

“ OUTSOURCING SUCCESS STORIES ”

A PSYCHIATRY CLINIC'S PREDICAMENT

A psychiatry clinic in Texas was having a very hard time documenting medical reports and records. Most of the reports were handwritten with the legibility of the reports such that even the physicians' own secretaries could not decipher them. Besides the wastage of time on handwritten reports and the expense of photocopying them for the patients and the referring physicians, the clinic was facing problems with delivering these reports on time.

The backlog of reports to be delivered was piling up and was reaching alarming proportions. Auditing of the records was proving to be a huge problem. The clinic administration desired streamlining and moving towards a paperless office to address HIPAA regulations and improve operational efficiency. Also, the stakeholders (patients, referring physicians, government agencies, and billing office) wanted to implement an electronic medical records system, and this led them to reevaluate their existing operational processes.

Cost factor: Having the records transcribed locally by medical transcriptionists was an expensive affair as the average rate charged by American medical transcriptionists was about \$15 an hour. Recruiting in-house transcription staff was a Herculean task as it involved a lot of formalities and overheads besides huge cost implications. It worked out to about 40 cents per line to get it transcribed using in-house staff.

ESL Physician dictation: As some of the physicians were ESL (English second language) dictators, most American medical transcriptionists were not too keen to take on these jobs. This was when the clinic decided to outsource the work to India where the same job could be done at about \$5 an hour.

OUR DIAGNOSIS

After contacting and reviewing many vendors, this clinic approached TranscriptionStar and requested our expertise to streamline their existing infrastructure. TranscriptionStar deputed two of its Outsourcing Consultants to do a comprehensive existing system analysis as follows:

1. Time-to-chart metrics
2. Critical analysis of the need for creating and maintaining electronic patient records
3. Need for web-based document management system
4. Cost benefit analysis of implementing electronic patient records

Our consultants identified many critical areas and their repercussions. Specifically, time-to-chart issues lead to cascading effects onto the entire chain of healthcare, patient care, provider accounts receivable management, thereby leading to poor business performance of the physicians' practice.

Psychiatry specific exclusive transcription team: Our consultants recommended that this job be done by an exclusive team of medical transcriptionists who were well versed with psychiatry and this job was entrusted to them.

THE SOLUTION – Our Prescription

We offered them two alternatives. Firstly, they could use our toll-free dial-in dictation system and start dictating straightaway either via a cell phone/mobile phone or through any landline phone connection. Our technical staff could have this up and running within half an hour of receiving an E-mail request from the client.

Secondly, they could opt to utilize a brand new digital Dictaphone that we would provide to them free of cost. Our representatives showed them how they could log into our secure File Transfer Protocol server and upload their dictations, and how this whole process could be automated with the use of software that would also be provided by us free of cost.

The physicians were also told about our exclusive online physician portal which could be accessed by them wherever they were, using their PDA/Blackberry. Also, they could view, edit (if necessary), and E-sign the transcripts. They could also fax or E-mail the transcripts to their patients or the insurance companies.

After satisfying all their requirements by a one-week free trial of dictation by various doctors, the clinic was delighted to entrust us with the task of handling the entire transcription process starting with capturing the dictation, transcribing the reports, editing them, three-level quality control checks, and delivery of the final error-free transcription reports.

They realized that outsourcing improves time-to-chart (TTC) metrics, that their patients receive treatment sooner, that insurance companies can be billed sooner, and that they themselves receive payment sooner. Moreover, electronic medical record management facilitates easier audit of healthcare facilities which is one of the US government's objectives.

CLIENT FEEDBACK

"TranscriptionStar's team has done a wonderful job. The transition process to electronic patient records was smooth. We are relieved and delighted that it cost much lesser than we feared."

Office Manager xxxx Psychiatry, Houston, Texas.

MORAL OF THE STORY

Staying competitive is the most critical aspect in today's business world. Harnessing technology and global sourcing of talent is the mantra of success--exactly what we achieved with the cooperation and initiation of this xxx Psychiatry Houston Texas client.

With nil-to-minimal investment, a paperless office can be established in a healthcare facility and HIPAA compliance ensured. A transition from a stage where medical reports are handwritten to a stage where processes are done electronically can be done smoothly and without any hassles when there is a dedicated team working on it.

Outsourcing makes good business sense especially if profitability is taken into account since all businesses are primarily run with the motto of staying competitive and profitable. Thomas L. Friedman said that in this twenty-first century, the world is flat. Nowhere is this truer than in the field of medical records transcription where a physician can dictate a report at midnight in the USA, have it transcribed and edited in India an hour or so later, uploaded to his office immediately, and find the report ready for him to sign before he leaves for the day.