

TIMELY PATIENT DATA SHARING INCREASES PHYSICIAN SATISFACTION AND PATIENT VOLUMES

Case Study

Clinical Decision Support

The Nebraska Medical Center

With referring physicians spread across five states, The Nebraska Medical Center needed to make patient data available to all of its physicians — anytime and anywhere.

The Nebraska Medical Center (TNMC) is an internationally recognized transplant center that has won multiple quality awards. It is the state's largest healthcare facility and one of the designated trauma centers in eastern Nebraska and western Iowa. TNMC treats patients from all 50 states and 41 countries. Closer to home, it receives patient referrals from physicians spread across five states.

The physicians who refer those patients want ready access to their patients' clinical information, both during the hospital stay and upon their return home. Typically, information was transmitted to the physicians by paper — a process that was much too slow. Frustration with the outdated system was reflected by low physician-satisfaction scores.

COURSE OF ACTION

Realizing this need for improved access to clinical data regardless of geographic location, TNMC selected the *Clinical Xpert™ Navigator* solution from Thomson Reuters. With *Navigator*, TNMC physicians, nurses, and pharmacists can access real-time patient data directly from their mobile devices, such as BlackBerry® and Windows® Mobile smartphones.



After seeing the benefit provided through mobile, real-time access to patient data, TNMC extended its use of *Navigator* to the Web-portal version. So whether on a mobile device, or at any computer with an Internet connection, referring physicians could access their patient's information immediately — from admission to 30 days post-discharge — instead of waiting to receive that information weeks later.

"Delivering discharge information to a remote referring primary physician can be challenging," said Bud Tice, director of physician relations for TNMC. "Giving our referring physicians access to real-time patient information was a big boost to those clinicians. It also had a big impact on their ability to contribute to the care of their patients while those patients were at our facility and also after discharge."

Navigator aggregates information directly from the hospital's disparate health information system components. Data collected includes demographics, laboratory results, medication lists, radiology results, pathology reports, consults, and other transcribed reports. Now, instead of having patient data mailed or faxed to them, physicians can automatically include the patient's reports, labs, notes, and discharge summaries in the patient's record in their office.

THE NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER

Location:
Omaha, NE

Size:
689 beds

Scope and services:
With a reputation for excellence, innovation, and extraordinary patient care, The Nebraska Medical Center (TNMC) has earned numerous distinctions, including Thomson Reuters 100 Top Hospitals®: Performance Improvement Leader recognition. As the teaching hospital for the University of Nebraska Medical Center, it has an international reputation for providing solid organ and bone marrow transplantation services and is well-known nationally and regionally for its oncology, neurology, and cardiology programs.

Solutions:
Clinical Xpert™ Navigator



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"I appreciate the real-time updates and being able to see what is happening with my patient from day to day," said Fred Echternacht, M.D., staff physician and acting medical director for the Glenwood (Iowa) Resource Center. "This allows me to offer more immediate input to the attending physician. If I see a situation developing where historical information might be useful, I can share that more quickly. This is a huge benefit to the patient."

RESULTS

Providing referring physicians with timely and comprehensive patient information has had a significant impact on physician satisfaction. The response to the survey question, "Are you kept informed about the care and treatment of your patient while they are in The Nebraska Medical Center?" indicated a 37.5-percent improvement in referring physician satisfaction. The survey question, "Following the patient's discharge from The Nebraska Medical Center, are you contacted with the findings and recommendations of the attending physician?" elicited a 31.2-percent increase in referring physician satisfaction. In short, satisfaction regarding the *Clinical Xpert* product has been overwhelming.

"No other hospital was doing this type of clinical information outreach at the time," said Tice. "Another benefit was that we were able to enroll physicians and nurses from a single-practice entity into one group. This allowed physicians providing coverage during the evening or on the weekend to see the latest clinical data on patients they may see in the ER, or who return to the office with medical complaints following discharge from our hospital."

Navigator was extended to referring physicians to improve satisfaction levels. While achieving this, the new service has also resulted in a significant increase in patient volume. Recently, *Navigator* access was extended to doctors serving the military community at nearby Offutt Air Force Base. TNMC had previously averaged 40 to 50 visits per month from this community, with a mix of about 40-percent inpatient/60-percent outpatient visits. Since extending *Navigator* access as a key part of an overall outreach program, referrals have grown to a monthly rate of 350 to 400 per month, with a comparable inpatient/outpatient mix.

"Clinical Xpert Navigator helped improve the transmission of clinical patient data from the hospital to the primary care physician... increasing physician satisfaction levels and improving the quality of safety and clinical care."

Bud Tice

Director of Physician Relations
The Nebraska Medical Center

According to Tice, "*Clinical Xpert Navigator* helped improve the transmission of clinical patient data from the hospital to the primary care physician. The referring physicians received accurate and timely patient data, increasing physician-satisfaction levels, and improving the quality of safety and clinical care that those physicians can deliver."

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