CASE STUDY:

Summit Medical Group provides seamless care and avoids lost revenue with Galen's VitalCenter business continuity solution

By Galen Healthcare Solutions

Seeking a solution to inconsistent EHR connectivity

Summit Medical Group (SMG), with over 220 physicians serving 12 counties, is based in Knoxville, Tennessee. Physician-owned and operated since 1995, the group has 55 office locations and has established itself as the largest and most respected primary care organization in the East Tennessee region. Following the implementation of an EHR in 2003, many of SMG's rural locations experienced inconsistent connectivity to the EHR, ultimately hindering the quality of care provided during system downtime. In 2014, Summit Medical Group selected Galen's VitalCenter™ business continuity solution to enable physicians and other caregivers to access patient clinical information in the event of EHR downtime, including network and power outages, periods of poor EHR performance, and planned maintenance.

Previous process reduced quality of care and practice revenue

Prior to implementing VitalCenter, Summit Medical Group utilized a custom downtime solution that provided PDF documents of patient charts that were accessible only at the SMG IT office. The process involved first printing and sorting

> " An afternoon of cancelled appointments is a significant amount of money. Our analysis found that if a physician used VitalCenter for 20 minutes to avoid cancelling one appointment, the application would pay for itself for the whole year. "
>
> — Michael Hayes, Director of IT, Summit Medical Group

the patient charts at a central location. The IT staff would then physically deliver the printed charts to the physician offices, some of which were more than two hours away. Additionally, the data that was presented within the printed charts did not provide comprehensive patient medical history.

> " Our old EHR downtime process was terribly inefficient and never worked correctly – the biggest challenge was getting the patient data to the end user. It was decent, but nowhere near as good as Galen's VitalCenter solution. "
>
> – Michael Hayes

The majority of end users disliked the previous downtime process so much that physicians typically cancelled appointments when the EHR was not available. SMG concluded that when physicians were forced to cancel appointments due to EHR downtime, the organization was potentially missing out on approximately $2,000 of revenue (per physician per hour) when taking into account visit charges, procedures, and lab work. During the evaluation process, SMG determined that VitalCenter was a true downtime business continuity solution

With Galen's VitalCenter solution, Summit can now:

- Provide seamless patient care during EHR downtime, improving care quality
- Avoid significant revenue loss
- Extract patient charts for insurance audits, generating new revenue
- Free up IT help desk staff for other tasks during an outage

that could provide patient data directly to clinicians in virtually any scenario, preventing loss of potential revenue during downtime.

Productivity problems eliminated

Since implementing Vital Center, physicians and caregivers have been able to seamlessly provide quality care in the event of EHR downtime. End users no longer need to be distracted by calling the IT help desk — they simply access the VitalCenter application to view relevant patient clinical data in order to continue seeing patients, with no impact to the productivity of the care team. In addition to visibility into the current day's schedule, users can generate electronic documents that will be filed directly to the patient's chart when the EHR becomes available — eliminating clunky downtime documentation workflows. Says Hayes, "I don't know of any downtime events where the physicians have cancelled appointments since we rolled out VitalCenter. The application is almost like using an iPad — it's so intuitive that very little training was needed."

> "**Release of patient charts for insurance audits is now only performed through VitalCenter for a fee for each chart. In the first half of 2015, we've extracted over 100,000 charts for Cigna, Blue Cross and Humana audits. The revenue from the first half of this year alone has paid for approximately 70% of a five year VitalCenter subscription cost.**"
>
> – Michael Hayes

FEATURES AND VALUE OF VITALCENTER:

Scheduled Appointment Window
During a complete network outage, VitalCenter users have the ability to view 30 days of historical appointment data and five days of future appointment data. In addition to being able to see today's schedule, SMG's clinical staff are able to access charts and address questions from patients who may have had a recent visit. In addition, a number of SMG's office locations bring patients in to perform labs prior to a scheduled visit. Being able to view five days of future appointment data allows staff to view the patient's outstanding lab orders, even when the EHR is down.

On-Demand Feature
In certain downtime scenarios where the EHR is unavailable but the office may have internet connectivity, VitalCenter's On-Demand functionality allows SMG's end users to view any patient chart on an ad-hoc basis, providing access to clinical information for these patients.

Batch Chart Generation
VitalCenter's batch chart generation feature allows administrators to easily extract patient charts in a PDF format that can be securely delivered to payers for insurance audits. For SMG, insurance audits are now a painless process as auditing resources are no longer required to be on site, occupying workspace and valuable resources. SMG not only utilizes VitalCenter's batch chart generation process to release patient charts in an effective and timely efficient manner, but to also generate revenue for the organization.

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