information needs. Among many requirements, systems must include up-to-date and accurate problem and medication lists, information about each patient encounter, referral and order tracking and a patient web interface.

*"Our ability to achieve PCMH Level 3 recognition is directly related to automating our practices to improve patient communication, using evidence-based medicine and enabling broad connectivity to clinical information — all of which would be impossible without EHR."*

*Barbara Morris, M.D., Chief Medical Officer  
Community Care Physicians, Inc*

#### EXAMPLES OF INCENTIVES AND PAY FOR PERFORMANCE FROM JULY 2005 TO JULY 2007:

> Bridges to Excellence	\$590,000
> CDPHP (local HMO)	\$1,600,000
> MVP (regional insurer)	\$192,000
Total:	\$2,382,000

The NCQA awards recognition from levels 1-3, depending on the degree to which requirements are satisfied, with the goal being a Level 3 and a score of over 75 out of 100 points.

Allscripts Enterprise EHR has also enabled Community Care Physicians' patient volume to increase at three to five percent per year. However, key benefits from EHR have been the financial gains through Pay For Performance incentives.

Using EHR's Analytics solution, the group was able to recognize 2.5 million dollars in incentive-based rewards through Bridges to Excellence and incentive payments within the first two years of implementation. Automated data sorting allowed the group to create detailed reports in a fraction of the time it would take in a paper world.

The group has also been able to significantly improve the ease and consistency of documenting patient care during visits. This has resulted in more accurate and higher coding, with subsequent increases in reimbursements.

"Our doctors can now realize when a visit is a level four visit versus a level three visit more easily because of EHR's built in note forms and templates," said Morris.

Another area where EHR has helped to produce tremendous efficiencies involves prescriptions which are now all done electronically, with detailed documentation. Pharmacies no longer call to question the doctor's handwriting and refills are simplified.

A side benefit of EHR implementation for the group has been the development of a reputation among consumers in the region for being early technology adopters. "Consumers are requesting providers with electronic health records because they know how it benefits them through better documentation and time savings," said Morris. In addition, the group's doctors are no longer tied to the office and can now address patient issues from anywhere, with full access to the latest clinical information, even while on call.

As another example of Community Care Physicians' reputation for early technology adoption, the group was the first in the county to have a doctor (Dr. Barbara Morris) use the new Allscripts Remote™ that allows access to critical patient information outside the office with the touch of a button. "The remote application is another example of Allscripts thinking ahead about what would make our lives easier as physicians," said Morris.

#### LOOKING AHEAD

Community Care Physicians looks forward to increased financial rewards as EHR becomes even more ingrained in the culture of the organization. Other rewards will come from the American Recovery and Re-investment Act (ARRA) HITECH incentives.

Additional plans include using EHR to develop a portal that allows patients to access their own health records from anywhere in the world, to streamline check-in office procedures, and to communicate easily and securely with physicians over the Internet.

The group also looks to Allscripts Enterprise PM system continuing to enable increased efficiencies through advanced revenue cycle management, scheduling, registration and claims scrubbing tools.