

Direct Transcription Entry into EHR Enhances Documentation Turnaround and Staff Efficiency

Highlights

Profile

Western New York Urology Associates

- Buffalo, Jamestown, Orchard Park, and Niagara Falls, NY

Challenges

- Strategies to optimize physician dictation transcriptions were not meeting WNY Urology's desired turnaround times
- Prior transcription services lacked the ability to enter information directly into WNY Urology's EHR system, forcing staff to spend additional time updating records
- Speech recognition and automated documentation solutions produced more back-end work for staff rather than saving time

Solution

- WNY Urology partnered with Acusis to have the transcriptions of physician dictations entered directly into its EHR system
- WNY Urology's physician workflows were unaffected by the process adjustments
- Acusis allows for WNY Urology to suggest any process improvements or modifications that will improve operations on their end

Results

- WNY Urology's transcription backlog was eliminated within one month
- Turn around time for transcriptions of physician dictation decreased from about five days to 24 hours or less
- Acusis' services provided WNY Urology's physicians, coders, and billers quicker access to transcribed information, improving work productivity

Western New York Urology Associates provides state-of-the-art diagnosis and comprehensive treatment for urological care throughout Western New York, the Southern Tier, and Northern Pennsylvania. With its world-class expertise and next-generation technology, WNY Urology is committed to providing compassionate and quality care in a prompt and friendly manner.

To maintain its high level of care, WNY Urology recognized the need to improve its internal workflows and specifically the turnaround time of insurance claims. With the average medical document turnaround time beyond 24 hours, WNY Urology needed a tool to help optimize this process. For physician preparedness, proper billing, and capturing patient experiences without any errors, a dedicated and focused transcription team can dramatically help a healthcare provider. To improve staff productivity, WNY Urology sought a documentation solution that would compliment its commitment to quality care.

Challenge

"We attempted multiple different methods to keep the clinicians efficient and have documentation done in a timely and economical manner, but we had not found a solution," says Rick Terhaar, President of Maxim Management, a medical services administrative company that WNY Urology has partnered with since 1996 to perform backend office services including billing, credentialing, administrative work, and transcription.

"Typically, companies that do third-party transcription services do not type directly into a medical practice EHR. Acusis' ability to do this is what makes this partnership unique and extremely efficient."

— Rick Terhaar
President at Maxim Management

Automated documentation and speech recognition software were some of the solutions WNY Urology implemented in the past to save time in this process—but these attempts resulted in more work rather than expedite the process. For example, one automated documentation system had branch logic that claimed to produce coherent paragraphs by simply having the physicians check a series of boxes. Unfortunately, this strategy was not able to capture the entire thoughts or messages of the physicians.

Likewise, WNY Urology tried using a speech recognition program to transcribe dictations electronically, but the subsequent editing process took staff members more time compared to traditional transcription. Even using outsourced transcription services failed to generate the desired results because of their inability to enter transcriptions directly into the organization's electronic health record (EHR).

"WNY Urology needed something cost efficient, affordable, and responsive with a commitment to quality and flexibility," says Terhaar. These specifications eventually led WNY Urology to Acusis.

Solution

A medical documentation company, Acusis provides remote clinical documentation with highly trained employees located globally. During a multi-week process, WNY Urology and Acusis were able to create a unique solution for its EHR transcription methodologies. Through this collaboration, Acusis was able to meet all the expectations that WNY

Urology had requested. Most importantly, Acusis' solution allowed its staff to remotely access and directly enter transcriptions into WNY Urology's EHR.

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Currently, Acusis provides WNY Urology with transcription, data entry, telephone message management, and several other administrative tasks. Acusis performs these tasks by logging into WNY Urology's EHR through a secure web connection, listening to the dictation, and typing notes directly into the corresponding patient records. Requests designated as "stat" are performed by a dedicated team of Acusis employees to ensure a rapid turnaround. Furthermore, this workflow did not require WNY Urology to change its current dictation processes.

"Before Acusis, a physician clicked an icon within the EHR under a patient chart to dictate a note, and a few days later, a transcribed note would appear," says Terhaar. "Using Acusis, physicians dictate notes the exact same way. However, turnover time is now remarkably faster, sometimes within 12 hours of dictating."

Results

The partnership with Acusis has improved workflow efficiency and staff productivity. Acusis was able to quickly bring WNY Urology's pre-existing transcription backlog current and establish a more rapid turnaround rate.

"The service performance Acusis provides us is better than expected," says Terhaar. "We predicted Acusis would need three months to work down the backlog, but they acclimated to our EHR so quickly that they achieved this milestone within about a month, with minimal guidance from our team."

Through the changes with Acusis, WNY Urology was also able to improve the turnaround time of claims by 35% and reduce the average rate of full documentation dramatically while maintaining the accuracy WNY Urology expects for its facility. With reduced turnaround times and quicker access to dictation transcriptions, physicians, billers, and coders at WNY Urology are able to work more efficiently with fewer errors.

When approaching its work, Acusis maintains high performance levels by producing daily reports that monitor workflow and turnaround times. Acusis quality controllers periodically review and assess the transcriptions' work to ensure it satisfies pre-defined standards.

"The Acusis staff perform at a level that all should aspire to," says Terhaar. "They are responsive, accountable, flexible, affordable, and committed to quality. All their employees have a desire and eagerness to get the job done and regularly check in to ensure they are keeping us as happy as possible during the process."

When medical documentation is not completed in a timely manner, patient records may be incomplete for long periods of time—potentially resulting in billing discrepancies or even medical errors if clinicians do not have all relevant information at their disposal. By partnering with Acusis, WNY Urology has created a system that reduces transcription turnaround time, improves staff efficiency, and ensures documentation is available in the organization's EHR. +

About Acusis

- Acusis is a medical documentation company based in Pittsburgh, PA, that offers customized medical transcription services.
- With employees located globally, Acusis' is able to offer better turnaround times, very competitive rates, high quality documents, and world-class customer service.
- Acusis' accomplishments are the result of a systematic approach using Six Sigma and Net Promoter Scores as high-lighted processes.
- For more information, please visit: www.acusis.com