

St. Claire Regional Medical Center

NEWSBRIEF

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Paper Purge

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Combining creativity and MEDITECH's 6.0 Health Information Management (HIM) solution, St. Claire Regional (SCR) has eliminated reams of paper from their workflow and achieved a medical record deficiency rate of less than 5%—much lower than the Joint Commission's requirement of no more than a 50% deficiency rate within 30 days of discharge.

No More Guesswork

Theresa Garvin, director, health information management, believes MEDITECH's functionality-rich solution has improved the work environment not just in her department, but throughout SCR.

"Before we implemented HIM, the coding process was burdensome," says Garvin. "Our staff wasted a lot of time chasing down paper lists and e-mailing other departments for the right information."

But that all changed when SCR implemented Abstracting. Feeling empowered, coders and clinicians took an unusual approach to challenges associated with imaging-related care—they formed a committee.

"The committee reviewed all the different procedures associated with interventional radiology and other diagnostic services. Then, they built them into the system, streamlining information and eliminating all those paper lists," explains Garvin.

HIM staff now review all CPT and DRG coding from their desktops via Abstracting Worklists, and confirm charge codes through a third-party encoder interface. The interface links to the CMS website, so staff can review Medical Necessity policies immediately, rather than wait for the government's quarterly updates.

A Drop in Deficiencies

To further streamline record-keeping, SCR centralized their Release of Information department, which copies medical records for the entire organization. The department's staff access and maintain all records, right from their desktops.



"Within one integrated system, staff can see outstanding issues, physician orders, and clinical documentation, and even send the record to the physician's desktop for electronic signature," says Garvin.

And, because nursing units scan orders and documentation nightly with MEDITECH's Scanning and Archiving, patient records are available the following day. HIM staff then assign charts to the physicians' desktops, so providers can e-sign transcribed and scanned documents quickly, at their convenience.

"Physicians used to waste time hunting down outstanding records. Now, we often collect all outstanding signatures before the patient even leaves."

All Together Now

Workflow enhancements such as consolidated, easy-to-access patient information and e-signature have grabbed physicians' attention. James Vansant, MD, director of hospitalists, says, "With only a few mouse clicks, I can find data, complete dictations, and sign orders."

"As SCR continues to implement EHR functionality, I'm looking forward to experiencing even more efficiencies with the increased integration."

Adds Garvin, "More than ever, we're working together to improve processes—our 95% completion rate for medical records attests to that. Instead of pulling incomplete records, our clinicians can put their focus where they want it—on patient care."