

Central Dermatology Center Saves Time and Money by Switching to the EHR System, EMA™



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— DAVID TODD DEVRIES, MD

KEY BENEFITS EXPERIENCED

Eliminated templates and saved time with automated notes

Increased revenue through automatic coding

Streamlined processes that improved patient care

Achieved an estimated MIPS score of 100%

A TOUGH DECISION TO SWITCH

Central Dermatology Center, located in Chapel Hill, N.C., made the challenging decision to switch electronic health record (EHR) system vendors. With 13 providers and additional office staff, the choice to change systems was difficult to undertake, but necessary in order to improve productivity.

Dr. David Todd DeVries, a dermatologist at the practice, explained, "Our previous server-based EHR system involved software that we purchased for a large lump sum of money with ongoing additional costs associated with adding licenses for new users and continuing support. Such an investment made the failure of the software particularly difficult to accept, but we knew this solution was not working for the practice. The system routinely went down and had multiple elements that made its use cumbersome, complex and impractical. We found that we were spending extraordinary amounts of time building customized office visit templates that did not meet the needs of our general dermatology, cosmetic and Mohs offerings."

"It didn't help that the training provided by our previous vendor was inadequate. The first day of using the system our patient flow ground to a halt, which resulted in panic, pain and frustration for our staff. Despite a tremendous investment of time and money, our productivity quickly plummeted 20 to 30 percent during the five painstaking months of using the system. We knew we needed to begin researching other solutions," Dr. DeVries said.

"We participated in a demo of EMA, the EHR system by Modernizing Medicine®, and were instantly impressed with its ease of use, built-in, dermatology-specific content and detailed notes. Also, the cost for EMA made switching a less-risky proposition, because it didn't require a lot of capital and continuing fees. We implemented EMA for our medical dermatology practice in July 2012 and Modernizing Medicine was well prepared in ensuring a successful transition. Our staff was quite wary of going through the process again in less than a year. Thankfully, Modernizing Medicine had an excellent training program, and we engaged with their team over several weeks. They have a great support site as well that is easily accessible."

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Dermatology

GOODBYE TEMPLATES

Practicing dermatologists designed EMA, so the system understands and adapts to the way Dr. DeVries practices, which was an important feature to him. “Our previous system was designed by computer software experts who understood nothing about dermatology and how best to chart a visit. EMA was designed by dermatologists working with technology experts to create an intuitive EHR system for their peers,” Dr. DeVries said.

EMA collects data in real time and allows Dr. DeVries to touch and tap his way quickly through an exam while generating a detailed note in minutes. “Now imagine a visit note in an EHR system in which each of the relevant elements are accessed by means of a tab system, since you and your scribes frequently move back and forth among various tabs. It adds complexity and the possibility of missed information, plus considerable time to document even simple office visits. Such was the situation with our first EHR system. We had to customize it to become functional, and we had to build the templates ourselves. In essence, we had to learn the language of the software,” Dr. DeVries explained.

“EMA was ready to use right out of the box, so we did not skip a beat in productivity. Every disease state has a list of morphologies, potential plans and patient-specific counseling. The visit notes are easy to digest in a single, scrollable web page and in a context recognizable to physicians regardless of their specialty. The intuitive, condensed fashion in which the notes are presented allow us to easily communicate with referring providers. Also, e-prescribing with EMA has demonstrated unequivocal success. It has timesaving capabilities and helped decrease the risk of errors. Generating notes, prescriptions and refills with EMA is far simpler than my previous EHR system.”

EMA PAYS FOR ITSELF

EMA automatically suggests ICD-10, CPT and modifier codes based on Dr. DeVries’ notes and populates them onto a bill for his review. “Prior to EMA we found we provided a higher level of service than what we billed,” shared Dr. DeVries. “The automatic coding in EMA is one of the ways the system has paid for itself and it allows us to capture far more revenue. We’ve had outside consultants assess that our level of coding is consistent thanks to EMA’s help.”

Dr. DeVries enjoys the numerous additional features EMA provides. “In dermatology we have unique needs for documenting precisely. With the 3D Interactive Anatomical Atlas™ I can mark where a particular problem exists on the body and rotate to view front, back or side. I can also see specific maps for the genitals, oral cavity, hands, feet, head, neck, etc. for very specific detailing of procedures like cryotherapy, surgery, as well as site-specific counseling. The cancer log and task management features save so much time, particularly with having multiple locations. We no longer have to worry about paper being misplaced. Anyone across the organization can access the patient information or medication list and respond to an urgent phone call. We also love the photo management capability. We can take a photo with the iPad and it’s immediately uploaded to the patient’s chart. EMA enables the high level of service our patients deserve.” said Dr. DeVries.

IMPROVED HEALTHCARE TECHNOLOGY

“Modernizing Medicine continually updates the system, incorporating improvements and adequately publicizing the changes via email and webinars. A great example is the pathology module we now use, which streamlines the pathology process and allows for more timely reporting and access to patient results. Our pathologists appreciate the degree of clinical correlation the system provides. For example, if we’ve taken a small punch of a lesion, the pathologist can see where the body sample was taken from. Also when diagnosing rashes, it helps for them to view those images in the patient chart so they see what we see,” said Dr. DeVries.

“EMA has also made MIPS reporting easier to manage so the providers can delegate this responsibility to a staff member. She uses the tools EMA offers to help all providers head towards success. With the help of EMA, I achieved an estimated MIPS score of 100% without it being a burden or deflecting from patient care. We are very happy with our decision to implement EMA and plan to use it for years to come.”

To learn more about the products Dr. DeVries discussed, please request a demo at www.modmed.com or call 561.235.7301

