

At a Glance

Organization

High Ridge Family Practice
Stamford, Conn.

- Family practice
- 5 physicians
- Active patient population of 5,000 to 6,000
- 12,500 to 14,500 office visits per year

Solution Spotlight

- Practice Partner Appointment Scheduler
- Practice Partner Medical Billing
- Practice Partner Patient Records
- Practice Partner Order Entry

Critical Issues

- Increasing productivity
- Improving profitability and cash flow

Results

- Annual gross charges increased by 30% after the first year
- Cash flow improved by 25%-30%
- Turnaround on insurance payments reduced from 45-60 days to 14-21 days

High Ridge Family Practice Improves Financial Performance with Integrated EHR Solution

High Ridge Family Practice, a busy, five-provider group of family practitioners in Stamford, Conn., has been committed to electronic health record (EHR) technology since 1990, when it implemented a rudimentary integrated EHR and practice management system. The practice finally hit the mark in 2004 with the right solution — an advanced integrated EHR, billing, scheduling, and ordering solution from McKesson. Now, all charges are captured during the patient encounter with efficient electronic documentation. Billing is virtually seamless, and days in accounts receivables are low. With these efficiencies, the practice has grown, adding two physicians, increasing the number of patient visits per physician and improving overall clinical care.

Challenges

In 2003, privacy and security provisions in HIPAA precluded further use of High Ridge Family Practice's legacy practice management system. Led by the practice's IT champion and founding partner, Dr. Alan Falkoff, High Ridge began the search for a better solution, one that would boost productivity and increase cash flow, while helping physicians provide better care quality.

The practice wanted a documentation system that would allow physicians to maximize their time spent with patients

and fully capture the given level of service so as to leave no money on the table. Additionally, High Ridge wanted a financially stable vendor, capable of providing ongoing support and technical enhancements for its solution as regulatory requirements and the practice's needs evolved.

Answers

After evaluating several vendors, High Ridge Family Practice chose McKesson's Practice Partner® suite of integrated software: Practice Partner® Appointment Scheduler, Practice Partner® Medical Billing, Practice Partner® Patient Records and Practice Partner® Order Entry. (Practice Partner version 9.2 from McKesson is a CCHIT CertifiedSM product for CCHIT Ambulatory EHR 2006 and 2007.) "I wanted a fully integrated software system that would allow my practice to operate as efficiently as possible. Practice Partner has succeeded in this objective," says Falkoff.

The Practice Partner system's integrated EHR and practice management tools meet the practice's needs for increased productivity and reliability. High Ridge physicians use the application's customizable progress note templates to fully document patient visits with appropriate diagnosis and E&M codes. Using these templates, the practice has improved its coding, and the physicians are confident that

Case Study

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Dr. Alan Falkoff

High Ridge Family Practice

their documentation supports the given level of service.

The Practice Partner application's progress notes automatically import clinical data, making patient visits more efficient and giving High Ridge physicians the power to make better care decisions. For example, documenting a yearly physical exam is much faster because the patient's past medical history, social history and family history are automatically inserted into the progress note. Additionally, the system's built-in alerts and practice guidelines help the practice improve performance metrics in key areas. Overall, this helps physicians improve clinical outcomes.

High Ridge physicians automatically send procedure and diagnosis codes entered during the patient encounter to the billing clerk via the Practice Partner software's electronic encounter form (EEF). This eliminates the paper superbill, helping to reduce data entry errors and billing omissions and speed charge posting. The practice can bill for services much faster and thus receive payments sooner, helping to improve cash flow.

"With the Practice Partner system, charge capture is maximized; we get paid better because the system captures every charge and helps us document office visits to their highest level," relays Falkoff.

The practice is confident that it has found a reliable vendor in McKesson. "The company has been very supportive, helpful and cooperative, with excellent support and responsiveness," explains Falkoff.

Results

The Practice Partner application's integrated software system helped High Ridge to improve both office efficiency and the financial health of the practice. Since deploying the system, High Ridge added two physicians and increased both quality time with patients and patient volume. The practice has accelerated receivables, reducing turnaround on insurance payments from 45-60 days to 14-21 days and improving cash flow by 25% to 30%. Overall, annual gross charges increased by 30% with improved coding and charge capture after the first year of using the Practice Partner solution. Since then, charges increased by 8% to 12% per year.

"Through the integrated system from Practice Partner, we bill for our services sooner and dramatically improve cash flow in our practice," explains Dr. Falkoff. "This improves our ability to maintain our office, retain quality staff, upgrade equipment and take home a reasonable income."

McKesson Provider Technologies

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