

Spectrum Family Medicine

The Challenge

Spectrum Family Medicine, a five-provider practice in Rockville, Maryland, was faced with the common challenge of “doing more for less.” Increased costs, coupled with decreased reimbursements from insurance companies, forced the practice to look at internal processes and determine how to become more efficient. Spectrum made the critical decision to implement a comprehensive Electronic Health Record, transitioning away from paper records, and aiming to maintain the high-quality service patients had come to expect.

Solution

eClinicalWorks’ comprehensive EHR solution and eClinicalWorks’ RCM met all of the goals set by Spectrum, providing great efficiencies and improved quality of care.

Results

After adopting eClinicalWorks, Spectrum now has improved communication, the ability to view patient records online, and has access, directly through the Progress Note, to labs, test results, and consult notes. In addition, with the use of the Patient Portal, patients can communicate directly and quickly with the practice, allowing them to be proactive in the management of their care.

Practice Overview

Spectrum Family Medicine, a five-provider practice located in Rockville, Maryland, that serves the community with comprehensive outpatient services and is an affiliate of Shady Grove Adventist Hospital. Since its founding in 2001, the practice has been dedicated to treating all patients with the highest quality medical care. All physicians are board certified by the American Board of Family Medicine and two nurse practitioners are certified by the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Spectrum provides professional medical care for all members of its patients’ families, from newborns to seniors. As an adopter of the EHR, Spectrum ensures professional medical care for all members of the patient family, from newborn to seniors.

EHR Selection & Implementation

In 2010, providers at Spectrum were faced with the common challenge of “doing more for less.” Increased costs, coupled with decreased reimbursements from insurance companies, forced the practice to look at internal processes and determine how to become more efficient.

Spectrum made the critical decision to implement a comprehensive Electronic Health Record, transitioning away from paper records and aiming to maintain the high-quality service patients had come to expect.

The eClinicalWorks (eCW) comprehensive Electronic Health Record (EHR) and Revenue Cycle Management (RCM) solutions were chosen, providing for industry-leading technology, electronic claim submission, and workflow automation. The RCM solution features a first-pass acceptance rate of 98%, well above the industry average.

The RCM dashboard allows the practice to navigate payment details, view the collection management module, and access refund summaries — all from one convenient area within the EHR. Implementation was rapid and smooth and included a week dedicated to on-site training and learning new processes. During this time, staff



at Spectrum remained positive, as the technology was intuitive and easy to use. In the months following implementation, staff collaborated, helping one another learn the nuances of the system.

Enhanced Practice

For providers and staff at Spectrum, implementing an EHR has meant greater efficiencies and improved quality of care. There are no longer paper records lining the walls. The EHR has improved communication by having all patient information available right at staff's fingertips. With the elimination of paper charts, the clinical staff can instantly view the patient's record online, print information out immediately, and respond to patient calls or questions for medication refills and lab results. In addition, providers and staff now have quick access to labs, x-rays, and mammogram results, along with consultation notes. Patients can use Patient Portal to communicate directly and quickly with the practice, allowing them to be proactive in the management of their care. Patients can now go online to access their medical records, request medication refills, and view lab results, anytime and from anywhere.

"I love pulling up patient information on the EHR and sharing it with a patient immediately."

Sally Belcher, family practitioner

Revenue Cycle Management (RCM)

By leveraging the RCM technology, Spectrum has the tools to perform all of the necessary functions to submit and follow up with claims, all within the EHR. eClinicalWorks RCM allows its staff of expert billers to handle back-office operations directly through the application, securely and accurately. Dashboards are provided to Spectrum staff for transparency into the process and real-time visibility into the practice's financial performance.

"With RCM, we receive tremendous reports in a timely manner and our days in A/R have been significantly reduced. We are confident all charges are being captured," said Dr. Carolyn Baier O'Connor, family physician.

To ensure problem claims are sent in a timely manner, Spectrum staff have daily communication with eCW RCM staff. As a result, the practice has averaged close to 1,200 visits per month and claims are submitted within two days, typically billed the following day.



"RCM has created a more efficient practice, especially for the front-office staff, because now when a patient inquires about their account, it's simply a matter of a few clicks and the information

is available at your fingertips. In addition, communication between the patient and the office has improved,” explained Denise Maness, practice manager.

Progress Notes are now completed on time, allowing for claims to be created efficiently. Consequently, turnaround times have been dramatically reduced and days in A/R have been reduced to 22 days.

Patient Involvement

Two years ago, prior to the adoption of the EHR, patients were initially hesitant about the technology, fearing change and what it would entail in terms of their care. Many now understand the importance of having a technologically advanced relationship with their primary care provider. Patients receive the information they need, in a quick and efficient manner, providing reassurance and a sense of being more involved in their health. Through the use of the Patient Portal, patients can communicate directly with their doctor and access important information over the internet. Spectrum takes advantage of the tool by sending lab results electronically.

Front Office Improvements

Since implementing eClinicalWorks, Spectrum has experienced multiple front office improvements, including:

- Electronic access to real-time patient information
- Communicating directly with patients through the Patient Portal
- The ability to quickly make appointments and check records for messages and reports.

