

Dr. Elana Oberstein Increases Office Efficiency with EMA Rheumatology™



“My previous EMR system was not rheumatology-specific and really slowed down my patient flow. EMA Rheumatology is equipped with disease specific diagnoses, patient information and medication pertinent to the chronic illnesses that we treat as rheumatologists. EMA is so intuitive that the plans, medications and procedures adapt to my habits and frequency of use.”

Elana Oberstein, MD, MPH

Key Benefits:

- Rheumatology-specific EMR system
- Intuitive medical knowledge built in
- Ease of note creation saves time daily
- Increased office efficiency enhances workflow
- iPad portability improves patient care

Dr. Elana Oberstein, a rheumatologist in Aventura, Florida, spent a significant amount of time searching for the right electronic medical records (EMR) system to implement in her practice. Her strong dedication to patient care and safety helped define her needs for a specialty-specific EMR system.

“With the federal mandates to embark upon an EMR system, I was looking for an option that was suitable for me to be able to chart the necessary requirements and also capture disease-specific activity for my rheumatology patients,” Dr. Oberstein said. “Since rheumatologists are first trained in internal medicine, the products we tend to look at are also used in internal medicine practices. Over a two-year period, I reviewed at least ten products which were all internal medicine based and very cumbersome. They had multiple layers of patient information from comprehensive immunization history to pediatric history that were not applicable to my rheumatology practice.”

Dr. Oberstein’s practice eventually chose a product that was implemented for a short time before deciding to go back to dictation. “The EMR system really slowed our

patient flow down to the point that we decided we were not capable of reducing our patient volume to satisfy going electronic,” she explained. “We reverted back to our dictation system to keep the patient flow. I felt that receiving the 2 percent penalty was not as damaging as reducing my volume to the capacity it was being reduced,” Dr. Oberstein said. “There are not that many rheumatologists nationally, so we tend to have long wait times for a patient to be seen. To go from 35-40 patients a day, down to 20 patients a day was a disservice not only to my practice, but also to the patient population.”

Dr. Oberstein was introduced to Modernizing Medicine’s Electronic Medical Assistant® (EMA™) by an associate whom she met during their training at the University of Miami. “My colleague was then launching EMA Otolaryngology™”. There had been discussion of introducing EMA into a new specialty, so I visited the company’s headquarters in Boca Raton and was amazed by what was being done. I wanted to develop a similar product to help solve problems for other physicians in my specialty,” she said. “It was at that point that I decided to join Modernizing Medicine as a consultant and devote two days a week to develop EMA Rheumatology.”

Charting the Course with EMA

EMA Rheumatology was designed with the medical knowledge built into the system and specifically for rheumatologists. Combined with the unique, user-friendly touch-tap technology of the iPad, you don’t have to be

a technical genius to access your patient's data. "EMA is equipped with disease specific diagnoses, patient information and medications pertinent to the chronic illnesses that we treat as rheumatologists. EMA is so intuitive that the plans, medications and procedures adapt to my habits and frequency of use," Dr. Oberstein said.

"Physical findings are imperative to document with an image, whether it's a rash or a swollen joint, and the camera feature on the iPad affords me the opportunity to capture those images. I can then view and track them from visit to visit to ensure my therapeutic intervention is improving their outcome," she explained. "The portability of the iPad is not only time saving but physically easy. With other EMR systems in which you type patient encounters all day long, your hands become physically tired. You are standing, hovering over a computer, and it's just not ergonomically correct," she said. "When you move rapidly between exam rooms, the iPad is physically functional. It's remarkable and effortless for me to be sitting on a stool, talking with my patient, much like using a paper chart."

Documenting Made Easy

"Since implementing EMA Rheumatology in June 2014, the transition has been seamless. EMA has already achieved two of my main objectives, which were to improve office efficiency and enhance workflow," said Dr. Oberstein. "I used to leave the office and dictate for two hours a day. I would dictate in the car, on the treadmill, at the park, anywhere. Now when I leave the office, my notes are complete and I'm done. My main problem was documenting while I was seeing patients, and now I'm able to complete the note in the exam room. EMA is saving me at least 120 minutes per day and one-third of the cost of transcription."

EMA is designed as a cloud-based system that enables you to access your clinical data from virtually anywhere. "I now have the opportunity to turn on EMA outside the office and look up a patient's information before



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responding back to them. I know what their disease process is at hand, what medications they are on and I'm much more informed when I return that phone call," Dr. Oberstein said. "Similarly, I'm able to document in real time that the patient was called and indicate what issue or side effect they were experiencing. If I feel a prescription needs to be provided, I now have the capacity live to address the problem and e-prescribe from anywhere."

Preserving Patient Care

"My patients are very impressed with the iPad technology I use in my practice," Dr. Oberstein explained. "I think we are finding more and more patients on their Kindle, iPad or eBook, and when I come in with the iPad, they are absolutely mesmerized. Patients today report many episodes where doctors have their back to them. They find it refreshing to see a doctor come in with technology that preserves the patient experience that I didn't want to relinquish by using an electronic product," she said. "You can still look at your patient, make eye contact and not over exert yourself. It's the only way to preserve my dignity as a doctor and still have that patient/doctor interaction and bedside manner. It's the one item of my personality that I couldn't sacrifice, and EMA Rheumatology allows me to preserve that."

Note: Dr. Elana Oberstein is Medical Director for EMA Rheumatology.