

Sage Intergy EHR | Success Story

Eagle Heights Clinic

Getting Bigger, Better and Happier with Sage Intergy EHR

● CHALLENGE

Burgeoning paper records were becoming expensive to manage and increasingly difficult to access in a timely manner for this growing practice.

● SOLUTION

Implementation of Sage Intergy and Sage Intergy EHR converting paper charts to electronic records for more efficient patient care. Moved from transcription to electronic documentation for most providers and utilized Lab Portal Services to speed-up lab results.

● RESULTS

Charting supply savings of \$30,000 per year; Chart management staff reduced for savings of \$70,000 per year; Transcription staff reduced for savings of \$20,000 per year; No new staff needed to support 3 new providers; Turnaround on transcription and lab test results reduced to 24 hours or less.

SPECIALTY

General Practice, Including Obstetrics

LOCATION

Arkansas

NUMBER OF LOCATIONS

One

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

4 Physicians, 16 Staff

SOLUTIONS USED

Sage Intergy

Sage Intergy EHR

Sage Practice Analytics

Lab Portal Services

How Do You Know When it's Time to Make the Move to Electronic Health Records?

To keep a growing business viable, changes often have to be made. In the case of healthcare providers, as a practice grows access to information can become more difficult as charts are spread out, supply and storage costs can rise as the patient load increases and payroll expenses can increase.

This was the case at Arkansas-based Eagle Heights Clinic where providers see 90 patients per day. The growing practice was struggling with the increasing costs of maintaining and storing tens of thousands of paper records. "The management of paper charts was our main reason for looking at making the change to an electronic health record (EHR) system," explains Marquette Walker, administrator. Before making the move to Sage Intergy EHR, Walker says "we had on-site storage plus rented storage off-site. We had six staff dedicated to finding and pulling charts, and we often couldn't find charts or up-to-date information that should have been in the charts."

Eliminating Paper Charts Saves Time and Money

The process of dealing with paper charts had become a huge burden and was holding the practice back from growing. Walker began researching potential Windows®-based solutions, and in 2004 the decision was made to implement Sage Intergy for practice management along with Sage Intergy EHR. "We were bursting at the seams," she recalls. "It was either get the EHR or add on to our building. Sage Intergy seemed like the right choice because it would allow us to automate our charts, Sage is very involved in the process of developing and implementing standards in healthcare like using the Medcin® nomenclature, and there was true integration from billing to encounter documentation."

Walker got exactly what she was looking for and is continuing to see benefits. Because of the size of the practice and the fact that they offer Obstetrics, many charts must be kept until the patients are 18, but they scan and shred what they can and no new paper charts are being created. As a result, storage is beginning to dwindle, supply costs are decreasing, they have been able to reduce staff and everyone from physicians to billing has access to up-to-date and accurate data for each patient at their fingertips.

"At this point we have no paper charts being used in the practice," says Walker. Eliminating new paper charts is saving both time and money. Before Sage Intergy, they were creating an average of 18 new charts a day at approximately \$7.00 per chart, racking up supply costs for charting of over \$30,000 a year.

Reducing Documentation Storage Space Increases Employees' Workspace

Slowly but surely storage space—and desk space that was once covered in documentation—is being reduced and reallocated for use by staff. Walker sees more satisfied, happier employees because their workspace is cleaner and they can more easily access information when they need it. The practice has also been able to reduce staff in the chart management area, eliminating two full-time employees and three part-time staff, creating a payroll savings of about \$70,000 annually.

The physicians are as happy as the rest of the staff. With instant access to patient information, easy communication with staff and the flexibility to use the system within the workflow and style they choose, they are more productive and care is improved. According to Walker, “The wonderful thing is that they have instant access to patient records whether it’s with handhelds or laptops, whether they are in either location or at home and they love that.”

Faster Turnaround on Transcriptions and Lab Tests Results

They also love how quickly data from transcribed notes, outside sources, and labs are entered in the patient record. The flexibility of Sage Intergy EHR has enabled each provider to decide whether to use Encounter Note to electronically document visits or to use the handheld devices to dictate notes. Both tools are more streamlined than what they did before. “With Encounter Note, the documentation is immediate but even with dictation, it is much faster now,” says Walker. “The turnaround on transcription is about 24 hours now and it used to be days or even as much as a week.” As a result, not only are notes more readily accessible but billing can be completed faster and the transcription staff has been reduced by two part-time employees, saving approximately \$20,000 per year.

The process of ordering lab tests and receiving results has also become more streamlined. In the past, labs would often take days to come back and could easily be misplaced. Often it took as long as a week to get results and report back to the patient. Now with Sage Intergy EHR and a laboratory interface, requests are sent electronically and results are generally received within a day. Requests and results are saved automatically into the patient record and through the Clinical Task Manager the provider is alerted to review them.

“We have pretty much eliminated the need to get up and run around looking for charts and other information, and the staff can move pretty seamlessly from one task to another and get issues addressed right away.”

– Marquette Walker
Eagle Heights Clinic

Streamlining Workflows and Communications

The Task Manager is serving the staff in other ways as well. This tool enables everyone to communicate more efficiently and enables Walker to monitor activities more effectively. “It has really helped to streamline everyone’s workflow,” acknowledges Walker. “We have pretty much eliminated the need to get up and run around looking for charts and other information, and the staff can move pretty seamlessly from one task to another and get issues addressed right away.”

Additionally, using Sage Intergy EHR has also made it feasible for the practice to participate in programs like the Medicare Care Performance Management demonstration.

Walker believes that these solutions are not only meeting patient needs more effectively, but also that the staff is happier, the physicians are more productive and the practice is poised for any future growth decisions they may make. “The patients seem much more satisfied because we are able to respond to their needs better and faster. Things just don’t slip through the cracks anymore.”