



AdvancedMD[®] Customer Success Story



Eye Center Associates
Sulphur Springs, Texas

Practice Profile

Providers:

Two-Location Practice

Practice Specialty:

Ophthalmology/Optomety

Technology Profile:

Utilizes the AdvancedMD Practice Management system in a web-based environment for its two locations. Looking to upgrade to the AdvancedMD Electronic Health Record (EHR).

Practice Highlights:

Eye Center Associates is a two-location practice that has been meeting the vision needs of patients in east Texas since 1980 and southeast Oklahoma since 1999.

Abstract:

Eye Center Associates came to AdvancedMD because their existing client/server application had become outdated and, as a clinic in rural locations (Sulphur Springs, TX, and Idabel, OK), finding IT specialists to maintain its client/server infrastructure had always been a challenge. Patient billing was a manual and time-consuming process and claims rejections were higher than the practice wanted due to the lack of a claims scrubbing application. Like most practices, the office experienced a high number of calls between the practice and various pharmacies in support of initial prescriptions and refills. As a result, the practice sought a Web-based application that could deliver a high degree of automation, across multiple practice management areas, to the practice. The practice wanted a solution that could easily support multiple locations, yet enable a high degree of customization to support the unique requirements of each physician. After reviewing several options, the practice determined AdvancedMD provided the best solution to meet its needs.

Rural, Multi-Location Eye Care Practice Moves from a Manual to a Highly Automated, Web-Based Practice Management Solution

The Problem

While Eye Center Associates had been on a client/server application since the 1980s, the practice knew it was going to require new software because its software vendor had announced it was not going to move forward on new EDI standards required to continue to support electronic claims submission. The practice wanted to continue electronic claims processing and automated patient billing, yet wanted a system that could provide a high degree of customization to support the specific needs of each physician.

“Our biggest problem was patient billing,” said Zella White, practice administrator, Eye Center Associates. “We were doing it all manually and stuffing envelopes.

Because of its rural locations, another selection requirement was a Web-based application, as this would help reduce the need for IT support at the practice’s two locations.

The AdvancedMD Solution

The Eye Center initially reviewed three different vendors and quickly narrowed it down to two. “AdvancedMD seemed more stable and more likely to be around for the long term, plus the company was open to client input. The other vendor seemed

more like a one-size-fits-all offering,” said White. The ability to customize the workflow to meet the specific needs of each physician, yet process claims from a centralized, common system was a major factor in the selection process.

Continued on back →



The AdvancedMD Solution *Continued*

The implementation process took about three weeks. "AdvancedMD has an awesome staff. It has been a wonderful group to work with. Additionally, the implementation manager I worked with was familiar with my specialty, which probably helped speed things up," noted White.

The Outcome

Utilizing the AdvancedMD Software-as-a-Service or SaaS-based practice optimization applications has resulted in numerous improvements in automation, efficiency and cash flow. "As a rural-based practice, it's nice not to have to worry about hardware issues and finding IT support," stated White.

More recently, with the implementation of the web-based performance improvement release in September 2009, White reported the Eye Center offices had experienced a "dramatic improvement" in application speed. "It's been a great enhancement," she added. (Her offices connect to the Internet via cable modem in Texas and DSL in Oklahoma.)

Electronic Claims Management

The claims scrubbing and submission engine has increased accuracy and decreased Eye Center's claims rejection rate down to less than one percent. Overall, she estimated the practice has been able to reduce overtime and staff due to the efficiencies gained from electronic claims and remittance management.

Another aspect of the AdvancedMD software enables the practice to improve claims processing efficiencies through an "episode of care". For example, when a patient makes an appointment to get glasses and wants to use a vision plan instead of medical coverage, the practice can setup an "episode", through transac-

tion entry, which links this service to the vision plan when the appointment is made. "Before we utilized this feature, we inadvertently would submit a claim to a medical carrier when it was supposed to go to a vision plan provider. There just wasn't a way to catch that mistake. Then we would end up going back and forth between the two carriers with reimbursement and refund issues," said White. Now the practice can submit a claim to the right provider the first time and avoid such refund issues.

Patient Billing

AdvancedMD enables the practice to handle real-time entry of patient encounters, which, in turn, enables the system to automatically calculate carrier payments based on fee schedules maintained in the system. As a result, Eye Center Associates is able to collect more patient payments at the time of check-out, dramatically simplifying patient billing.

"The AdvancedMD system can be set up to bill on a 20- or 30-day cycle, based on financial class," said White. "We can set up rules about how many and how often statements go to each patient as well as when to send out automatically triggered collection letters when necessary. With these tools, we are able to manage accounts receivables much more tightly than ever before."

Improved Document Management
Another valuable feature of the

AdvancedMD solution is improved document management capabilities. The tool has given Eye Center Associates the ability to handle patient correspondence and physician referral letters to primary care physicians more efficiently. "If a patient misses an appointment or fails to make a follow-up appointment, we use the 'recall' feature to send them an automated reminder letter. I think this feature really improves patient compliance," said White.

ePrescribing

Getting prescriptions filled was a time-consuming effort for Eye Center before they started utilizing AdvancedMD. Handwritten prescriptions created numerous phone calls and questions because the pharmacy could not read the doctor's handwriting or the drug was not covered by the patient's formulary. Additionally, patients would lose their prescription slips. The AdvancedMD ePrescribing feature eliminates these inefficiencies by automating the prescription filing process between the practice and the pharmacy. "This feature has cut our pharmacy calls by 95 percent. It's now rare for us to even get a call," observed White. "We also feel that patient compliance is better because patients are more likely to pick up the prescription if it's already been sent to the pharmacy and they don't have to physically drop it off and wait. Overall, it's a much better approach."

Intuitive User Interface

One of the best things about AdvancedMD, according to White, is how easy it is to train someone on the application. "It's not complicated," said White, who is responsible for staff training. She uses the online videos for initial training and then reviews the high points with the employee. "It's also a great documentation tool if you have an unemployment claim. You can prove that your office offers adequate training for the job. Furthermore, all training is consistent from one employee to the next."

Future Plans for EHR

Eye Center Associates plans to fully implement Electronic Health Record (EHR) technology through AdvancedMD in 2010. "We have been doing electronic documentation with Word document templates within AdvancedMD, but we plan to move to [AdvancedMD's] EHR this year," said White. "AdvancedMD has moved forward the way I hoped they would when we first started working with them. We have fully utilized the system's features. I don't think there is any functionality we haven't utilized at some point. It has become a valuable tool for us. I see us being with AdvancedMD for the long haul."