

International Eye Care

An EHR & Practice Management Success Story

eyecare
ADVANTAGE

The Problem: Gain Control over a Growing Business

As President of International Eye Care (IEC), Teresa Carter was already looking to move into electronic health records (EHR). But she also saw a need for more business data to give her better control over a rapidly growing practice. IEC had grown from a single office to 9 locations in Illinois and Missouri, and was starting to feel the growing pains. "IEC family members," as Carter calls her staff, would spend days pulling together the data she wanted for reports on capture rates or the efficacy of patient education efforts. "It was time consuming, often inaccurate, and really impossible to do any valid financial forecasting with numbers scratched on a notepad," she says.

The Solution: : State-of-the-Art EHR with the Industry's Most Flexible, Robust, Real-Time Reporting

With Compulink's Eyecare Advantage™, IEC recognized three key benefits. First, Carter got real-time access to any data she wants to track. "If I notice that one employee has a low rate of spectacle completions, I can address that training opportunity immediately, rather than 6 weeks later," she says. Compulink's robust, flexible reporting features also increased her control over all aspects of the practice, from vendor turnaround to patient wait times. "If a staff member in one office is sick, I can access all the schedules for the day and reassign a tech from an office with a lighter patient load," she says. And because Compulink's reports are so customizable, she's able to tailor them exactly to her needs. "Eyecare Advantage has really helped us to forecast forward and better understand our revenue streams," Carter says.

In fact, the customizability of everything from reports to exam screens was the primary reason IEC chose Compulink. "It was the only system that would allow us to add new fields we wanted to track or create entirely new tabs just because they align better with our practice," Carter says. "Most other systems will consider such changes if you pay for them and if they decide the change will benefit other users, but Compulink lets us make any change that will benefit us."

The Results: Per-Patient Revenue Increases by \$60 and Optical Shop Multiples by 20%

"Eyecare Advantage paid for itself within the first 18 months," Carter says. As one example, Smart Functions embedded in the EHR software remind staff to recommend sunglasses and backup glasses for contact lens wearers. "The result is more consistent patient education and fewer missed sales opportunities, which has increased optical shop multiples by about 20%," she says. By picking up on those missed opportunities, Carter calculates that IEC's average per-patient transaction revenue has increased by \$60 since implementing EHR. "If your practice sees 5,000 patients per year, that's a \$300,000/year revenue gain," she points out. Efficient billing and more accurate insurance claims have added to the savings, too. Carter estimates that employees "touch" each claim 3 times fewer than before and recoup about 15% more in copays, reimbursements and plan-appropriate charges. The practice also hasn't needed to add staff in 3 years, even as revenues increased. "Of course there were challenges in implementing EHR, but our practice, our patients, and our IEC family members are all stronger for having done so," she says.

Pearls for Success

Carter urges doctors and administrators to think of an EHR system as an investment—and to look for what the return on that investment will be, rather than just the price tag for initial implementation. "When comparing systems, focus on what you can customize and how easily the system can adapt to your practice," she says. "With each demo, ask yourself if you can measure everything you want to measure; if your doctors can practice the way they want to practice. Because if they can't, the price tag doesn't matter at all—it just won't be worth doing."

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