

Swedish reduces transcription costs, achieves 100% adoption of EMR

Challenge

- Eliminate indecipherable, incomplete documentation
- Achieve 100% EMR adoption
- Maintain patient care and physician satisfaction excellence

Solution

- Deploy EpicCare EMR on the Citrix desktop virtualization platform
- Speech-enable EMR with Dragon Medical Network Edition

Results

- Reduced transcription costs by as much as 50%
- Eliminated turnaround time for notes
- Achieved 100% adoption of EMR

Summary

Swedish is the largest nonprofit healthcare provider in the Greater Seattle area with five hospital campuses, two ambulatory care centers with ERs, and a network of more than 100 specialty-care and primary care clinics. Roughly 3,000 providers have privileges at Swedish, all using the EpicCare® EMR.



“Our transcription costs have dropped by one third to one half with Dragon Medical Network Edition, and we’ve been able to repurpose some of our transcriptionists.”

D r. Tom Wood, Chief Medical Informatics Officer
Swedish, Seattle, WA

When Swedish moved from paper records to EpicCare, it mandated that all physicians and providers adopt the EMR. Swedish is an open medical staff model where a majority of the 2,000+ affiliated or credentialed physicians are private practitioners along with more than 900 employed providers, which are part of Swedish. However, because Swedish does not employ all providers, the IT department wanted a simple transition that would not interfere with patient referrals.

In the ED, Swedish encourages documentation to be completed at the time of admission for that category of patients—but there is no such requirement for patients who are discharged. Still, most notes are completed in a timely manner and routed to the primary care provider because that timeliness is appreciated as a valuable component of patient care—not because it’s required. IT leadership agreed to give physicians numerous options for entering notes—typing, templates, dictation, and voice recognition using Dragon Medical Network Edition.

Implementation

Dragon Medical Network Edition was deployed by Swedish to a pilot group of approximately 50 users, eventually migrating the solution to serve 450 physicians.

Dragon Medical Network Edition works with EpicCare, running on the Citrix® desktop virtualization platform. IT manages Dragon Medical Network Edition centrally, performing installation, optimization, backups, profile restoration, and more via a central console. With Dragon Medical Network Edition, IT has been able to continue to employ a single system administrator even as the number of users grew nearly tenfold—an event that would have otherwise required an entire support team.

Instant turnaround time

At Swedish, Dragon Medical Network Edition is extremely popular in the Emergency Department, Ambulatory Care, and Cardiac units where fast turnaround of clinical documentation is critical. Dragon Medical Network Edition allows physicians to complete notes on the spot, rather than waiting hours for transcription. In the ED, physicians cannot release a patient until the note is in the chart; instant turnaround means patients can be transferred quickly to the appropriate level of care. Notes are routed instantly to referring primary care physicians, which allows them to provide timely answers to questions from the patient’s family.

Higher quality notes

While EpicCare provides templates and structured drop down menus, many physicians at Swedish find notes created by templates alone sparse and difficult to understand. For the many physicians who are not speedy typists, Dragon Medical Network Edition helps them capture the patient’s story with meaningful and comprehensible detail.

Christine A. Lee, MD, FACS at Swedish/Issaquah, says: “I do cancer consults, and my documentation for each patient is very detailed and nuanced. It would have been very difficult to create that level of detail if I hadn’t been using Dragon Medical Network Edition with EpicCare.”

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