

Advocare, LLC

A Successful 'Big Bang' Implementation

The Challenge

After a large physician-owned multi-specialty medical group selected eClinicalWorks for their 600+ physicians and 190 locations, they undertook a daunting challenge — a “Big Bang” implementation of the EHR in every office in one day.

The Solution

Advocare, LLC established workstreams for training, IT, interfaces, communication, and contracting, and teamed with eClinicalWorks experts at every location — in Pennsylvania and New Jersey — for Go-Live on June 24, 2019.

The Results

Thanks to planning and buy-in from all staff, Advocare enjoyed a successful Go-Live. Within two months, staff in all areas — internal, family, and pediatric medicine, OB/GYN, and medical specialties — were using the EHR proficiently.

A 'Big Bang' Two Years in the Making

Scientists know our universe began with a Big Bang 13.8 billion years ago. No one knows how long the planning took. By contrast, we know Advocare, LLC, one of the nation's largest physician-owned, multi-specialty practices, took two years to prepare for their own Big Bang implementation of eClinicalWorks.

With 600+ physicians and 190 locations in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, Advocare needed that time to prepare for a transformation of their medical cosmos.

“This is the biggest transformation we've gone through since our inception 21 years ago,” said Dr. Howard N. Orel, CEO and President. “There were eCW trainers at every one of our practices during the Go-Live week.”

Choosing eClinicalWorks

Dr. Orel said Advocare had been with a vendor since 2011 that was “not providing us with comprehensive, wrap-around support.”

Jon Mackler, Chief Administrative Officer, said Advocare needed a best-in-class EHR with the ability to grow along with Advocare. After reviewing 1,600 pages of documents,



Howard N. Orel, MD, CEO

Advocare chose three finalists to demonstrate their handling of complex medical scenarios.

The Advocare review panel was impressed by every aspect of eClinicalWorks, led by CEO Girish Navani.

“We were very impressed that Girish knew every single feature, function, and component of the platform,” he said.



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Building Intellectual Capital for Go-Live

“As we marched toward our Big Bang, every week we would talk through all the different issues,” said Chuck McQueary, Advocare’s Executive VP and Chief Operating Officer. “We developed a partnership with eClinicalWorks, not just a vendor relationship.”

McQueary said that Advocare needed “infrastructure to carry us past the Big Bang,” so they recruited trainers and system analysts — the intellectual capital needed for success.

At Go-Live — June 24, 2019 — eClinicalWorks was on-site at every location, working with practice personnel to cover management, communications, interfaces, data migration, and training.

“We were impressed with the depth of support that eCW provided,” Mackler said. “Not only did we transition to a new EHR, but we brought all management services under Advocare’s responsibility. That we were able to go live on day one and see all our patients is remarkable.”

“The planning process was like a military operation,” Dr. Orel said. “There were literally tens of thousands of decisions that needed to occur. I’m proud to say that they did.”

Making a Clinical Difference

“We have many doctors of multiple specialties,” said Dr. Scott Schaffer, an ENT doctor with Advocare. “They wanted input from as many different parts of the organization as possible.”

“eClinicalWorks allows us to bring in information from all the other care centers with which the

patient has been involved,” Dr. Schaffer said. “The patient really benefits in the long run.

“eClinicalWorks definitely turned out to be intuitive,” he continued. “The more we repeat certain patterns in our care and documentation, the easier it is to do so for future patients. Which means more time face to face with the patient.”

Building a Long-Term Partnership

Looking back on Go-Live, McQueary offered two important lessons for other practices considering a Big Bang.

“Give yourself as much time as possible,” he said. “Don’t think that ‘Oh, well, that’s really two years away, or three years away.’ It’s not too early to start planning. Number two, you need to have a clear communication line, both with eClinicalWorks, as well as with your internal physicians.”

Implementation is just the first step on a journey of growth with their healthcare IT provider to create better experiences for providers and patients.

“I’m very excited about the future between Advocare and eCW,” said Dr. Orel. “Healthcare is very dynamic and changing, and what we provide and what we need in 2019 may not be what we need in 2021 and 2022. eCW’s leadership has given me the confidence that they’re willing to invest and explore with us.” ■