Valley Health System

The Challenge:
Moving Toward Standardization

With nine outpatient rehab clinics managed by six different hospitals, you could have described us as working in silos. We knew each other and referred to our clinics as indicated, but the hand-off was not ideal. Some facilities dictated notes, others hand-typed them, and the rest used handwritten documentation. We didn't even share a basic scheduling tool so, we lacked uniformity and our ability to work as one corporate department was cumbersome and inefficient.

Fortunately, one of our colleagues researched Rehab EMR products and recommended Cedaron as their first choice. After we watched the product demos, visited Concord Hospital in New Hampshire, and performed our financial due diligence, we all agreed that Connect met the needs of our outpatient facilities best. Connect promoted standardization of notes, scheduling, and workflow processes while allowing for major customization.

Author

Written by Steve Francis, Sr. Project Manager for the Ambulatory Team and former Director of Rehab Services at SMH and lead developer of Cedaron's Connect product for Valley Health's Outpatient Rehab Services Dept.

ValleyHealth

Cedaron Connect™

Immediate Results

On January 31st, 2012 we went live with Connect in eight of our nine outpatient departments. Within 16 months our ninth department was added.

In general, the transition went very well and showed almost immediate results:

- Patient information flowed appropriately from the hospital's registration system to Connect.

- Therapists learned the system quickly and were able to effectively document and charge for their services using the same platform and workflows.

- Note quality was consistent and definitely improved.

- Correct charge capture was much better, and accounts receivable (AR) days dropped significantly as there were few issues for the billing office to address.

- Denial rates basically disappeared.

The entire Rehab Department across Valley Health System had access to each other's schedules and notes, allowing us to reduce the silo effect and continue to grow and mature as one corporate department, not nine different clinics. For the first time we were able to communicate efficiently and set up a system that promotes best practices company wide.

"Denials basically disappeared."

Cedaron vs. Epic
The Billing and Compliance Difference

About one year after our Connect implementation, Valley Health System decided to switch to a more comprehensive and robust electronic medical record (EMR) platform. We were using a patchwork of different systems tied together by an older McKesson platform. The different components did not communicate well with each other and the need for a truly integrated system became a main focus for Valley Health System. After many months of intense investigation, Valley Health System chose Epic as its vendor. The next step was to decide if any legacy systems needed to be kept and interfaced with Epic. During this time the rehab leadership team compared Epic's outpatient rehab tools against Connect.

When comparing the two, it was evident Connect had the tools for charge editing and note alerts that were critical to our business. In fact, at the time, even Epic felt that by switching to their system, we would take a step back in terms of the billing and documentation notification.

We recommended that the outpatient rehab departments stay with Connect primarily for the unique charge editing and note reminder functionality. A more detailed justification for this recommendation included the following key features and functions unique to Connect:

- Connect automatically loads CMS billing rules on a routine basis.

- Connect edits and verifies charges before interfacing with the hospital's billing system, saving valuable time for the coders and billing staff. The charges were basically scrubbed clean before they went through the hospitals' auditing tools.

- The reminder function allows therapists to easily keep track of when MD progress notes or prescriptions are due, and when certifications will run out.

- The staff also can monitor when insurance authorizations are ending and can work with our clerical staff to avoid coverage issues.

- Connect can place in G-codes and modifiers and verify that charges entered by therapists match the documentation and time requirements.

"We are happy with our decision to stick with Connect, and would definitely do it again. Connect has improved our compliance, standardized our workflows and has promoted a sense of one corporate department throughout Valley Health System."

Epic Integration-
No Pain No Gain

As with most integrations, integrating Epic with Connect posed some challenges, but it was well worth it, and if we had to do it again, we would chose Connect. By staying with Connect for outpatient rehab documentation, we have maintained the billing and reminder functionality as well as many other capabilities. We are happy with our decision to stick with Connect, and would definitely do it again. Connect has improved our compliance, standardized our workflows, and has promoted a sense of one corporate department throughout Valley Health System.

About Valley Health System

Valley Health System is a nonprofit organization serving the healthcare needs of people in and around an area known as the Top of Virginia, as well as parts of West Virginia and Maryland. Headquartered in Winchester, Virginia, Valley Health sysem operates six hospitals with a combined 594 licensed inpatient beds and 166 long-term care beds. The system is supported by more than 5,300 employees, and a medical staff of over 500.

Valley Health System offers both inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services that include physical, occupational and speech therapies. In addition to the routine therapy services that a consumer would expect, we also have specializations in aquatic therapy, cancer rehabilitation, drivability, hand therapy, low vision rehabilitation, pediatric therapy, vestibular rehabilitation, wheelchair seating and positioning, wound care, and women's health services.

About Cedaron

Cedaron Connect delivers rehab documentation, scheduling and outcomes solutions that enable hospital outpatient rehab clinics and large private practices to streamline documentation, improve compliance and enhance patient care. The program was developed by industry luminary Malcom Bond in partnership with the American Physical Therapy Association, American Occupational Therapy Association and other national rehab associations. Connect's high level of customization, integration and coding accuracy, in addition to its interface with leading billing and EHR systems, helps therapists eliminate denials, streamline workflow and increase efficiency.

Founded in 1990, Cedaron Medical, Inc. is a privately held company in Davis, CA that develops software applications for the healthcare industry. They consistently merge cutting edge technical solutions with personalized, responsive customer service. Cedaron products lead the movement towards electronic medical records, driving efficient, evidence-based care delivery, and promoting improved data collection and outcomes measurement.

CEDAR⊙N
calm the storm.

Cedaron Medical Inc.
P.O. Box 2100
Davis, CA 95617
Cedaron.com