

Case Study



Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare is a Catholic, not-for-profit organization with more than 100 sites in Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois. It offers a wide range of healthcare services including world-class heart care, leading baby and mother care, and nationally ranked orthopedic services. Wheaton Franciscan-The Wisconsin Heart Hospital Campus consistently ranks in the top 1% nationwide for inpatient and emergency department care. Wheaton Franciscan-St. Joseph Campus is Magnet™-designated for excellence in nursing services and recognized in the Thomson Reuters annual 100 Top U.S. Hospitals National Benchmarks study. Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare-Elmbrook Memorial is the recipient of two HealthGrades 2009 Specialty Excellence awards for the quality of its general surgery and joint-replacement surgery.

Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare Creates Electronic Health Record, Improves Care Quality

In 2003, Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare committed to a new business model and strategies to optimize clinical outcomes, physician relations and financial performance. The health system partnered with McKesson to implement a broad range of systems in nine hospitals and more than 70 clinics across two states in three years. In combination with process and culture change, Wheaton has successfully transformed its patient-care delivery process. An integrated electronic health record (EHR) solution was the key enabler. The organization has not only connected and standardized care but also improved productivity and quality, enhanced revenue and reduced costs. Over five years, financial benefits are expected to total more than \$70 million. In fact, fifth-year performance suggests a potential operations improvement of \$22.2 million.

Challenges

Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare is a Catholic, not-for-profit organization with more than 100 sites in Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois. The health system is dedicated to delivering quality care through advanced technology, highly trained staff, and superior and compassionate service.

Without standardized clinical processes and an integrated EHR – which makes patient information accessible to authorized caregivers anytime, anywhere – Wheaton would be unable to realize its clinical and financial goals.

“Our goal was to leverage technology across our system to improve the quality of patient care by giving clinicians access to critical information that is accurate, timely and actionable,” says John Oliverio, president and chief executive officer.

Objectives were developed to standardize clinical processes with evidence-based best practice, improve clinical quality and patient safety, engage physicians, and maximize documentation compliance. By identifying the benefits of each component of the EHR and monitoring results, the organization could stay focused on its goals.

“We needed to concentrate on supporting caregivers because that’s our core business,” says Greg Smith, chief information officer. “We wanted to develop a systemwide approach where we could identify best practices and change clinical practice and the associated policies and procedures. Finally, we needed to underpin it with technology to make that new practice concrete.”

At a Glance

Organization

Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare
Wheaton, Ill.

- Health system with 16 hospitals including All Saints, St. Francis, Franklin, Elmbrook Memorial, Wheaton Franciscan-St. Joseph and The Wisconsin Heart Hospital Campuses, Covenant Medical Center, Mercy Hospital and Sartori Memorial Hospital
- 3,500 physicians
- 70 clinics employing 600 physicians
- 23,000 associates

Solution Spotlight

- Horizon Admin-Rx™
- Horizon Business Folder™
- Horizon Clinicals®
- Horizon Emergency Care™
- Horizon Expert Documentation™
- Horizon Expert Orders™
- Horizon Homecare™
- Horizon Meds Manager™
- Horizon Patient Folder™
- Horizon Practice Plus™
- Horizon^{WP} Physician Portal

Wheaton wrote the business case for its EHR four years ago. “Interconnectivity, sharing of information and patient safety were essential to the strategic plan,” says Nancy Weber, chief nursing officer for the Iowa region. The initiative required massive change management from caregivers. Even sites that had pieces of technology already in place were confronted with some level of change as new applications were implemented and old ones redesigned.”

Answers

For more than 15 years, Wheaton and McKesson have enjoyed a solid and trusting partnership. The health system has been a McKesson beta partner and an early adopter of numerous products. When the decision was made to implement an integrated EHR, Wheaton turned to the Horizon Clinicals® solution suite from McKesson.

A staged implementation approach was adopted. Two teams formed to oversee the initiative: the governance team and the EHR operations team. Each included McKesson and Wheaton executives. Additionally, technical, education and communication teams supported the work of the various application teams. A major key to success was significant engagement by physicians and clinical leadership in the design, testing and adoption of the applications.

“The physician engagement model was instrumental,” notes Steve Cardamone, D.O., chief medical officer. “We had very

strong executive physician support, but it was coupled with strong involvement from practicing physicians in the field.”

Enhancing Quality

While some quantitative results take months or years to fully realize, quality measures were realized almost instantaneously. With the deployment of McKesson’s document imaging solution, doctors gained anytime, anywhere electronic access to view, complete and sign off on patient charts.

“Physicians also use that information for real-time decision making,” explains Cardamone.

Not only has physician satisfaction been overwhelmingly positive but also the solution’s tremendous workflow automation has enabled Wheaton to completely transform the staffing structure of its medical records departments.

A vast improvement in the medication administration process came with the implementation of Horizon Admin-Rx™. Nurses use the point-of-care system to electronically scan bar-coded wristbands and medications at the bedside, helping to ensure “five-rights” checking before patients receive medications. Additionally, route of administration is present on all doses, and discontinuation of meds is easy to see with no manual input needed from nurses. Perhaps most important, patients say they “feel safer.”

Patient safety was an overwhelming driver for deploying Wheaton’s

EHR. With McKesson's pharmacy information solution, up-to-date patient allergy information is now shared across all facilities. Additionally, an enterprise workflow process ensures that allergy information is consistently collected and documented.

Patient safety also improved with the rollout of Horizon Expert Orders™. The computerized provider order entry (CPOE) solution replaced paper orders and improved access to patient data and decision-support tools. The use of CPOE also helps to prevent potential medication errors by eliminating illegible orders.

Standardizing Care

Physicians can access CPOE and other solutions through Horizon^{W/P®} Physician Portal, a Web gateway that provides secure access to inpatient and outpatient data across the health system. In addition to vital patient information, clinicians now have a comprehensive, dynamic view of what medications patients have taken, what they are taking and what they will take.

With Horizon Expert Documentation™, Wheaton nurses review each patient's status and document information at the point of care. The solution enables clinicians across multiple disciplines to communicate, evaluate and coordinate the patient's care and progress. Nursing best practices and guidelines are incorporated into the system to standardize care throughout the enterprise. The application also enhances nursing workflow by making it seamless to record assessments and vital signs.

And in the emergency department, Horizon Emergency Care™ enhances collaboration among the care team while enabling a more efficient workflow and patient management.

Finally, in Wheaton physician offices, billing, scheduling and workflow management improved with the implementation of Horizon Practice Plus™. Appointment reminders are now automated, and enhancements have been made in the appointment preregistration process and tracking of physician referrals. The patient itinerary provides staff with information on scheduled follow-up appointments. The number of no-shows has decreased. Co-pays are posted in real-time to use system-generated receipts, improving collections at the point of service.

Results

McKesson technologies have helped Wheaton to create a fully integrated EHR and standardize care enterprisewide. Medication and patient safety have improved. Productivity, quality of care, communication and revenue have also increased while costs have decreased.

"Each component of the solution has held true to its commitments," says Susan Boland, chief operating officer, Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare-All Saints. "And we've seen a clear reduction in expenses."

At a Glance

Organization

Critical Issues

- Compliance with the use of technology
- Patient safety, particularly medication and lab safety
- Clinician satisfaction
- Financial health

Results

- Achieved 97% compliance in scanning medications prior to administration
- Reduced medication errors by 92% overall
- Decreased mislabeled blood specimens by 98%
- Cut patient-identification errors by 20%
- Saved \$310,000 due to the decreased need to redo lab work
- Captured \$100,000 in previously missed revenues
- Improved clinician satisfaction

“With McKesson’s partnership, we’re proud to now have an integrated EHR deployed throughout our system that enhances patient safety, facilitates the exchange of information and reduces overall costs.”

John Oliverio
President and CEO
Wheaton Franciscan
Healthcare

Results through July 2009:

- Reduced the number of orderables through CPOE, dropping from 34,000 to 10,000, a 71% decrease
- Decreased full-time clerical staff needed in medical records as a result of the document imaging solution, creating a 20% savings
- Decreased adverse drug events as a result of warnings and alerts generated by the pharmacy information and medication administration systems. Wheaton now exceeds the 90th percentile in avoiding adverse drug events. Horizon Admin-Rx™ also decreased IV waste by 10%
- Increased physician portal logins by 100% since July 2006. Portal usage also facilitated a reduction in full-time radiology staff and decreased film costs and storage by more than \$2 million
- Improved physician completion of chart deficiencies by more than 40% as a result of electronic signature capability
- Record storage costs decreased by 94% at one site. Supply expenses were reduced by \$105,000 annually

- Improved emergency department performance through better documentation. One site saw a 40% increase in revenue

“A shared commitment to meeting the goals and collaboration between McKesson and Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare ensured our success,” says Oliverio. “With McKesson’s partnership, we’re proud to now have an integrated EHR deployed throughout our system that enhances patient safety, facilitates the exchange of information and reduces overall costs. Our work will continue as we further optimize this important tool.”

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