



Case Study

Saint Vincent Health System Erie, PA

Allscripts Enterprise EHR (formerly TouchWorks®)

BACKGROUND

Saint Vincent Health System in Erie, Pennsylvania is an integrated healthcare delivery network that serves 350,000-500,000 residents in northwestern Pennsylvania and neighboring areas of northeastern Ohio and southwestern New York. The system provides a wide range of services through a main medical center, rural clinics, an extensive primary-care medical group and an ambulatory surgery center.

Saint Vincent Medical Group (SVMG) is the outpatient ambulatory arm of the Saint Vincent Health System with 90-100,000 patient encounters per year.

SVMG is a multi-specialty hospital-owned group with 23 practices throughout Northwestern Pennsylvania. Fourteen of the group's sites are primary care practices and nine are specialty care practices. In all, the group employs more than 141 providers and a support staff network of more than 250.

Specialties include pediatrics, sports medicine, neurosurgery, digestive diseases, general surgery, surgical oncology, pain management, cardiovascular surgery as well as obstetrics and gynecology. The group also has an urgent care facility.

SVMG continues to grow and expand to meet the needs of its pediatric, adult and senior patients. The group strives to provide the region's finest specialty care services throughout Saint Vincent Health System.

St. Vincent's continued focus on providing high quality medical expertise in an environment that is conducive to both patients and associates has earned the health system the distinction as the region's number one health care provider.

OPPORTUNITY

SVMG began using EHR in 1999 when seven of its fourteen primary care practices began using GE Logician. However, processes and information flow in the remaining offices were still paper-dependent, leading to delays in data access and inefficient workflows.

In the fall of 2005, leadership determined that the current system did not meet the organization's needs and the search for a more robust EHR system with expanded functionality began.

SVMG required that the new system must be able to easily integrate with the group's existing GE Flowcast Practice Management (PM) solution, interface with labs and hospital systems, and result in a paperless environment.



"EHR implementation has exceeded our expectations as a whole. This is due in part because Allscripts listens to customers and adapts the product accordingly."

Pam Lewis, R.N., System Administrator and
Enterprise EHR Project Coordinator
Saint Vincent Health System

RESULTS:

- > \$100,000 in dictation and transcription cost savings
- > Increased Pay For Performance incentives
- > Seamless patient experience with real time information
- > More efficient prescribing through E-prescribing
- > Faster turnaround time for test results
- > Remote access for all providers
- > Increased revenue per patient visit via better documentation
- > Improved patient satisfaction
- > Enhanced provider satisfaction
- > More preventative patient care
- > Implementation of care team care approach



Case Study

Saint Vincent Health System

SOLUTION

SVMG's leadership chose Allscripts Enterprise EHR not only because of how it seamlessly integrated with the group's existing PM, but also because of its vast functionality.

Attractive features included point of care charge entry, flexible template-driven documentation, a modular design, fully integrated scanning, embedded decision support and evidence-based guidelines, e-prescribing and physician order entry.

"We also liked that Allscripts was established in the EHR marketplace and committed to its customers," said Pam Lewis R.N., System Administrator and Enterprise EHR Project Coordinator for SVMG.

The decision was made to implement EHR in all of the group's primary practices first and focus on specialty offices later. After five months of preparation, the group went live with Allscripts Enterprise EHR in March of 2006.

Preparation for the seven practices already using EHR was relatively simple once interfaces were developed and discreet data was converted for the new system.

For the remaining practices, preparation included workflow meetings at each site to review different roles and how they would change in the electronic world. A clinical design team worked with each group to design and test workflows.

Physicians and staff were required to take personal computing (PC) assessments, with additional help and training for any scores lower than 80 percent.

Nursing and front office teams preloaded discreet data into EHR eight weeks prior to each office's "go-live" on a designated Saturday with a "Preload Pizza Party" complete with contests and prizes.

Provider and clinical staff members received eight hours of training two weeks prior to each "go-live," along with six hours for front office personnel.

Depending on practice size, each office implementation took from eight to twelve weeks to be up and running on all modules. In all, fourteen offices were using EHR within eighteen months. SVMG began with version 10.1 and has since upgraded to version 11.1.4.

RESULTS

Today, SVMG's EHR connects all of their primary physicians and links them to the entire community of care including patients, hospitals, labs, pharmacies and payors – providing a more seamless patient experience.

Dictation and transcription savings within the first year saved the group \$100,000 and costs for producing and storing paper charts have been eliminated. In addition, fewer staff members are dedicated solely to medical records.

"Having all patient information available in real time has definitely improved the quality of care we can provide. We can better track our patient care much more easily"

Pam Lewis, R.N., System Administrator and
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Case Study

Saint Vincent Health System

Advanced reporting with EHR's Analytics module has enabled the group to qualify for various incentives through insurance companies and Pay For Performance (P4P) reimbursements. The group also qualified as a P4P top tier performer, resulting in additional revenue.

Within the first six months of "go-live," five practice sites achieved NCQA Physician Recognition status for the Diabetes Physicians Recognition Program.

In addition, physicians are now able to provide a higher standard of patient care with the ability to immediately access patient information from anywhere at anytime via the web-based software.

"Patient satisfaction has improved due to the reengineering of workflows enabled through EHR," said Lewis. "We didn't realize how ineffective some of our workflows were in the paper world until we analyzed them and streamlined them electronically."

Results from SVMG's regular patient survey found that patients reported significantly faster turnaround time with lab and test results thanks to EHR. Patients are now notified real-time within a day rather than a week.

The main areas where EHR has enabled SVMG to redefine workflows and implement more of a care team approach include scheduling protocols, pre-visit preparation and rooming standards. Efficiencies have resulted in increased revenue per visit.

Before EHR, SVMG had a nurse dedicated to answering the phone for medication refills. Now with more of a care team approach through EHR, the number of refill calls has decreased from 130 per day to 10 per day, freeing up personnel time to do other things.

Provider satisfaction has also increased, with physicians enjoying access to medication lists and notes while on call and from any location.

"Having all patient information available in real time has definitely improved the quality of care we can provide. We can better track our patient care much more easily," said Lewis.

LOOKING AHEAD

SVMG looks forward to implementing EHR version 11 in its specialty offices in the near future, starting with neurology and pain management. The group looks to implement EHR in its urgent care facilities as well.

"It will be a huge benefit to our patients for our specialty offices to have shared access with our primary care patient chart information," said Lewis. "This will save our patients valuable time usually spent filling out paperwork and verifying information."

SVMG also expects EHR to enable increased P4P incentives moving forward, through the Analytic module's advanced reporting capabilities.