

Middlesex Cardiology



Bud McDowell, M.D.
 Cardiologist

Access to Information

“There is no way our office could ever go back. Our ability to get access to patient information is revolutionary.... Amicore has improved the practice of medicine in our office. Even the most technology-reluctant physician on our staff now claims that it has changed my life for the better.”

Benefits

- Annual transcription staff and supply savings \$127,937
- 8,000 additional patients visits annually \$481,080
- Total Annual Increase in Bottom Line \$609,017
- 50% increase in volume of office procedures
- Four physicians added with no increase in support staff

Dr. Bud McDowell
 on Amicore:

I would list the greatest benefits as:

1. **Superior communication throughout all office locations.**
 This results in greatly improved patient care, increased doctor satisfaction, and electronic tracking of message follow-up and care management.
2. **Access to patient records anywhere: office, hospital, or home.**
 We can view patient records, e-mails and diagnostic tests from the Tablet PCs or from home. We recently implemented a system to automatically transfer patients' hospital lab data into the EMR so we can access that ldata as well. In the future, we plan to add direct downloading of electro-cardiograms and nuclear stress tests into the system.
3. **More effective drug management.**
 Prescriptions are filled more quickly and efficiently – and it's ability to check the patient's history and possible adverse effects saves time and increases safety.
4. **Better response to patients, resulting in better care.**
 Having the freedom to carry the electronic records into the exam room makes it easier to share test results with patients or write notes and highlight text directly on the screen. At Middlesex, patient response to better service and cutting edge technology has been overwhelmingly positive.

Arthur V. McDowell, III, M.D., F.A.C.C., F.A.C.P.

Dr. McDowell, a Middletown native, joined Middlesex Cardiology in 1983 after completing his fellowship in cardiology at Beth Israel Hospital and Harvard Medical School. He graduated from the College of the Holy Cross and Albany Medical College. His internship and residency were spent at Hartford Hospital. Dr. McDowell is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in Cardiovascular Disease and Critical Care Medicine. Dr. McDowell is a senior attending physician and chief of cardiology at Middlesex Hospital and is the director of the Middlesex Cardiology Echocardiography Lab. He is board certified by the National Board of Echocardiography in Transthoracic Adult Echocardiography and a member of numerous other medical societies. Dr. McDowell holds an academic appointment as assistant clinical professor at the University of Connecticut.

Middlesex Cardiology

SPECIALTY

Cardiology

PROFILE

- Eight physicians
- Five mid-level providers
- 50 employees
- Three offices

LOCATION

Middletown, Connecticut

AMICORE PRODUCT:

Amicore Clinical Management

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Amicore Clinical Management is a comprehensive clinical workflow solution set designed specifically to support the medical practice. The hand-held wireless pen tablet easily captures and retrieves clinical, financial and patient-related data.

With tools programmed to support a doctor's workflow, providers can document and retrieve patient charts, histories, schedules, claims and insurance records. Practices can reduce transcription costs and easily submit accurate coding and billing data, plus send appointment reminders to patients. Fewer phone calls, chart pulls and updates help increase productivity, gain office space and lead to a more effectively managed practice.

Situation:

In 2000, Middlesex Cardiology was ready for growth. "In our area, demand for cardiology services was outstripping supply," says John Colebaugh, Administrative Director. "We had to find a way to expand our physical facilities, expand the number of providers, and support it with an integrated management infrastructure that saved money."

At the time, Middlesex Cardiology was spending thousands per month for outside transcription and had little support for the tracking and management of transcriptions. Because of a steady increase in paperwork and resulting inefficiencies of dealing with it on a daily basis – spending countless hours documenting patient information, hunting for charts, copying, filing and approving paperwork – they wanted to find a solution that would reduce the costs of transcription, eliminate paper charts, and improve overall office operations. They also wanted a mobile, wireless system that would not require wiring or structural modifications or additions to their multiple locations. And to facilitate 100% physician buy-in, the system had to have an easy interface that doctors could learn quickly.

Solution:

Middlesex Cardiology hired Colebaugh, a practice administrator who had previous experience implementing the Amicore Clinical Management system. As a result of ACM's success in his previous practice, the system was purchased and installed in January, 2001. Today, all three medical locations have fully implemented a mobile, wireless practice management solution deployed on Tablet PCs.

At Middlesex, electronic practice management starts the appointment process. The system finds the next available or most convenient appointment time for a patient and ensures arrival with an automatically generated reminder phone call. Ninety five percent of the notes regarding a patient's visit are input through a series of prompts in the Amicore system. Using the Tablet PC's pen, doctors select from appropriate guidelines and complete the rest with audio and digitally inked messages. Providers find that customizing the standard templates is quick and seamless.

Benefits:

Amicore Clinical Management system allowed Middlesex Cardiology to rapidly expand the practice with no increase in support staff. They added new providers, doubled the size of the diagnostic lab and opened a new office. As a result of this increase in providers, the practice has been able to handle approximately 8,000 additional visits per year, increasing annual revenue by nearly \$481,080. Staff that was required to pull charts and other paper-related functions has been redeployed to more productive tasks in the practice. Middlesex Cardiology has seen a five point decrease in overall operating expenses while the practice is continuing to grow. This is in addition to the \$101,000 savings in transcription costs.

"Having an electronic medical record on Tablet PC's has been a lifesaver. We easily move information between our three clinics. Doctors get at patient information anywhere in the clinics, at the hospital, when they are at home, and even on vacation. We don't have to be planning for rooms to hold more charts and additional staff to carry them around," Colebaugh also says. "We are avoiding nearly all of the old transcription costs."

One year after implementing, ACM gained 100 percent provider acceptance. Even the most reluctant physician on staff claims that "it has changed my life for the better."

Colebaugh says the system is not only helping to integrate emergency medical records at the point of care, but also spurring doctors to keep pushing the digital revolution forward. By using ACM for more interactive tasks such as prescribing medications and documenting patient information during the course of the visit, patient satisfaction has improved. Doctors can now focus their attention on the patient while having instant access to more information at their fingertips.

amicore

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