

Case Study

At a Glance

Organization

Medical University of South Carolina
Charleston, SC.

- 16 sites
- 650 physicians
- Nearly 900,000 patients seen annually

Solution Spotlight

- McKesson's Practice Partner® Patient Records

Critical Issues

- Establishing connectivity and interoperability to the EMR within a very complex IT environment
- Supporting high transaction volumes through the interfaces in a mission critical environment

Results

- Successful deployment of over 10 interfaces encompassing the full spectrum of clinical and administration systems
- Effective production support of high volume interface environment, exceeding 600,000 annual transaction

Medical University of South Carolina Practice Partner supports ambitious interoperability initiative for a large integrated delivery system

The Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) is a busy integrated delivery system with many different software applications that generate an enormous amount of patient data every day. For the ambulatory care group, interfaces to their electronic medical record are crucial to daily workflow. "Without those interfaces our systems couldn't talk to each other," says Jim Smith, MUSC's Manager of Ambulatory Care Information Systems. MUSC uses McKesson's Practice Partner® electronic medical record and has achieved an impressive level of interoperability with over 10 interfaces that support in nearly 900,000 patient visits a year.

"My vision for Practice Partner was to have it as a one-stop shop," says Smith. "The physician accesses Practice Partner and is able to do all the business of patient care without having to stop and log into other systems. By and large, we have achieved that vision."

Challenge

Interoperability for an organization of this size is a tall order. The ambulatory group at MUSC treats close to 900,000 patients a year at 16 different outpatient facilities. MUSC's 650 physicians work in over 30 specialties. All of them use Practice Partner, as do 800 nursing staff, 500 residents, and administrative, compliance, pharmacy, radiology and lab staff. Systems include lab information systems, ADT, radiology, practice management, transcription, and many ancillary tools such as cardiac or pulmonary systems.

"The idea is that everything from these third-party systems must get into Practice

Partner's electronic patient chart so that we do not have to rely on paper or manual entry of data," says Smith. In this all-electronic environment, it is critical that patient information from all the different systems can easily communicate with the EMR.

Solutions and Results

Building the interfaces was a collaborative effort by MUSC, Practice Partner, and each individual software vendor. Using HL7 protocols as the framework for the interfaces, MUSC has taken advantage of an interface engine (Cloverleaf), to help centralize their interface efforts to a single "appliance" which can receive inputs from various systems and deliver data as single feed into Practice Partner.

Their efforts have paid off. MUSC supports over 10 interfaces to Practice Partner, encompassing both administrative and clinical functions. On an annual basis the system manages over 600,000 transactions into and out of Practice Partner.

Interfaces that help manage administrative functions, such as patient registration and demographics include:

Keane serves as the hospital's master patient index (MPI) and ADT system. The Keane system generates financial and medical record numbers for both inpatient and outpatient activity. It provides Practice Partner with detailed patient demographics.

IDX is MUSC's ambulatory practice management system. The IDX interface to Practice Partner includes a registration

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feed that triggers the creation of a chart for new patients. It also includes a scheduling interface that lets clinicians see their patient schedule from within Practice Partner.

Interfaces that help effectively manage the seamless distribution of clinical information between systems include:

Cerner is MUSC’s primary hospital laboratory information system (LIS). The Cerner interface passes both discreet data for specific tests and as well as text reports for pathology and microbiology results. Like all the lab interfaces, the provider receives a notification within Practice Partner for their review and signoff for all incoming lab results.

Labdaq is a LIS for practices that do a significant portion of their own lab work. It is used for data coming from one of MUSC’s 16 sites, Carolina Family Care, a for-profit branch that has its own laboratory.

Labcorp is a national reference lab with locations throughout the U.S. “Many of our patients have had transplants or suffer from cancer and come here from across the state,” says Smith. “When they go home and have their follow-up test sent to the local Labcorp facility, and the results get sent back to us.”

Orchard, like Labdaq is another LIS lab system designed for use with practices that manage their own labs. It is used at Palmetto Primary Care, a specialty clinic that is one of MUSC’s business partners.

IDX Rad allows Practice Partner to download textual radiology results for all imaging protocols including X-ray, MRI, CAT Scans and Pet Scans.

An interface to the AssistMed transcription service allows easy downloading of transcribed notes directly into Practice Partner

Ophthalmologists’ progress notes are incorporated in Practice Partner via an interface with MUSC’s **Medflow** ophthalmology EMR.

MUSC is able to incorporate ambulatory information into their **Oacis** clinical data repository which receives progress note information from Practice Partner via an outbound interface.

The project has been a success. Practice Partner provides MUSC with a level of interoperability that is crucial to the hospital’s workflow. “Practice Partner and our interfaces allow us to run smoothly and efficiently,” says Jim Smith. “They’ve helped us create a seamless electronic environment for our physicians and staff.”

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