



Case Study

Central Utah Clinic Provo, UT

Allscripts Enterprise (formerly TouchWorks®)

BACKGROUND

Central Utah Clinic has come a long way since it began in 1969, but the vision today remains the same. As a group of independent physicians, Central Utah Clinic values, first and foremost, the quality of care patients receive and their right to participate with their physician in treatment decisions. The group's physicians strive to treat their patients with compassion, dignity and respect, regardless of ability to pay.

Today, Central Utah Clinic is the largest group of independent physicians in Utah. Comprised of 100 physicians and nearly 50 midlevel providers who offer care in 19 specialties, the group operates out of 15 locations and treats 600,000 active patients per year.

OPPORTUNITY

Before 2002, Central Utah Clinic was largely paper based, creating over 20,000 charts per year in its already limited physician space. Central Utah Clinic devoted significant staff and resources to creating, storing and transporting nearly 300,000 paper charts across 11 locations, with a price tag of more than \$1 million a year to transcribe physicians' notes.

Physicians were unable to efficiently access and share clinical information. While clinical personnel searched for complete records, multiple charts were sometimes created for the same patient, and delays compromised the delivery of patient care. In addition, physicians would sometimes call for costly clinical tests, not knowing that recent test results were merely unavailable due to the slow process of updating paper records.

Without electronic documentation, physicians really did not know if they were documenting accurately for the appropriate level of care – especially with the more highly compensated interactions. This “downcoding” resulted in significant financial losses because providers failed to bill the higher, more accurate amounts.

In the years from 2002 to 2005, Central Utah Clinic grew by an astonishing 300 percent, with the number of physician specialists increasing from 26 to 78. This high growth rate, along with a multi-specialty focus and multiple site locations, made managing patient records increasingly challenging. It also compromised the group's future growth potential.

To meet this challenge, Central Utah Clinic leadership looked to information technology. By adopting the right system, Central Utah Clinic hoped to provide the information access and automated clinical workflows that would be required to support future growth.



“Our relationship with Allscripts has been more of a partnership than a client/vendor relationship – we’re in this together.”

Becky Lauritis, IT Project Manager
Central Utah Clinic

RESULTS

- > Nearly \$1 million ROI within first year of implementation
- > Eliminated transcription costs of \$380,000 in first year of implementation
- > \$285,000 in savings during the first year by eliminating new paper charts and reducing chartroom FTEs
- > Increased revenue from improved coding \$103,000 in first year
- > Significant reduction in physical space requirements for chart storage
- > Streamlined Rx processes
- > Instant access to accurate clinical information from any location
- > Participation in PQRI, CMS bonus incentives due to reporting functionality

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SOLUTION

The original goal for electronic health records (EHR) was to create a paperless environment and provide better patient care for patients in all the various specialties and its numerous facilities.

Over five years, Central Utah Clinic evaluated more than 10 different EMR products and reached a decision that Allscripts Enterprise EHR was the best product to meet the needs of the group.

The system provided the right functionality, a proven ability to integrate with the practice Central Utah Clinic existing management system from IDX Systems, and a track record for quickly producing physician uptime, increased revenues and streamlined patient care processes.

In April of 2002, when Central Utah Clinic employed 29 physicians, the group implemented Allscripts Enterprise EHR, only rolling it out to ten physicians at a time. Now the group has grown to 100 physicians and nearly 50 midlevel providers, all using Enterprise EHR.

Central Utah Clinic is currently using EMR version 11.1.5 including: Base (Tasking, Call Processing, Document), Dictate, Document, Result, Rx+, Note, V11 Note, Charge, SureScripts, iHealth (minimal use), Forms, Scan and TIU functionality.

“Our physicians liked the Allscripts approach that gave us the ability to carve out pieces to implement and change our culture gradually,” said Becky Lauritis, IT Project Manager at Central Utah Clinic. “We also liked that allscripts is a strong, growing that listens to its customers.”

Dramatic improvements in how the clinic managed patient records began to surface soon after Central Utah Clinic implemented EHR.

RESULTS

After only one year of EHR implementation, Central Utah Clinic documented nearly \$1 million in savings from increased revenues and reduced operational expenses. Transcription expenses have been dramatically reduced because physicians now have multiple options for documenting patient encounters. Fewer FTEs are required for chart pulling, filing, and maintenance and costs for creating and storing new charts have been eliminated.

With no need to create and store paper records for new patients, Central Utah Clinic’s newest facilities have been built without any records rooms at all. In addition, physical space requirements for record storage in existing buildings have been significantly reduced – leaving room for revenue-generating activities.

“We’ve experienced multiple success stories where patients arrive in the ER with an urgent care situation and physicians can now see what tests have already been done by their primary physicians. Everyone benefits because tests are not duplicated unnecessarily,” said Lauritis.

EHR also has decreased the incidence of under- and over-billing by recommending the appropriate evaluation and management (E/M) codes based on the level of care documented..

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In sharp contrast to the handwritten notes of the past, templates in the EHR leverage the Medcin® database of 200,000 medical terms, utilize structured data entry for standardized clinical terminology and searchable clinical findings, and automatically calculate E/M codes. In addition, the application automatically populates components of the note as a by-product of caring for the patient.

In certain complex cases where physicians dictate sections of notes, EHR captures the dictation electronically, automatically routes it to the transcription service, and stores the completed transcription in the electronic patient record with an electronic signature.

Document imaging played a key role in Central Utah Clinic's transition to paperless records. EHR enabled Central Utah Clinic's staff to electronically scan existing paper charts and other non-automated documents as digital EHR files that can be accessed by physicians instantly rather than up to three weeks with the old system by the time paper documents reached a patient's chart.

LOOKING AHEAD

Central Utah Clinic plans to continue to further utilize EHR in even more ways to link information and personal health records.

In addition, the group plans to continuously stay ahead of evolving technologies in order to provide the best quality of care possible for its patients.

"Allscripts has created relationships with strategic partners that will enable us to embrace technologies as they evolve," said Lauraitis.