

# Rx for success

## Gastro Practice & Surgery Center Embraces New Technology

Like patients, software needs support. At Dekalb Gastroenterology Associates in Decatur, Georgia, the practice management system they had used for 11 years was no longer being supported by its manufacturer, so the group knew it was time to move on.

According to Mark Stern, MD, the group's managing partner, the group recognized that replacing the PM system was going to be a challenge. But given that an EMR system was certainly in their future, they decided to go ahead with that purchase as well.

"We looked at six or seven other programs before we chose Centricity," said Stern. "We liked the stability of GE, and we were sold on local support through HealthSystems. We knew the transition had the potential to be tough, and we wanted to be sure that we were comfortable with and confident in the people who would be guiding us through this change."

### Customization Delivers Exactly What's Needed

Stern says in hindsight, the group's PM decision was easy, but they didn't really know what they needed in terms of EMR. "We couldn't really appreciate the EMR nuances because

we'd never used an EMR system before," he said. "We had an idea of how we wanted it to work, so we did a lot of customization to make it function the way we want it to for the practice and the surgical center. Now we are very happy with it. We have instant access to patient files, we're no longer chasing charts, and we can access files from home when we're on call."

The EMR is also used in the practice's ambulatory surgery center, so the surgery center and office are integrated for better documentation. The group also uses several add-on products such as Faxcom, Docutrak, PatientLink and CCC-Voice Recognition Integration to make workflow easier.

"Now that we've been through the hard work of getting adjusted to the system — and getting it adjusted to us — it's clearly making us a better practice," he added. "We are able to deliver a better product to our patients, and there's no question that we will earn back our costs in efficiency and quality over time."



Mark Stern, MD

### At A Glance

#### Dekalb Gastroenterology Associates

5 physicians  
3 nurse practitioners  
41 total employees

Centricity PM and  
Centricity EMR

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