CASE STUDY

Cutting Documentation Burden Down to Virtually Zero

THE CHALLENGE

Meeting the demands of a tightly timed environment

It is essential for medical practices to provide quality care for a substantial number of patients day after day. As a physician and partner at Capital Women's Care in Silver Spring, Maryland, Dr. Darryn Band knows this well. Keeping up with the clinical schedule and avoiding the need to cut back on patient load is core to the business of delivering healthcare.

This reality can be made more challenging by widespread adoption of electronic health records. "When you use an EHR," explains Dr. Darryn Band, "you pretty much have a computer tied to your waist. It can be very burdensome."

When technology doesn't meet human needs

In most practices, care is delivered in a tightly timed environment, with the performance of each team member dependent on a workflow that needs to move efficiently. Not uncommonly, clinical and administrative staff log into the practice's computer system all at once, causing processing speeds to slow down. Physicians become frustrated waiting for the EHR screens they need, adding to time pressure and stress.

During the patient exam, many physicians struggle to avoid looking at the computer too frequently. For their part, patients may resent it if too much of the visit is spent with the doctor's eyes on-screen.

The quality of the clinical note is likely to suffer when findings must be keyed into an EHR in this tight timeframe. "I was grinding through the notes, trying to get through the least I could to get a complete note," recalls Dr. Band. "It was tough, and the notes that resulted weren't specific enough for our needs. They weren't as accurate as I wanted. I'm sure many of my colleagues had similar experiences."

Capital Women's Care

- Offers obstetric, gynecologic, and specialized women's health care services
- Largest OB-GYN group in the mid-Atlantic region
- More than 81 locations in the Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC
- Staffed by more than 200 physicians, nurse practitioners, physician's assistants, and certified nurse midwives.

NEXTGEN HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS

- NextGen® Mobile
- NextGen® Remote Scribe Services

HIGHLIGHTS

Elimination of documentation burden to virtually zero

Time savings leading to improved quality of care and greater productivity

Alleviation of physician burnout

Decreased stress associated with excessive paperwork

More accurate documentation leading to enhanced quality of care

Greater precision in medical coding

Increased revenue due to greater productivity and more accurate billing

THE SOLUTION

Dr. Band had been using NextGen® Enterprise EHR for a considerable amount of time. However, his first experience with mobile wasn't with a NextGen Healthcare solution, but another vendor's software for capturing documentation using a smartphone.

"The first mobile dictation solution I tried didn't populate the notes. I'd have to revise virtually the entire note in order to code for my visit. I immediately abandoned it. Then I just went right to NextGen® Remote Scribe Services."

To make use of NextGen Remote Scribe, the physician or provider simply dictates their notes into their smartphone using NextGen® Mobile. A professionally trained scribe in a separate location completes all required documentation and related tasks directly inside the EHR via secure remote access.

"I stopped setting the computer in front of me while I'm interacting with patients. My coding has become much more accurate and my charges are more readily justifiable."

THE BENEFITS

Benefits to the practice go beyond increased efficiency, explains Dr. Band. "The quality of my work, when fulfilling my administrative responsibility as a physician and when interacting with my patients, is better."

Enhanced quality of care

For Dr. Band, improved care quality is the most important benefit. "With mobile and remote scribe, I can look at any of my notes from the last year and know exactly what I was thinking when I previously saw the patient.

"Before I used the remote scribe, I was curt and short-handed with what I would type. I wasn't able to achieve the level of preparation I wanted before entering the exam room.

"Now my documentation is much more accurate. If I look at the patient's history, my last note, and my assessment plan, I'll understand precisely what I was thinking during the patient's last visit. I know exactly the follow up I want to provide."

Less stressful workday

Removing the bulk of documentation burden has greatly improved day-to-day work for Dr. Band, who sees a large number of patients and prides himself on being one of the most productive physicians in his practice.

"I don't have to worry about how slow the computer at the office is anymore, because I'm not on it. My partners are jamming away on their computers. They're waiting and waiting for the next page to turn.

"Now, I walk out of a patient exam, I can get a glass of water and go about my day at a more reasonable pace. All I have to do is have my cell phone in my hand. "

"When I begin dictating my note, I don't usually even say the patient's name, because it pops up on my phone, so there's no HIPAA concerns. I can dictate from anywhere. I no longer have the burden of sitting on my desk and having to cram on a typewriter."

"When I adopted NextGen Remote Scribe, it was a little tricky at first. Once I knew my routine and the scribes on the other end knew their routine, my notes became much quicker to do and much more precise. It allowed me to spend more quality time engaged in the practice of medicine."

Darryn Band, MD, physician and partner
Capital Women's Care, Silver Spring, Maryland

Improved accuracy in coding

Remote scribes can also assist the practice by identifying the proper codes for more obscure diagnoses.

"I can tell the scribe my findings, and she'll find the codes for them. When seeing patients, I don't have that extra time it takes to track down some of the more obscure codes.

For example, at Capital Women's Care, we provide genetic cancer screening. When dictating my note, I might say 'the patient's positive for the CHEK2 mutation,' which is linked to increased risk for breast cancer. The next day, when I check the EHR, I'll find documentation of the correct diagnostic code for this finding. The specificity and the accuracy are much better."

Growth in revenue

According to Dr. Band, NextGen Remote Scribe Services are also giving a boost to productivity and revenue. "The total amount I bill as well as the percentage of what I bill that gets collected has gone up. I see a definite financial impact."

A real answer to documentation burnout

Dr. Band emphasizes the importance of giving physicians and other providers access to training needed to successfully transition from keyboarding to mobile dictation and remote scribe. Some clinicians are resistant to new to technology, especially if they completed their education before the onset of the current digital revolution.

But providing that training is well worth the time and expense. The burnout rate among physicians is at an all-time high, a phenomenon attributed in large part to the widespread use of EHRs, which keep physicians and other healthcare providers glued to computer screens for long periods of time.

Dr. Band believes that NextGen Remote Scribe is the right solution to alleviate the tedium and frustration associated with keying in notes and checking off template items in the fast-paced environment of contemporary healthcare. The important point is—there is an answer here and now. The means exist today to bring your documentation burden down to virtually zero.

"The burnout rate in medicine is insane. A lot of the burnout rate is because of electronic medical records and the need to be glued to your computer. You're typing the same stuff over and over again. I think NextGen Remote Scribe is absolutely the only solution at this point."

Darryn Band, MD, Physician and partner
Capital Women's Care, Silver Spring, Maryland

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

Partner with us at **855-510-6398** or **results@nextgen.com**.

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