

Beacon Health System boosts patient volumes and enhances care



5-7

extra patients on average seen per provider per week

Up to 25%

time saved during patient consultation

50%

reduction in clinical scribe FTE in several clinics

CHALLENGE: Reduce the cognitive load from documentation volume and complexity and shorten turnaround times for in-office clinical notes.

SOLUTION: Implement Nuance Dragon® Ambient eXperience (DAX™) and Dragon® Medical One to improve the physician-patient experience and simplify documentation and reporting processes.

RESULTS: Streamlined documentation process lowered the cognitive burden for its clinicians, improved the patient experience, and dramatically shortened turnaround times for clinical notes.

A transformative technology adoption

Beacon Health System is a locally owned, not-for-profit health system caring for the communities of Greater South Bend and Elkhart, Indiana, Three Rivers, Michigan and surrounding counties. It's the regional leader in comprehensive, integrated services, supporting patients with multiple hospitals, 526 beds, more than 7,000 associates, and a 500 provider multi-specialty clinical group.

In recent years, the health system has seen increasing turnaround times and an increase in clinical scribes for clinical notes. To support clinicians in their work, Beacon Health used medical transcription, which was expensive and had a significant impact on the organization's annual operational budget.

The cognitive burden from increased documentation volume and complexity has also negatively affected physicians' health, as manually recording and inputting data—both during and after patient interactions—can lead to feelings of fatigue and burnout.

"The clinicians that have adopted DAX have increased the number of patients that they're able to see every day, and their overall cognitive burden really seems to be less."

— Dr. Scott Eshowsky, Chief Medical Information Officer, Beacon Health System

To address their issues, the health system implemented the Nuance Dragon Ambient eXperience (DAX) to give its clinicians a new way to efficiently complete office notes and other documentation. DAX automatically documents patient encounters accurately and efficiently at the point of care, turning conversations between clinicians and patients into detailed clinical notes that are ready to be reviewed and signed. It enhances the patient experience while easing the documentation burden for clinicians—without compromising on documentation quality.

“DAX has been very useful in getting my notes completed in a timely fashion. It’s also been very helpful in capturing important information during the office visit which I may have missed and not documented otherwise, especially when there are lengthy conversations with patients.”

— Dr. David Amrhein
Family medicine specialist,
Beacon Health System

The adoption of DAX follows the health system’s ongoing strategy for improving clinical documentation processes, which also included an upgrade to Dragon Medical One, providing its clinicians with next-level speech-driven clinical documentation.

Higher patient volume with a lower cognitive burden for physicians

Beacon Health initially rolled out DAX to a cohort of its ambulatory care doctors, bringing multiple benefits to the patients it serves and its clinicians.

“DAX has been very useful in getting my notes completed in a timely fashion,” Dr. David Amrhein, a family medicine specialist at Beacon Health System. “It’s also been very helpful in capturing important information during the office visit which I may have missed and not documented otherwise, especially when there are lengthy conversations with patients.”

Using DAX lets Beacon Health’s clinicians focus less on typing and more on taking care of patients and listening closely to their concerns during consultations. DAX has had a transformative effect, according to Dr. Scott Eshowsky, a practicing family doctor, and Beacon Health System’s Chief Medical Information Officer.

“They’re not looking at the computer as much, trying to document while they’re talking to the patient,” says Dr. Eshowsky. “They’re interacting with the patient and then with DAX just through their voice; it’s all part of a very natural conversation. They rely on DAX to complete their documentation because it allows them to connect with their patients so much more effectively in the exam room.”

DAX has also helped clinicians minimize the impact of charting on their already busy days. “DAX has improved my work-life balance by decreasing the amount of time spent on charting,” says Deanna Huss, a family nurse practitioner at Beacon Health System. “DAX has reduced repetitive charting while maintaining accuracy of patient encounter.”

The combined power of two complementary tools

The benefits of adopting DAX have added to Beacon Health’s gains from upgrading to Dragon Medical One, Nuance’s conversational AI workflow assistant and documentation companion.

With its AutoText and navigational commands, Dragon Medical One is ideal for working in parts of the EHR with lots of detailed, templated fields, and great for clinicians who are more comfortable with direct dictation.

“What we’ve noticed is some of our clinicians prefer using Dragon Medical One in front of the patient,” says Dr. Eshowsky.

Actively dictating notes during the consultation ensures the patient feels heard and allows them to provide extra details as they remember them. And once the appointment is over, clinicians no longer need to spend extra time dictating or typing up their notes after hours.

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— Dr. Scott Eshowsky, Chief Medical Information Officer, Beacon Health System

“Our clinicians have figured out ways for these technologies to really complement each other to help them get through their day much more effectively and with a lower cognitive burden,” says Dr. Eshowsky.

Significant savings in time and cost

By implementing the Dragon family of solutions, Beacon Health has made significant time savings during consultations, which has translated into an increase in average patient volumes—meaning more patients can get the care they need much quicker.

As soon as the clinician has finished with their notes, they’re ready to share with the rest of the care team or send them on to specialists. Clinicians using DAX and Dragon Medical One no longer need to wait for a scribe to type up and send their notes back for approval. This has reduced the use of scribes by 50% in several clinics, and completely eliminating scribes in the ER, freeing up an impactful portion of Beacon Health’s budget that can be reallocated to more valuable aspects of patient care.

LEARN MORE

Discover how DAX can enhance your quality of care and patient experience while increasing physician efficiency and satisfaction: nuance.com/healthcare/ambient-clinical-intelligence



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