

Multidisciplinary Clinic has Several Departments all Wanting the Patient Files at the Same Time

Dr. Aaron Pick, DC

19 staff members: 2 DC's, MD, PT, ATC, LMT, PA and support staff
105 patients seen daily

Problem

Dr. Pick practices in a multidisciplinary clinic with five other providers. Scheduling patients to see different providers on the same day and keeping track of patient charts was becoming increasingly difficult. Thus, defeating the intent of a multidisciplinary clinic to easily accommodate patients in one visit and in one locale.

The multidisciplinary clinic was also missing out on potential income from patients who were not aware of additional services provided by the clinic. Some longtime patients had no idea they had a physical therapist on staff or provided services such as natural hormone therapy for women. Aside from wall posters, handouts and provider's treatment and exercise plans, patient education and marketing were not automatically integrated into their internal system.

Current Situation

Each provider worked in their department and had his or her own schedule. Integrating patient visits often resulted in confusion and frustration about who had which patient record. Plus, coordination of seeing the progress of care in one department was often unavailable in real time and had to wait another day for a staff meeting.

Due to time constraints, patient education consisted of basic instruction with minimal demonstration and there were no additional marketing plans to increase referrals or promote additional services. The providers knew it was more economical to cultivate the existing patient base for interdepartmental referrals and promote other services from within, but did not have the time or system to inform all their patients.

Desired Situation

Dr. Pick needed an efficient scheduler that could accommodate multiple providers with appointments in multiple departments. He wanted a system that would increase efficiencies by automatically integrating patient visits with patient education that promotes awareness of other diagnostic and treatment services provided in the clinic. Through patient education, he wanted to increase patient referrals and requests for other services. Dr. Pick's practice also needed a system that would improve interdepartmental communication and allow multiple providers to access patient records at the same time.

Solution

Dr. Pick installed Future Health's, Virtual Office Suite in 2005 with the Scheduler, Virtual Document Storage, and Video Patient Education components. The Scheduler has improved the office flow of patients through better efficiency and staff control by reducing bottlenecks and increasing capacity. The electronic health records eliminated the need time required for providers to track down patient records. Records are instead, accessible in 3 seconds from any computer by all authorized providers. Now, each provider has virtual access to patient records including X-rays, specialist's reports, and daily documentation.

Staff members can quickly schedule each provider's patients on the same screen. The easy to use, color-coded, customizable options give staff members the ability to determine, at a glance, who is available and when. Patient lists and patient insurance information is located on one screen for easy retrieval and smooth checkout. In addition, the tool bar simplifies scheduling of future appointments and the calendar tracks reasons for changed or missed appointments for follow-up and rescheduling. Doctors are back in control, knowing a patient's cancellation history and treatment compliance pattern. Plus, patients who don't show are automatically entered on the rescheduled list.

With the Video Patient Education and Internal Marketing component integrated into the Scheduler, the three to five minutes of waiting time for patients is now turned into a valuable educational opportunity. Or, if the patient is lying on a therapy table receiving modalities, they get greater value during those 8-10 minutes. They now are watching videos that are diagnosis and demographic specific. Dr. Pick and the other providers now have more one-on-one time with the patients or to see other patients, and can communicate more effectively with them. Due to watching the information, patients have a basic understanding of their condition and treatment options, plus they are aware of other services offered in the clinic. Additionally, the videos that the patients watch are automatically documented in the patient's record as patient education.

The Video Patient Educator has also increased referrals and is now an important marketing element. Patients are asked by the video in a non-threatening manner to tell others about their beneficial experience at the clinic and are also told about additional health options offered, such as acupuncture or massage therapy. The Virtual Office Suite automatically selects the appropriate video based on the patient's diagnosis and demographics and plays it for them without any staff having to cue up a video. It's all automatic! Dr. Pick's and the other provider's services are marketed to the patients without having to ask for a referral, the video did it for them.

"I am truly impressed by the efficiencies our clinic has experienced since we added the Virtual Office Suite to our

system. In just a little over six months, we have increased referrals by 70% and have added \$15,000 in additional services. We're seeing our secondary profit centers increase with the VOS."