WESTMED Medical Group:

Leveraging Enterprise Content Management

WESTMED Medical Group, a physician-owned and managed multi-specialty group practice founded in 1996 and based in Purchase, NY, has been an early adopter of health IT, implementing its GE electronic medical record (EMR) system and Hyland Software's OnBase enterprise content management (ECM) system in 2002. Led by President and CEO Simeon Schwartz, MD, and Medical Director Barney Newman, MD, the visionary medical group developed a strategy to completely move from paper to electronic records, eschewing the common practice of having both an EMR and paper record. OnBase is helping WESTMED to achieve its paperless vision in the clinical environment, but the ECM solution is also enabling the management of all forms of content and streamlining of paperless processes across departments, thereby delivering greater value to the entire organization.

First use case of ECM: Delivering the true record of the patient

When WESTMED began rolling out its EHR, the organization's goal after the go-live of each clinical department was to not add any more paper to the paper record, according to Merin Joseph, CIO, of WESTMED Practice Partners, the management services company formed in 2011 to run the medical group's back-office operations and to serve other medical groups as well. "We had to immediately expand to deliver quality and efficiencies our customer expected," she said.

In 2002, WESTMED had grown to 50 physicians and with only 25 full-time employees in its medical records department and charts' dating back 20 to 30 years, scanning every patient record into the EMR system was costly and impractical. OnBase was deployed to scan pertinent information into its central repository, which then allowed WedMed to efficiently and effectively retrieve whatever information was requested. The organization also benefited from the ability to collaborate with Hyland to customize its ECM solution to meet its needs. In 2005, the company worked with Hyland to create a release-of-information (ROI) module. Currently medical records has 14 full-time employees for 250 physicians.

"We made OnBase our true record of the patient," Joseph said. WESTMED can now fulfill a ROI request within 24 hours. In addition, per New York state law, healthcare providers can charge insurance companies 75 cents per page for requested patient

information. However, previously generating the patient record and burning it to a CD was time- and resource-intensive. With a streamlined process now in place, WESTMED transformed its medical records department into a profit center. "The biggest impact [of OnBase] was definitely in medical records," Joseph said.

Image capture and storage through a seamless interface

One of the difficulties WESTMED faced was the lack of integration between the EMR and its other health IT systems, such as ultrasound imaging. Despite working with an ultrasound system vendor to create an EMR interface, WESTMED discovered that the volume of meta data alone made the project too complicated and unwieldy. In addition, there was no place within the EMR system to store the images.

In 2011, WESTMED deployed OnBase to integrate with ultrasound systems, capture images and videos, generate reports from the data and download the information into patients' records all within the EMR. With OnBase, clinicians review images and their discrete data, conduct their reporting and make recommendations with only a few clicks, streamlining workflow processes, according to Joseph. Now, 28 OBGYNs coordinate, discuss diagnosis and review reports, images and data using OnBase, helping to improve care coordination and, consequently, patient care.

WESTMED further collaborated with Hyland Software to leverage OnBase for its gastrointestinal department, allowing staff to store colonoscopies and endoscopies images in a central repository and allow for report writing. They planned to create similar solutions for ophthalmology, cardiology, dermatology and plastic surgery in the near future.

In another effort to integrate systems and enable more efficient workflows, OnBase sends a charge file back into the revenue cycle management (RCM) system once the clinician signs off. As a result, WESTMED now produces quality reports and maintains high physician satisfaction because they now spend less time writing and sending reports.

"The biggest impact [of OnBase] was definitely in medical records."

Merin Joseph

From a clinical solution to enterprise-wide

One of the primary reasons WESTMED selected OnBase was to extend its capabilities beyond clinical departments to other areas of the organization, according to Joseph. "When you look at back-end operations of medical groups there is so much paper involved," she said.

In RCM, multiple payers submit volumes of explanation of benefits (EOB) documents that need to be stored and easily retrieved. Prioritizing by volume of paper, WESTMED deployed OnBase in RCM first. By scanning EOBs, finance staff search and conduct research in a more streamlined fashion. "We started scanning paper records into OnBase, and it became a repository to be able to find any piece of paper," Joseph said.

Managing finance reporting to process control

In May 2012, WESTMED implemented the OnBase Accelerated Financial Reporting Management (AFRM) solution to manage its accounting month-end close processes. AFRM connects documents, procedures and activities related to the financial close, and provides real-time management of processes and workflows. Not only did the medical group gain greater visibility into its financial processes, AFRM also reduced the steps involved in the monthly close process. That, in turn, cut down the process of closing out the month from 15 days to 10 days, according to Joseph.

Afterward, the medical group realized that having greater visibility into other areas of the organization would enable it to apply proper process controls to meet regulatory compliance, heighten efficiency and reduce costs. As a result, WESTMED Practice Partners is working on a new OnBase implementation for the medical group and managed services company. The goal is to move all of the group's policies and procedures from Microsoft SharePoint® to OnBase via OnBase Case Manager, which allows organizations to view and track both information and interactions of a specific business process.

Building toward the greater goal

WESTMED's numerous health IT initiatives work toward the company's overall goal of centralizing data and limiting the number of vendors used to do so. "We want to get solutions under the same umbrella," Joseph said. Given that WESTMED did not want to buy disparate systems to compensate for the integration issues of its EMR, the medical group is building those solutions with Hyland Software.

To that end, Hyland Software has helped WESTMED create user-friendly templates that nontechnical, departmental managers can administer. Changes can be made directly to the template instead of waiting a few product cycles for the desired functionality, which not only saves time but also enables departmental IT systems to be more nimble.

"There are so many capabilities [within OnBase] out there that we don't even know about," Joseph said. "Hyland has already thought through how to make things happen." Expanding its OnBase solution will certainly help WESTMED Medical Group meet the needs of its more than 250 physicians and 1,200 employees. The medical group's expanding solution set, powered by OnBase, will also provide ongoing support for its goals as it grows by approximately 20 percent every year.

About the Hyland Software solution, OnBase
One of the largest independent software vendors in the world of enterprise content management (ECM). Hyland Software is the developer of OnBase. An award-winning suite of document management and content management solutions. OnBase has a proven record of solving problems resulting from time consuming, costly and error plagued manual tasks. Today, people at more than 10,000 organizations both large and small in 67 countries have the time to do the things that really add value thanks to OnBase. Available on-premises or as software as a service (SaaS), OnBase installs quickly, cost effectively and is designed to grow with organizations.

For more information, visit **www.Hyland.com/Healthcare** or call 1-888-495-2638 to set up an appointment.