eClinicalWorks

Solo practice making enormous impact on the lives of many

Salvatore Volpe MD PC

The Challenge

Salvatore Volpe, M.D., PC, a solo provider-practice on Staten Island, New York, understood its paper-based system no longer provided the optimum environment regarding its mission of serving patients in the context of family and community while also building relationships with caregivers. As a result, the practice needed to implement an EHR system to improve efficiencies and enhance patient care.

The Solution

eClinicalWorks' comprehensive EHR solution exceeded the needs of Dr. Salvatore Volpe's practice by improving efficiency and quality of care throughout the practice to expand upon the practice's mission.

The Results

After installing eClinicalWorks, Dr. Salvatore Volpe's practice now has more accurate prescriptions, a higher level of patient safety, and lower healthcare costs. The practice has also experienced substantial ROI and has saved $30,000 of recurring expenses within the first year of implementation. The EHR also helped Dr. Volpe become and the first solo practice in New York State to receive Level 3 PCMH recognition, based on the 2008 criteria, and first solo practice in the United States to receive PCMH 2011 Level 3 status.

Practice Overview

Salvatore Volpe, M.D., PC, is a solo provider practice on Staten Island, New York, dedicated to serving his patients in the context of family and community, and building strong alliances with caregivers within the local community. Practicing for more than 23 years, Dr. Volpe is committed to building long-standing relationships with both his patients and their families. This commitment led to Dr. Volpe becoming the first solo practice in New York State to receive Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) recognition, based on the 2008 criteria, and the first solo practice in the U.S. based upon 2011 criteria. Practices that have attained PCMH status coordinate care in a primary care setting with the goal of strengthening the physician-patient relationship, leading to better care, more involved patients, and reduced costs over time. Over the next five years, Dr. Volpe plans to work with large health systems, allowing him to further improve the health of his patients.

EHR Selection and Implementation

For many years, Dr. Volpe was a proponent of Electronic Health Record (EHR) technology; however, the cost of implementation prevented him from purchasing an EHR for his own practice. In 2006, he decided to look for an EHR that was both comprehensive and affordable. He realized eClinicalWorks was a perfect fit.

The selection of an EHR system was intended to improve and expand upon the practice's mission of serving patients in the context of family and community. Dr. Volpe was concerned his practice would be overwhelmed and be less productive when implementing an EHR. His concerns were soon put to rest after a smooth transition from paper-based records to the EHR.

eClinicalWorks was implemented because it was:

- Affordable
- Offered a subscription service
- Offered customized capabilities for workflow design

Implementation was rapid and smooth, and included a week dedicated to on-site training and learning new processes. As a result of the training and the system's intuitively designed layout and

features, the practice swiftly adapted and incorporated the technology into its workflow. After a few weeks, the practice was back to seeing and caring for patients at its normal level.

"The eClinicalWorks EHR is very easy and convenient to use."

Lauren Bilella, Office Manager

Enhanced Practice

Before implementing the EHR, Dr. Volpe's practice struggled to complete many processes in a timely manner, specifically medication requests which required multiple steps to simply record patient information. Now, seven years later, the integration of e-prescribing within eClinicalWorks and Surescripts® has meant greater efficiency and time saved. The solution provides cleaner, more accurate prescriptions, improved patient safety, and lower healthcare costs. As a result, the staff and Dr. Volpe have improved time management by no longer spending extended time rekeying information. Prescription information goes directly into the pharmacy computer system. Another key feature utilized by the practice is the ability to check for harmful drug interactions by reviewing patient medication histories at the point of care.

The comprehensive EHR is also improving efficiency and care quality throughout the practice. Prior to implementing eClinicalWorks, the practice separated charts into five subsections in an attempt to provide quicker access to patient information. With the EHR, access to all clinical content is at Dr. Volpe's fingertips, allowing him to manage medications, access labs and test results, conduct clinical decision support, and provide patient education in a heartbeat, wherever he may be located. Staff can view records online, print out pertinent information, respond to calls promptly, answer questions, refill medications, and review lab results.

The practice can now maintain its mission and care for its patients in the context of their family and community.

Front-Office Improvements

Since implementing eClinicalWorks, Dr. Volpe has experienced multiple front-office improvements, including:

- Customizable templates for Progress Notes and medications
- Enhanced prescribing features utilizing e-prescribing and direct faxing within the system
- Recording vitals as structured data elements
- An increase in patient and caregiver engagement through the use of Patient Portal

- Improved workflows
- Ease of preregistration and overall check-in process
- Fast communication within the practice using the internal messaging feature
- Improved support through the eClinicalWorks customer portal my.eclinicalworks.com.

"Support has been wonderful. Within 15 minutes of placing a ticket, I always get a return call from someone at eClinicalWorks willing to help me out," said Rachel Volpe, nurse.

Further Improvement: P2POpen

Dr. Volpe is using P2POpen™, a network that provides the practice with the ability to connect physicians and help them collaborate and connect with any provider or staff, both in the practice and within the network's community. At Dr. Volpe's practice, the preregistration and check-in process have vastly improved due to the ability to monitor wait times, send inter-office messages, and enter messages directly into patient charts. The practice is expanding its network by encouraging other

> "With information technology, a solo practitioner can now be part of a virtual healthcare system."
>
> Dr. Salvatore Volpe

providers in the area to join P2POpen, thus creating an expanded list of providers to whom patients can be referred.

Patient Involvement

At the practice, patients now also have the ability to remain more involved in their health. The web-based eClinicalWorks Patient Portal allows patients to communicate securely 24/7 with the practice, view their Personal Health Record and lab/imaging results, schedule appointments, request prescription refills, and complete practice forms. The Patient Portal has been especially popular with older patients, who track their health and their medications.

"I've been a patient of Dr. Volpe's for over 20 years, and I love the EHR. The technology allows me to look through all of my old records, contact Dr. Volpe through the Portal, and it is especially helpful to allow me to care for my elderly parents," said Denise, a longtime patient.

The practice staff also enjoys utilizing the Patient Portal, which allows the practice to quickly communicate with patients through a secure network. Office staff can schedule appointments, view recent lab work,

and receive and send referrals to other providers in the surrounding area. Dr. Volpe's practice prints out full Progress Notes for each patient after every visit. This allows the nurse to clarify anything before the visit is complete. The Progress Note includes the physical summary, recent blood work, past and current medications, and vitals. After the visit is complete, the practice encourages patients to share their notes with family and friends and, of course, other referring physicians.

Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH)

As the first solo practice in New York to be recognized as a Patient-Centered Medical Home in 2008, and the first in the United States in 2011, Dr. Volpe was honored to receive such prestigious awards. The processes required a lot of effort, requiring the practice to survey patients and learn additional best practices. Features in the eClinicalWorks application that support the goal of PCMH include: the ability to capture demographics, real-time clinical decision support, registry reporting, coordination or referrals, e-prescribing, managing labs and x-rays electronically, compiling a comprehensive Electronic Medical Record spanning the continuum of care for every patient, as well as participation in local, regional, and statewide health information exchanges. Becoming a PCMH helped the practice build strong alliances throughout the community. For example, local ERs understand Dr. Volpe will conduct the necessary steps to accurately diagnosis patients' symptoms and, as a result, the hospitals are able to provide the best care to patients.