

Primary Care Medical Center

SPECIALTY

Family practice, internal medicine and pediatrics.

PROFILE

- 7 physicians
- 1 nurse practitioner
- 3 physician assistants

LOCATION

Two offices in Murray, Kentucky

WEBSITE

www.primarycaredcenter.com

AMICORE PRODUCT:

Amicore Clinical Management

BENEFITS

- 24 percent net increase in physician salaries and benefits.
- Four percent drop in overhead costs due to increased efficiencies.
- Accurate coding resulting in increased revenue.
- Automatic checks for drug to drug interactions.
- Complete, up-to-date patient charts.
- Paperless office, including scanning all incoming reports, results and other correspondence.

Amicore Clinical Management is a comprehensive clinical workflow solution set designed specifically to support the medical practice. The hand-held wireless Tablet PC 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:

Primary Care Medical Center was facing ever-increasing storage and filing needs for the paper records of its more than 30,000 patients. The practice was also concerned about keeping the various medications straight for elderly patients who were seeing different providers at the clinic. At first, the practice decided the only answer was to purchase a new building and hire additional staff to meet its needs. They purchased the building, but instead of reworking workflow to accommodate a new facility and more people, the practice turned to technology as the best long-term solution for patients and the business.

Solution:

In 1999, Dr. Robert Hughes, the practice's managing partner, began investigating electronic medical records solutions and discovered one of the only truly wireless EMR systems available—Amicore Clinical Management (formerly PenChart). Between late 1999 and mid-2000, Dr. Hughes and several of his associates traveled to the company's home office and visited other practices using the software to get a better feel for the way the Tablet-based clinical management system worked. The strength and stability of Amicore—which is backed by Microsoft, Pfizer and IBM—instilled confidence in the practice and offered assurance that Amicore would be in the market for the long term. By fall of 2000, all of the practice's partners were satisfied with the decision and implementation began.

Benefits:

Amicore Clinical Management has helped Primary Care Medical Center deliver better care for patients and realize many practice efficiencies. As a result, the physicians' salaries and benefits went up 24 percent after the first year, despite a 2.6 percent spike in IT spending. But Dr. Hughes says the extra income was merely icing on the cake. The original goals—to increase office efficiencies and improve quality of patient care—also were realized shortly after the installation was complete. And since all the partners in the practice worked together on the decision to move to an EMR, physician satisfaction has improved as well.

Amicore officials had promised Dr. Hughes and his partners that they would see a financial return-on-investment after a short time with the clinical management system—and they were right. The 24 percent increase in the physicians' net earnings was attributable to a four percent drop in overhead costs due to increased office efficiencies; an 18 percent increase in billings; and an estimated \$3,000-\$5,000 a month that had been lost through incorrect billing.

If reports, consults, lab results, and other correspondence arrive in paper format, they are immediately scanned into the EMR and then discarded. These items no longer slip through the cracks, and patient charts are always complete and up to date. This saves time that used to be spent looking for misplaced charts and other patient information.

A paperless office also means better patient care and a safer, more efficient way to keep track of patients' medications. For the first time, any physician in the practice has immediate and complete access to each patient's medication history. Because the system automatically checks for drug-drug interactions, clinicians can make prescribing decisions with confidence, which ultimately benefits patients.

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Amicore, Inc.
200 Minuteman Road
Andover, MA 01810

800.568.1528
www.amicore.com