R X for success

Neurological Practice Secures Growth with Centricity Practice Solution

Coastal Neurological Institute

Growth has its challenges, and outgrowing old technology is an issue for burgeoning medical practices. Coastal Neurological Institute (CNI) had been using its existing EMR system for years, but the Mobile, Alabama-based practice was straining the capability of its EMR. "Our old system just didn't work the way we wanted it to," said Chief Administrative Officer Jerry Golden. "The notes didn't read like normal notes, the functionality wasn't good. Even our referring physicians complained about it. It was time to move on."

The practice had been using Centricity PM for seven years, so Centricity Practice Solutions (CPS) was already on Golden's radar. "We were familiar with the GE product and knew that other neurological practices were already onboard. The seamless integration was a big selling point for us, and we knew that using one shared database would streamline things considerably."

Upfront Planning Eased Transition

The planning process took CNI about five months, and the practice did a lot of work upfront to customize various templates and lists. Staff members from different departments served on the planning and implementation team, which helped to ensure a seamless start.

"HealthSystems did a great job helping us through the transition," said Golden. "The training was thorough and effective, and the whole HealthSystems team was available to assist."

Now the practice is enjoying significantly increased efficiency. They've gone from 14 fax machines to one fax server, and consult notes are generated and sent the same day as the appointment. The practice even received exceptionally positive feedback about its documentation during a recent malpractice insurance review.

Training & Integration Key to Success

For other practices considering CPS, Golden has several recommendations.

"First, get clinical personnel involved in planning," Golden said. "Make sure you know what physicians are looking for so that you don't waste time in set-up."

Golden also says that add-on software programs must integrate smoothly. "This is particularly important for a specialty practice, where you're working with a lot of referrals, insurance approvals and back-and-forth documentation," Golden explained.

Finally, don't skimp on training. "Clear the schedule and plan for lots of training. It's a big help when everyone feels comfortable using the system." said Golden.

"Our patients come in with some very serious issues," he added, "Our staff wants to spend time helping patients manage their medical issues. CPS has helped us streamline our office so that we can concentrate on the things that count. This is the way a practice should work."

At A Glance

Coastal Neurological Institute

8 physicians
2 physician assistants
12 nurses
45 total employees
13 remote locations

Centricity Practice Solution and EDI

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HealthSystems