



Upstate Neurology Consultants

Making a Plan that Works with Intergy Practice by Sage and Intergy EHR by Sage

Like snowflakes, every medical practice is different. Even two practices in the same region with the same number of providers are different. Because of this fact, the practice and clinical management solutions on the market need to be flexible enough to work in diverse environments and meet a wide range of needs. Even more than that, the vendors need to be capable of working with practices to provide implementation and training that suit a wide array of environments as well.

When Upstate Neurology Consultants decided to make a change in their practice automation, they found that Sage Software has this kind of flexibility. "Intergy by Sage will adapt to almost anything you want to do," explains Bill Henderson, administrator at Upstate Neurology. "I spent a lot of time talking to other practices, looking for failure points, and what I found was that the system was so flexible that practices were using it in all kinds of different ways."

With the complete integration of Intergy Practice by Sage and Intergy EHR by Sage, the flexibility the system offered and its intuitive design, Henderson was confident it was the right choice. Once the software was purchased, the next step was implementing it. In the first quarter of 2004, the implementation of their new systems began, and he found out that Sage Software offered a lot of flexibility in this process just as they did in their software design.

Sage Software has been using a proven four-step process for implementing Intergy for many years. This process was developed by working with practices and using their feedback to fine-tune the installations. Using this procedure as a starting point, they then work with the individual practice to customize the actual launch. For Upstate Neurology, this meant several steps over the course of about 18 months.

In some areas, like billing and scheduling, they installed the system and began working with it right away. One of the most impressive aspects of the product implementation was the training that was offered, which combined computer-based, interactive Internet and on-site methods, to prepare the staff to utilize the software. They also saw results right away with a drop in their A/R of 15% and no need to hire any additional billing staff. In other areas, like document and image management and transcription, they transitioned over time. For every area, they evaluated their existing systems, structures and workflow and then created a plan to move forward with a complete commitment to making the system work as effectively as possible.

In June 2004, they began scanning charts. They set-up the system to mirror their existing paper chart set-up and then scanned charts for patients who were coming in for appointments. Once

Customer:

Upstate Neurology Consultants

Specialty:

Neurology

Location:

New York

Number of Locations: One

Number of Employees:

6 Neurologists, 17 Support Staff

Products:

- Intergy EHR
- Intergy Practice
- Practice Analytics

CHALLENGE

Update practice automation with emphasis on flexibility of software to meet diverse needs.

SOLUTION

Install Intergy Practice and Intergy EHR in a customized implementation to achieve the most efficient use of systems and streamline the practice.

RESULTS

Reduced transcription costs by 50%; Cut transcription turnaround in half; A/R down 15%; Lowered supply costs; Eliminated 800 square feet of storage space; Reduced staff 1.5 FTE; Receiving P4P incentives through Bridges to Excellence (BTE) Program.

the chart was scanned, it was shredded. Three staff worked on file management and scanning. They have since reduced that staff by 50%. For their administrative and billing paperwork, they also created a unique plan. They scanned all EOBs and billing-related items along with a variety of other business documentation, and then divided the ongoing scanning into two categories—things that get scanned as they come in and things that get filed and scanned at the end of the fiscal year. “This might not work for someone else, but it’s what works for us,” says Henderson. “And, the system allows us to do things the way we want to.” The scanning process alone freed up more than 800 square feet of office space, which is now used to generate additional revenue, instead of holding charts.

Transcription was another area where they worked with Sage Software to implement solutions and moved forward in a unique way. They began by letting the providers continue to dictate notes, but they used Intergy’s Transcription System to streamline the process, cutting the turnaround on notes by half. The physicians moved from dictating on tape to dictating into a handheld device. The consultations were initially scanned into the patient’s record; later, they were electronically imported. Once everyone was comfortable with the electronic charting and task management components of Intergy EHR, they moved forward with the electronic encounter documentation.

Today, the doctors are doing a combination of dictation markers (small sections of dictation inserted into the encounter note at different places) and electronic documentation because of the complexity of the specialty. Turnaround is even faster, notes are more accurate and the cost of transcription has been reduced 50%. According to Henderson, what’s most important is that the physicians have the flexibility to document in the way that is most comfortable for them, “Some use tablets and some use handhelds when they are with their patient. Some do notes in the exam room and others wait until later, but whatever they do, it is more accurate now. And, all the patient data is now searchable through the powerful reporting software, Practice Analytics.”

Because they chose to do a slower implementation in small steps, their training was much easier as well. “We would wait to be really comfortable with a piece and then move on to the next one,” recalls Henderson. “Often, by the time the trainer came to show us the next system, we wouldn’t need very much training because it’s all so

intuitive.” For example, with the electronic encounter documentation, they learned how to create forms and all the physicians were involved in that process. When the trainer came to show them how to document the actual patient visit, the entire clinical staff was already very familiar with the system, and they needed almost no real training.

“It may seem like this has been a long, complicated process, but it has worked very well for us,” says Henderson. “We made a commitment to do this right and to put structures in place that make us as efficient as possible. Working with Sage Software, we have been able to implement the system in the most effective way for us, and now that it is all in place, we are seeing real benefits.” Those “real benefits” include reductions in transcription costs, supply costs and personnel costs along with improvements resulting from electronic prescribing and lab interfaces.

In addition, in January 2006, Upstate Neurology received NCCA recognition through the Bridges to Excellence (BTE) Program. Bridges to Excellence is a multi-state, multi-employer coalition developed by employers, physicians and other industry experts. It was created to encourage significant leaps in the quality of care by recognizing and rewarding healthcare providers who demonstrate that they deliver safe, timely, effective, efficient and patient-centered care. To participate, practices must be able to track identified clinical data on specific patients. “The combination of Intergy Practice, Intergy EHR and Practice Analytics by Sage helped us to meet the BTE guidelines,” asserts Henderson. “In theory you could do this manually but I can’t imagine anyone would because it would require so much work. With the solutions we have in place, we are able to create the forms with fields for the information we need and with Practice Analytics we can report on every field within those forms for an entire class of patients in seconds. We can pick varying levels of detail—if it’s in our form, we can track it. The result is the ability to not only participate in Pay-for-Performance programs like BTE where we receive financial incentives but also the ability to conduct clinical research.”

“We would certainly never go back,” Henderson says. “In fact, the only real complaint I hear from my staff is that they are gaining weight because they aren’t up running around anymore looking for charts and other information!”

ABOUT SAGE SOFTWARE

Sage Software Healthcare Division is a part of Sage Software, the North American business of UK-based The Sage Group plc. Sage Software supports the needs, dreams and challenges of small and medium-size businesses (including medical practices of 500 employees and more) by offering leading business management, practice management and electronic health records products and services. More than 2.6 million North American small and medium-sized businesses and tens of thousands of medical practices currently rely on Sage Software applications.

For more than 25 years, Sage Software Healthcare Division has delivered easy-to-use, scalable and customizable software for practice management, including private practices, multi-million dollar medical enterprises and community health centers. Our Intergy EHR by Sage electronic health records software is CCHIT CertifiedSM for its product, and meets CCHIT ambulatory electronic health record (EHR) criteria for 2006.

Sage Software

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