

Case Study

PROBLEM

Solo practitioner in a small community faces the economic challenges of today's healthcare industry.

PURCHASE FACTORS

The practice noted:

- Flexible documentation methods
- Third-party integration
- Health maintenance reminders

RESULTS

- Reduced staff
- Complete patient records organized in one online location
- Faster reimbursement

Dr. Gervacio Diaz, M.D.

In California's dry, hot Central Valley, Dr. Gervacio Diaz runs a solo practice whose efficiency would make his colleagues on the coast envious. What's his key to success? Since 2005, he has been using Aprima to keep his practice working smoothly.

The Aprima solution provides an electronic health record (EHR) and practice management (PM) system in one application, using one database. The solution allows Dr. Diaz to run an efficient practice, gives him access to pay-for-performance initiatives and helps minimize the impact of declining Medicare reimbursement rates.

BETTER DOCUMENTATION, BETTER CARE

One roadblock to a paperless EHR has been that it required physicians to change the way they document care. Aprima allows physicians such as Dr. Diaz to use the method that is most comfortable for him: handwriting, typing, dictation, voice-recognition and transcription. In Dr. Diaz's case, Aprima enabled him to reduce his staff (eliminating medical records clerks) and eliminate the costs of transcription. More importantly for patient care, Dr. Diaz no longer has to wait for charts to be transcribed or risk losing important information to a garbled recording or illegible handwriting.

"To me, the number one benefit of Aprima is documentation. Patient records are more accurate, more complete and all in one place," Dr. Diaz says. Aprima's optical character recognition tool allows Dr. Diaz's staff to collect vital patient and payer information quickly and easily. For example, the front desk scans insurance and ID cards into the record during registration, eliminating the costly, time-consuming step of copying this information and then manually entering the same data into patient records later.

Another Aprima documentation feature that appealed to Dr. Diaz is its e-prescribing service. This allows him to use a tablet PC to handwrite new prescriptions or quickly write refills. Prescriptions are then sent electronically with just one click.

Since Aprima is integrated with LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics, Dr. Diaz's lab order process has been streamlined. This makes it easier for Dr. Diaz to request labs without writing out separate orders. In addition, his office receives results electronically; these are automatically recorded in the correct patient EHR and can later be viewed as charts and graphs.

FASTER REIMBURSEMENTS

"The number two benefit is quicker reimbursement," says Dr. Diaz. There are several reasons that his practice is paid faster using Aprima. First, the system automatically generates superbills from the chart at the end of a patient visit. As the visit concludes, Dr. Diaz receives a recommended E&M coding summary, diagnosis and procedure information.

"Patients appreciate being able to interact with the Aprima system. I show them the screen as we're reviewing histories, medications, and visuals like a graph of a diabetic patient's A1C levels."

Dr. Gervacio Diaz, M.D.
Internal Medicine
Practice Owner

Practice Profile

DR. GERVACIO DIAZ, M.D.

As a practitioner in Modesto, California, Dr. Gervacio Diaz efficiently runs a solo practice with only a billing manager and two medical assistants to help.

ANNUAL SAVINGS

Transcription costs



Upon approval, a superbill is created. Aprima automatically compares superbill codes with more than 200,000 CMS rules that are built in and updated in real-time. Billing is enhanced because Aprima won't accidentally downcode a visit or forget to bill a service.

Secondly, the Aprima solution offers Dr. Diaz's office staff electronic remittance capabilities. This speeds reimbursement and tracks allowable amounts for patients and insurance. It interfaces with multiple third-party databases and instantly and accurately applies remittances.

PATIENT SATISFACTION

Even Dr. Diaz's patients appreciate Aprima. When Dr. Diaz turns his tablet PC around to display a graph or a lab result, patients are impressed. He explains, "They like being able to see their history and medications, and they like knowing that all their information is in one place." When they see how quickly he can find their history, medications and labs, patients realize that their physician is prepared for the future of medicine.

HEALTH MAINTENANCE REMINDERS AND PQRI

Dr. Diaz and his staff use Aprima's health maintenance reminders to ensure that every patient receives appropriate preventive care, such as foot exams for diabetics. Moreover, Dr. Diaz is able to participate in the federal PQRI program since Aprima relates his documentation of the encounter to the government's criteria.

TIPS FROM THE DOCTOR

For practices considering moving to an EHR, Dr. Diaz advises looking for one system that can meet both operational and clinical needs. Having a single system has eliminated interface issues at his office.

Next, he recommends taking a careful look at the practice's needs and workflows.

Finally, Dr. Diaz advises physicians to have patience and embrace training at the beginning in order to maximize their effectiveness later. "If you try to solve five problems at a time, you won't be as effective as when you solve one problem at a time. There will be a time, while you are learning the system, that you'll be staying late. That's just part of learning and moving through the transition. Later, you'll see the rewards when you don't have to spend time looking for information."



APRIMA IS SPEED

Aprima lets you enter data on a tablet PC by handwriting recognition, keying, transcribing or dictating—whichever way is fastest for each user.

Available through