Dr. Gilbert Wong Switches to EMA™ and Saves Time

"Before I switched to EMA, I was spending seven minutes per patient documenting each visit, plus an extra hour at night finalizing notes. With EMA, I spend less than two minutes per patient documenting a chart and I'm out the door at 5:30 p.m., with no extra time needed."

Gilbert Wong, MD

Key Benefits and Improvements:
- Saved an average of 5 minutes per patient per day
- Saved an additional hour at the end of the day
- Successfully attested for Meaningful Use Stage 1
- Increased revenue through more accurate coding
- Cloud-based system and iPad improved patient care

When Dr. Gilbert Wong opened his solo ophthalmology practice, Canyon Eye Center, in early 2012, he knew that he wanted to go with an electronic medical record (EMR) system. He didn't have much storage space in his new office, so large computer equipment was out of the question. He also knew that electronic was the way of the future. He wanted a cloud-based EMR system that he could access from virtually anywhere and use on an iPad. He also wanted to attest for Meaningful Use.

"The first EMR system I implemented was recommended by a peer," said Dr. Wong. "The layout of the chart notes was good, but there seemed to be a lot of bugs. The worst part was that after five months on the system, the vendor still hadn't built a bridge to my practice management (PM) system. The EMR vendor's programmers were located in India, and poor communication between them and my PM system vendor just made things worse. Furthermore, even after many hours programming the EMR to customize my diagnoses, treatment plans and billing preferences, the EMR still wasn't fully functional."

Frustrated by the lack of support and inefficiency, Dr. Wong moved his practice back to paper charts and continued to search for a cloud-based EMR system with a native iPad app. In less than a month, Dr. Wong found EMA Ophthalmology™, an EMR system that surpassed his requirements.

Saving time with EMA
Dr. Wong began implementing EMA Ophthalmology in July 2012. He and his staff were trained in August and were fully up-and-running by the end of September. "From the start, I enjoyed big time savings by switching to EMA", he noted. "With my first EMR system, I was spending seven minutes per patient documenting each visit, plus an hour at night finalizing notes. With EMA, I spend less than two minutes per patient documenting a chart and I'm out the door at 5:30 p.m., with no extra time needed."

EMA's adaptability capabilities have also been a time-saver. "The fact that EMA learns and remembers how

I practice has certainly cut down the time that I spent searching and verifying diagnosis and treatments on my other system. Also, while my previous EMR was not fully functional after hours of programming, EMA was fully functional from Day One."

Earning more money and attesting for Meaningful Use

Dr. Wong's practice was up-and-running on EMA just in time for Meaningful Use Stage 1 attestation for 2012. He was able to easily meet the requirements and received incentive dollars. "EMA made the attestation process incredibly easy," he said. "We could run a self-audit at any time and EMA would tell us where we were lacking. Modernizing Medicine helped us through the process, providing great support, including Meaningful Use manuals and tutorials. Once we were ready to attest, all we needed to do was go to the attestation website and enter the numbers that EMA gave us."

In addition to the Meaningful Use dollars, Dr. Wong has also seen a steady increase in revenue. EMA's prompts and easy entry have enabled him to code more accurately, which has increased his billing per patient.

Improving patient care via the cloud

EMA's cloud-based system has helped Dr. Wong improve patient care. "My patients are my highest priority," he noted. "Without them I wouldn't have a practice. The cloud-based system gives me access to my patient files from anywhere. So if a patient calls outside of office hours and needs something urgently, I can hop on EMA from wherever I am through my iPhone, iPad, laptop or home desktop, and get them what they need with no delay. It's really helped me take patient care to the next level."

"I would tell other ophthalmologists who are reluctant about a cloud-based system to think again," he said. "Some providers I've spoken to are possessive of their files and servers, but they have to worry about the backup and whether or not their system is fully updated. Yes, your EMR vendor needs to be reliable, but if it is, a cloud-based system is a lot less worry for you."

A more mobile experience

EMA's native iPad app has delivered on Dr. Wong's expectations. "The iPad makes it easier for me to be face to face with patients and enjoy a more mobile experience," he noted. "With my previous EMR, it was inconvenient to lug around a laptop from room to room, or from a room to a table surface to use the mouse and keyboard to fill out charts. With EMA, I can fill out charts while I walk from room to room between patients.

"Ophthalmology is a very visual medical specialty," he continued. "With EMA, I can draw findings on the retina directly on the iPad, and the drawing is automatically included in the patient's record. EMA and the iPad have also improved my interaction with my patients by allowing me to face them at all times. Electronic prescriptions are sent right through the app. I have one iPad for myself, and one for my tech. My staff loves the program."

A supportive EMR vendor

"The difference between Modernizing Medicine and my prior EMR vendor is like night and day," said Dr. Wong. "The customer service team has been really responsive, and the training was as easy as it could possibly be. We opted for Web-based training, which was very simple to understand. And our EMR-to-PM system bridge was completed within just a few weeks. The Modernizing Medicine team is always making improvements. I'd highly recommend them as a great vendor to partner with."

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