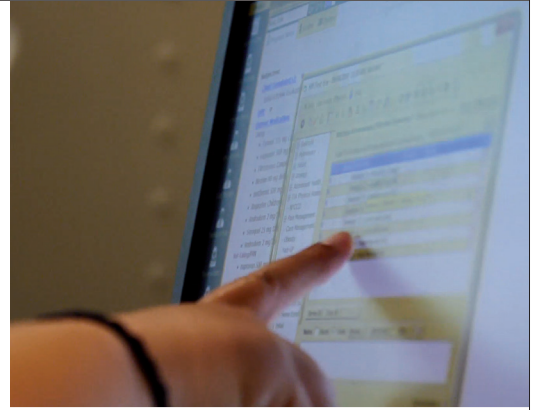


eClinicalWorks CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



Urban Health Plan

Growing Together in NYC

The Challenge

Urban Health Plan was founded in 1974 by Dr. Richard Izquierdo, a life-long resident of the South Bronx who expanded the San Juan Health Center to provide primary care and specialty medical services to a large and economically disadvantaged population in need. By 2005, UHP had grown to three health centers but needed a new healthcare IT partner to help them fulfill their potential.

The Solution

In 2006, UHP switched to eClinicalWorks, gaining tools necessary to support quality healthcare, including the ability to track patients and outcomes, while expanding their network. By 2019, UHP was serving the Bronx and Queens with 11 health centers, 12 school-based clinics, and smaller centers in homeless shelters and assisted living facilities.

The Results

In 2009, Urban Health Plan was recognized with a HIMSS Davies Award for excellence in the implementation of healthcare IT. UHP has built upon that success each year. In 2019, they achieved a 14% increase in their colon cancer screening rate, had 22 active Messenger campaigns to engage patients, sent 600,000 messages by year's end, and saw about 90,000 patients.

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Strong Roots in the South Bronx

In 1967, five years after founding his medical practice, Dr. Richard Izquierdo, a family physician, pediatrician, and life-long resident of the South Bronx, launched the San Juan Health Center to better serve a community in need of comprehensive and affordable medical care.

Seven years later, in the middle of a decade during which the South Bronx was suffering from serious social and economic decline, Dr. Izquierdo took an even bolder step. Refusing to give up on the community, he transformed the San Juan Health Center into Urban Health Plan, a Federally Qualified Health Center.

By 2007, the organization that he created had not only persevered but had grown to three locations, serving thousands of patients in a revitalized South Bronx. Dr. Izquierdo was widely recognized for his work, and that year received the Surgeon General's Medallion for his life's work. September 2010 saw the opening of the Dr. Richard Izquierdo Health and Science Charter School, the first charter school in New York City preparing students specifically for careers in healthcare.

Growing Stronger with eClinicalWorks

In 2006, Urban Health Plan had taken another crucial step toward the future when they replaced their legacy Electronic Health Record with eClinicalWorks.

"We've been live with eClinicalWorks now for 13 years," said Paloma Hernandez, who is President and CEO of Urban Health Plan and proudly carries on the work of her father, Dr. Izquierdo.

Hernandez says eClinicalWorks was a key factor in fueling UHP's rapid growth since 2006 — from three to 11 health centers, plus the addition of 12 school-based clinics.

"eCW has allowed us to improve care by assuring that all of our patients, irrespective of where they are seen, are connected," Hernandez said. Without eClinicalWorks, she adds, it would have been a nightmare trying to handle that growth while maintaining the continuity of care patients need.



Paloma Hernandez, MPH, MS
President & Chief Executive Officer

"That simple undertaking is huge when you think about the power of the Electronic Health Record," she said. "Our ability to collect and analyze data? We could never have been able to do that without eClinicalWorks, its flexibility and its architecture, which allow us to run reports however we want them."

Growing Together With eClinicalWorks

"Patients are able to be seen at any of our facilities," said Alison Connelly-Flores, Chief Medical Information Officer. "Their records are available, so if there's a specialist that they're seeing in a different building, the reason that they're there, their labs, their diagnostic imaging tests, everything is accessible at the time of the visit."

Connelly-Flores said UHP had a strong working relationship with eClinicalWorks from the very start, implementing the new EHR throughout its system within six months. That relationship has continued to expand since 2006.

"We use all the products that eClinicalWorks has to offer," she said. "One of my favorites is Messenger.



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– Alison Connelly-Flores, Chief Medical Information Officer.

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Outreach through eClinicalWorks Messenger® has been particularly effective with colon cancer. UHP was able to contact all patients who had a colon cancer test ordered. As a result, there was a 14% increase in the number of patients coming in for the screening, leading to an overall doubling of the screening rate for one of the most common and serious forms of cancer.

"We are a very data-driven organization," Hernandez said, "and we believe that the only way you can improve the health of communities is by knowing where you are. One of the philosophies that we have at Urban is that 'bad data is good data,' because bad data really allows you to understand where the areas for improvement are."

The Data-Driven Difference

"It's important to have a complete medication history for our patients when we see them," said Michael Baxter, a clinical pharmacist. "Some patients may not remember all of the medications that they're taking. The Rx tab in eClinicalWorks allows us to search by the medication and go back to when that drug was first initiated or when it was discontinued, to see why."

As a result, providers can maintain up-to-date lists of medications, avoiding prescribing those that

have not worked in the past, avoiding adverse drug interactions, and reducing the number of medications taken.

"We had a patient who brought in about 72 medications with them," Baxter said, "and there were many prescriptions that were duplicated or expired. After sitting down with the pharmacist, we were able to whittle that down to 16 medications that they actually needed, and at a follow-up, we were able to refine that to just nine tablets that they needed to be taking each day. Not only did this make a big difference for the safety of the patient, but it also helped the patient's quality of life. They got the optimal benefit from these medications."

Rafik Yacoub, a clinical pharmacist at UHP's Center for Healthy Aging, reviews patients' medication regimens daily and, thanks to eClinicalWorks, has access to every item on their medical chart.

"Most institutions use third-party providers to create such programs," Yacoub said, "but here at Urban Health Plan, we were able to create our own through eClinicalWorks. It provides us an easy way to guarantee the safety of our patients, and in addition to that, it's a very effective way to target any kind of population we need to target."

Food as the Best Medicine

Karla Giboyeaux, a registered dietitian, coordinates UHP's Healthy Cooking Program and uses eClinicalWorks to track behavioral changes in her patient clients.

"We target adult patients and are connecting integrative nutrition concepts and health and



Karla Giboyeaux, a registered dietitian, coordinates UHP's Healthy Cooking Program and uses eClinicalWorks to track behavioral changes in her patient clients.

wellness concepts while using foods and ingredients that they could find in their neighborhood,” she said. “My main goal is to teach them how to use vegetables and make them taste good. I’ve seen many benefits.”

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Karla Giboyeaux, registered dietitian

Giboyeaux’s team developed evidence-based questions and a specific template for the cooking program in the eClinicalWorks software. Based on the Latino Dietary Behaviors Questionnaire, the UHP questionnaire was customized to target diabetes, hypertension, and obesity, all of which are elevated in the Latino community in the South Bronx.

“It’s very helpful to have eClinicalWorks for the cooking program because it not only helps us track each patient if they are coming to the program, but also helps us see any behavioral change they may have,” she said.

Looking Toward a Bright Future

“We have seen lots of very good, exciting things over these last 45 years,” Hernandez said, “and we are looking forward to our 50th anniversary, really

figuring out how we can continue to impact the communities that we serve, not only with healthcare but also by addressing all the Social Determinants of Health that exist.”

“This is a really exciting time in healthcare, as we continue to use data-driven technology to lower costs, improve care, and move toward value-based care,” Connelly-Flores said. “I’m looking forward to integrating things like artificial intelligence, natural-language processing, to reduce the burden on the provider so we can continue to improve the care, but also reduce burnout for providers.”

UHP has taken its mission well beyond medical care, creating a workforce development center, helping people gain their high school equivalency degrees, and teaching them about how to find employment and improve their financial security.

Three classes have now been graduated from the Dr. Richard Izquierdo Health and Science Charter School, and every graduate has gone on to college.

“We’re very proud of that,” Hernandez said. “That’s another way that we really believe that we can step out beyond our walls and make a socially impactful difference in the communities that we serve.” ■