

AMS Cardiology saves over \$200,000 annually while increasing overall satisfaction

Challenge

- Replace inefficient paper-based process
- Eliminate \$200,000 annual transcription expense
- Create comprehensive patient documentation

Solution

- Implement Dragon® Medical Practice Edition with eClinicalWorks

Results

- Complete, real-time patient notes
- Saved \$160,000 annually in transcription costs
- Reduced office staff by 4-5 FTEs
- Reduced denied claims
- Obtained unparalleled confidence in coding
- Increased referring physician satisfaction

Summary

AMS Cardiology's (Abington, PA) 17 full-time cardiologists serve thousands of patients annually with comprehensive cardiac care. The practice was dealing with an abundance of paper charts, circulated by courier among their four offices. According to Office Manager Barbara Thompson, the process left staff constantly looking for charts. Furthermore, rising transcription costs were costing more than \$200,000 annually.



“Since we’ve adopted Dragon Medical Practice Edition, far fewer claims are denied before they go out the door, since the documentation is more complete and comprehensive.”

Dr. Andrew Fireman, Cardiologist,
AMS Cardiology
Abington, PA

As the practice researched electronic health records (EHRs), they realized ‘point and click’ templates limited the information in the patient record; physicians still needed to dictate portions of their notes. Dragon Medical Practice Edition, coupled with eClinicalWorks®, promised a way to create comprehensive, real-time records.

Implementation

A phased rollout of eClinicalWorks and Dragon Medical Practice Edition began with a group of four technology-savvy physicians. Although some physicians resisted adopting the new workflow initially, within a few short months the entire practice was fully implemented.

Dr. Bruce Berger, cardiologist, recalled the ramp-up: “I was dragged kicking and screaming into using it, but I was trained after only one day. Today, I’m much happier than I expected. Overall productivity isn’t affected and I get a more complete note dictated now with Dragon Medical Practice Edition.”

Dr. Andrew Fireman, cardiologist, echoed those remarks: “I was surprised by how easy learning Dragon Medical Practice Edition was. You go through the tutorials and start dictating; it was just that easy.”

Improved decision-making

Overall, Dragon Medical Practice Edition has helped physicians at AMS Cardiology create high-quality documentation that garners positive feedback from patients and referring physicians alike.

“Since I can’t type, I use eClinicalWorks for a lot of ‘point and click,’” Dr. Berger explained. “But for the subjective information, as well as my conclusions and impressions, that’s where Dragon Medical Practice Edition shines. I would never go back to life pre-Dragon.”

Currently, 16 physicians, two nurse practitioners, and two physician assistants use Dragon Medical Practice Edition to complete documentation within eClinicalWorks.

Healthier bottom line

After implementing Dragon Medical Practice Edition, AMS Cardiology has eliminated nearly all transcription expenses, saving over \$160,000 per year. The practice was able to reduce and redistribute office head count by four to five FTEs, for additional savings of hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. “We’re more productive economically with Dragon Medical Practice Edition; our coding and billing is better,” Dr. Berger stated. The comprehensive notes that result from coupling narrative with ‘point and click’ lead to a confidence in coding at the maximum, appropriate level of billing.

“Additionally, since we’ve adopted Dragon Medical Practice Edition, far fewer claims are denied before they go out the door, since the documentation is more complete and comprehensive,” added Bonnie Mower, assistant office manager.

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