



PinnacleHealth System

Successes in the Paperless Environment with Enterprise Document Management (EDM) and Soarian HIM

A man with short dark hair, a goatee, and glasses is wearing a white lab coat over a light blue shirt and a yellow and blue paisley tie. He is looking down at a black handheld device he is holding in his left hand, with a pen in his right hand. A blue ID badge is clipped to his lab coat. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

About PinnacleHealth

A charitable organization, the PinnacleHealth System is dedicated to maintaining and improving the health and quality of life for the people of central Pennsylvania. Pinnacle comprises Harrisburg Hospital, Seidle Hospital, Polyclinic Hospital, and Community General Osteopathic Hospital. The organization also includes two outpatient surgery centers, more than a dozen family medicine centers, nine outpatient physical therapy sites as well as home-based and hospice services. The leading healthcare system in the Harrisburg area, Pinnacle—with 824 beds, 900 physicians, and 5,000 employees—handles 69,000 emergency room visits and admits more than 33,000 patients annually.



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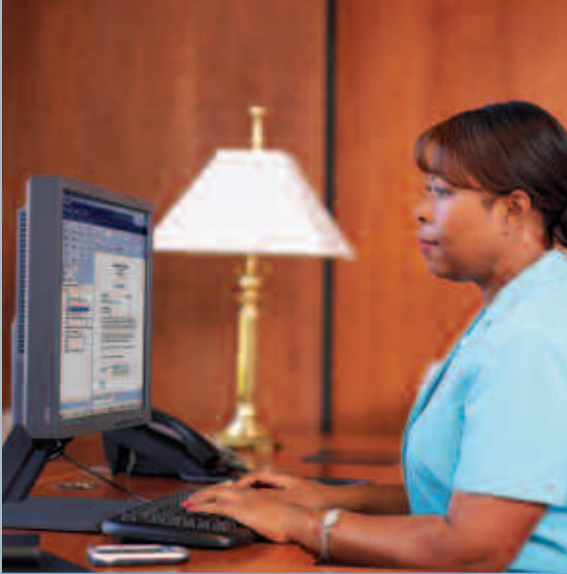
Challenge

Pinnacle recognized that its productivity and customer satisfaction were being compromised by a paper-laden environment. Pinnacle's business office and patient registration areas were especially affected. The process of registering a patient proved time-consuming and inefficient, with the continual need to leave the registration desk to copy the patient documents. In addition to the time wasted in this highly administrative function, the massive amounts of paperwork made it difficult to access records in a timely manner.

The problem was compounded in the HIM department. Staff spent many unproductive hours sorting, categorizing, and filing enormous amounts of documentation and paperwork that poured in from the nursing floors. This impacted chart completion by the HIM analysts and physicians. The workload for coders also proved arduous; they would manually write notes on charts,

carry them to the incomplete chart area, and hand them off to another employee who would then track the notes in an Excel spreadsheet and place the notes in physicians' mailboxes. This employee would then have to pursue busy physicians to secure missing documentation needed to complete the charts or to answer coding-related questions, resulting in elongated billing cycles and physician dissatisfaction.

Pinnacle's four-hospital merger uncovered the fact that the business office in each facility handled data storage differently. Some facilities would collect data via microfilm, while others preferred microfiche, and they differed on whether they stored data onsite or offsite. This lack of conformity was a challenge when the business office needed to find specific paperwork. In addition, the network needed its staff to be able to access information across different software systems.



“We have gone from a backlog of 300 inches of miscellaneous paper down to about five inches.”

Kim Murawski, RHIA, MHA, Director, Health Information, PinnacleHealth

Solution

Pinnacle needed a solution that would reduce paper documents, provide anytime access for physicians and other stakeholders, and move the organization toward a fully integrated system for its physicians and clinicians. Pinnacle accomplished these goals with Siemens Enterprise Document Management (EDM) and Soarian® Health Information Management (HIM) systems.

Designed to allow a free flow of patient documentation throughout the enterprise, EDM and Soarian HIM provide patient data that is streamlined, virtual, paperless, and available simultaneously from any location. Soarian HIM helps enhance patient care and improve patient safety through instantaneous access to a complete, online medical record.

The solution consolidates traditionally separate HIM applications into one environment. Online records, deficiency analysis, chart completion, coding management, HIPAA disclosure, and information release are combined into a single, web-based infrastructure for quick and easy access. EDM electronically and manually captures patient data throughout the patient visit and revenue cycle and includes capabilities for electronic signature capture by patients and physicians.

Implementation Strategy

EDM was first rolled out in Pinnacle's central business office followed by the emergency department (ED) and OB/GYN departments at Harrisburg Hospital. In 2005, a second hospital—Community General—went live with EDM in its ED and then began implementing Soarian HIM, which is now live in all Pinnacle facilities.

Pinnacle implemented signature pads for patient signature in the registration areas at Harrisburg Hospital and the West Hanover Imaging Center. At the point of care, Pinnacle presents laminated consent forms, available in four languages, to each patient for review prior to signature. After reading the consent form, patients use the signature pads to record their agreements. The electronically signed consents are automatically filed into EDM as part of the patients' permanent records. According to Robin Reifsnyder, CHAM, manager of Patient Registration, patients appreciate the convenience, and employees spend less time scanning registration documents, which expedites the registration process and helps reduce denials through the electronic capture of accurate information. The installation of a fax server allowed Pinnacle to receive

documents from outside the facility eliminating the need to manually scan documents. The network also placed small, desktop scanners at each registration desk at its two acute care hospital sites. Pinnacle uses these devices to scan insurance cards, prescriptions, and other forms of patient documentation. Once scanned, the data is readily available to the billing department and care units, which helps reduce denials and promote patient safety. This electronic capture of personal documents also serves as a safeguard against identity theft.

Pinnacle used a "train-the-trainer" model to familiarize staff with the new technology. For example, the registration area took on the responsibility of educating its staff and a work group helped to develop policies and procedures for the processes. The Pinnacle HIM team provided physicians with individual training and instruction cards, and it supplied HIM Customer Service User's Manuals to all HIM stakeholders. In addition, ancillary, nursing and support staffs were all trained by HIM staff.

"Multiple staff members can look up the record at the same time. The staff loves it. It's much more efficient and more effective in getting our bills out the door."

Trish Masterson, Manager, Business Informatics,
PinnacleHealth



Results

Pinnacle noted immediate operational improvements and streamlined operations with its implementation of the EDM/Soarian HIM solution. With the click of a button, staff could now electronically access documentation that previously existed in paper form and lacked categorization and consistent storage methods. A completely paperless environment, Pinnacle now stores all business office documents in a virtual patient record that also contains the patient's medical record documents. This integration of patient data allows the Business Office to access or print key medical record documents on claims to immediately accompany the bill. This has significantly reduced the number of requests sent to HIM for record copying. With the ease of access to these documents, Pinnacle's business office experienced a reduction in FTEs from 110 to 80; it was able to reduce the number of FTEs in its file room alone from 12 to 5.


Operational improvements were not unique to the Business Office and HIM departments. With scanners at each registration workstation, employees experienced increased productivity from not having to wait for the copy machine. Every document the staff might need was readily and easily accessible online. Completing the registration process in a more timely fashion increased patient satisfaction.

From December 2005 to December 2006, Pinnacle saw a 26% reduction in release of information costs. Polyclinic Hospital no longer required a full-time, outsourced ROI staff member, which has helped reduce costs. These requests can now be handled at Harrisburg Hospital since the records are online. Pinnacle staff also witnessed productivity improvements with release of information, as online charts could now be sent electronically to the requester.

"Historically we had an enormous amount of miscellaneous paperwork... With the implementation of Soarian HIM, all the ancillary labs, pathology, radiology nursing notes, and clinical documentation are available online in the patient's folder. We have gone from a backlog of 300 inches of miscellaneous paper down to about five inches. Now, this is scanned on a daily basis, eliminating the backlog. This reduction improves patient care and safety by making sure complete information is available electronically in each patient's chart," states Kim Murawski, RHIA, MHA, director, Health Information, PinnacleHealth.

Physicians have also seen a positive impact. "Siemens really listened to our physicians as far as the types of functionality they felt would help them in their workflow," says Murawski. With the implementation of EDM/Soarian HIM,



 **We see a way to reduce the costs of release of information by up to 26%***

*Results may vary. Data on file.



“Soarian HIM will give us a true electronic health record.”

Kim Murawski, RHIA, MHA, Director, Health Information, PinnacleHealth

Future

physicians no longer have to contact the medical records departments for charts; now they have easy online access to the medical record allowing them to complete their deficiencies in their homes, from their offices, or on the nursing floors. This has dramatically improved turnaround time and increased physician satisfaction. In addition, any questions related to coding of a patient chart are handled online for easy review and answered by the physician within his or her deficiency list.

Embraced by the staff, EDM’s efficiency helped Pinnacle send out bills in a more organized and timely manner reducing the risk of manual human error. As a result accounts receivable days fell from approximately 64 in 2000 to roughly 43 in 2006.

“Multiple staff members can look up the record at the same time. The staff loves it. It’s much more efficient and more effective in getting our bills out the door,” says Trish Masterson, manager, Business Informatics, PinnacleHealth. Pinnacle no longer had to struggle with the same issues of inconsistent storage methods, slow response to patient inquiries, and lost paperwork. “With EDM, we’re able to access information with the click of a button,” says Masterson.

“Soarian HIM has helped PinnacleHealth transition toward electronic medical records in several areas and in several ways—for example, physicians, nurses, and support staff have had a first taste of the Soarian product and have been given an opportunity to look at charts online. “Soarian HIM will give us a true electronic health record,” states Murawski.

With the successful implementations of Soarian HIM, Soarian Scheduling, and Med Administration Check™ (MAK), Pinnacle is well prepared for the launch of Soarian Clinicals. This longitudinal clinical repository will enable users across departments to view patient histories, demographics, allergies, results, and images.

Pinnacle will pilot Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE), which will help the network improve the care delivery process, create an interactive care model, and enable providers to communicate more effectively.

“As we move forward, I believe the integration between Soarian Clinicals, Soarian HIM, Medication Administration Check (MAK) and Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE) will provide us with a true health information record,” said Murawski.

For more information on Soarian HIM, please visit us on the web at www.usa.siemens.com/HIM-EDM or call 1-888-826-9702.

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