

Sage Intergy EHR | Success Story

Cottonwood Medical Center, Ltd.

Managing Data, Liability and Security with Sage Intergy

● CHALLENGE

Build more efficiency into a busy practice with particular attention to liability, tracking and documentation. Improve patient privacy and security of information.

● SOLUTION

Sage Intergy and Sage Intergy EHR ensure that each encounter with a patient is documented electronically. Paper records are eliminated, affording more security and privacy for patients and greater access for providers.

● RESULTS

System helps meet requirements that result in 5-10% reduction in malpractice insurance; Pharmacy calls reduced by 15-20 a day; Ordering a lab electronically is 50-75% faster; Time spent processing X-ray study requests reduced by 50-75%; Added 10-20 patients a day, increasing billing by \$18,200-\$36,400 a year.

SPECIALTY

Pediatrics, Internal Medicine

LOCATION

Arizona

NUMBER OF LOCATIONS

One

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

6 Physicians, 5 Mid-level Providers, 38 Staff

PRODUCTS

Sage Intergy and Sage Intergy EHR

Sage Practice Analytics

PhoneTree

Castelle Fax Server

For Cottonwood Medical Center, Liability, Tracking and Documentation Are What Really Counts

As office manager Madonna Dearie and family nurse practitioner Marlene Hoefft talk about their experience with Sage Intergy, a theme keeps recurring—liability, tracking and documentation. With 11 providers seeing well over 200 patients a day and an entire separate department dedicated to managing referrals, this busy practice values the ability to track every piece of data and every communication for every patient. It means as much to them as the time savings, which are huge, and the financial returns that they are seeing.

Today, with Sage Intergy and Sage Intergy EHR, each encounter with a patient or related to a patient is tracked electronically. From phone inquiries to patient follow ups to refills and labs, notes are added to the system showing the event, the staff person responsible and the date and time of the task. The result is more accountability within the practice and documentation that can be used to support practice actions, which is especially useful in case of patient complaints or malpractice. "There is no question about what we did or didn't do," says Dearie. "Everything is in the system, documented clearly. Someone might say 'You didn't call or follow up,' and we can say 'Yes, we did, we called you three times and left messages on the following dates.'" This tracking not only helps in managing liability, it is also helping the practice meet requirements that result in a 5-10% reduction in their malpractice insurance.

Eliminating Paper Records While Protecting Your Patients' Information

Another piece of managing overall accountability within the practice is meeting privacy and security requirements. According to Dearie, "The fact that almost all communications are now electronic is helping us manage the security of information. We are not passing notes and charts around the practice anymore. Most issues are handled via the task management system as tasks and notes." Eliminating paper records means that patient information is protected through security protocols and accessible only by those who have permission to access it. It also means that everyone who needs patient information can get it when they need it.

Accessing accurate, updated information so easily has resulted in enormous time savings for this dynamic practice, where nearly 50 users are moving around a 10,000 square foot facility as well as a remote administrative and referral suite. In the past, most employees were burdened with spending time each day moving through the practice finding charts, dropping charts off to others, passing notes and messages or just asking questions. With the Sage Intergy software, most of that running around has been eliminated resulting in some satisfying changes:

- Madonna Dearie is saving at least 30 minutes a day in time previously spent running errands around the office
- Patient inquiries are often handled in minutes instead of hours
- Phone staff have cut message taking time by 50% by electronically sending messages instead of handwriting
- Refill requests are processed in less than a minute, a process the practice used to tell patients would take up to 24 hours
- Pharmacy calls have been reduced by 15-20 a day, eliminating not only the time spent on those calls but also time spent looking up the prescription
- The time it takes to order a lab electronically is 50-75% faster than it was when it was done on paper
- Because the X-ray technician doesn't have to re-enter information to forward a study to the radiologist, the time spent on this task has been reduced by 50-75%

Improving Referral Management

Dearie and Hoeft agree that this is just the beginning of the new efficiencies in the practice. In referrals, specifically, they are seeing new improvements weekly. With more than 100 referrals a day being managed by four full-time employees, this is a significant part of the management of the practice. "Now the referral staff can be processing an MRI referral and referencing the chart while the provider is entering notes or the billing group is looking up a claim," says Hoeft. "Everyone has access to the chart at the same time, making it faster and easier for each department, and the patients generally walk out the door with a complete referral form. This has led to very positive interactions with our patients and referral partners, which we believe will help us continue to improve the development of our practice."

Streamlined Workflow and Improved Efficiency

The Sage Intergy software is also helping the practice improve its bottom line in very tangible ways. Cottonwood is scheduling more patients each day because of the streamlined workflow and improved efficiency enabled by the system. Since implementing

"This system is so much better for the patients. It's faster and more accurate and the tracking and documentation is fantastic!"

— Madonna Dearie
Cottonwood Medical Center, Ltd.

Sage Intergy, they have been able to add 10-20 patients a day. With an average per patient billing of \$70, that is an increase of \$350-\$700 a week or \$18,200-\$36,400 a year in added billing. The automation is also enabling the practice to cost-effectively add two new providers, who will each see approximately 30 patients a day. A staff member who was managing medical records has been shifted to the growing referral department, and, one of the file room staffers has been trained to enter all new patients. Currently, the practice sees approximately 200 new patients a month. In other words, the practice can handle the increase in patient load and referrals with a restructuring of existing staff and no need to hire new employees.

The Sage Intergy software is providing the tools to grow the practice and manage liabilities that can come with a thriving medical group. Most importantly, they are doing it in a way that is also truly benefiting their patients. "This system is so much better for the patients," says Hoeft. "It's faster and more accurate and the tracking and documentation is fantastic!"