

## Case Study

### Practicing Medicine Better and Faster From Day One: Installing MedcomSoft Record at Burwell Family Medicine

#### Customer:

Dr. David Burwell is in solo family practice in Altoona, Pennsylvania. His practice employs a physician's assistant, two medical assistants and a front office specialist. Operating four days a week, they see approximately 20 patients per day. Dr. Burwell opened his practice in 2004, directly from residency.

#### Challenge:

"I chose family medicine because of the challenge it presents, the diversity of patients and diversity of diagnoses that I see," says Dr. Burwell. He chose private practice rather than joining a large group practice for a variety of reasons as well, not the least of which was his desire to implement an EHR.

From the beginning, Dr. Burwell planned to implement an EHR and build his practice's workflows around it in order to maximize efficiency. "I saw a great deal of wasted time and effort during my residency training, which showed me first hand the necessity of an EHR. The staff required to maintain records, process billing and perform all the work associated with paper charts—it's outrageous. Having an EHR eliminates the need for entire departments that exist to organize data."

Dr. Burwell had no intention of building waste into his practice. Rather, "I wanted a small, streamlined, highly efficient staff, supported by a state-of-the-art EHR."

#### Solution:

"If you are starting a practice," Dr. Burwell advises, "you don't want to buy an EHR, train yourself and your staff on it, and then have to replace it with a better system in a few years." Thus, Dr. Burwell's first criterion was that his EHR be scalable to the future of medicine.

He investigated several of the best-known systems and quickly understood the difference between code-based and text-based EHRs. "Products that are text-based, and to my mind any system that does not use Medcin® as its nomenclature, will require updating, if not complete replacement, in order to conform with the direction that medicine is going." Medcin is a numerically codified "language" of over 280,000 clinical terms developed by hundreds of physicians in order to standardize and streamline patient charting. Under continual development for nearly three decades, Medcin is a living language that is added to regularly.



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“MedcomSoft was so much more advanced than other systems, and that reflects a corporate philosophy,” says Dr. Burwell. “MedcomSoft thinks two steps ahead. They understand the direction medicine is going, and they built Record with the future in mind.”

## Results:

“I wanted efficiency in my practice,” says Dr. Burwell, “and that is what I have. I am operating with at least one and one-half fewer full time equivalent (FTE) employees than I would be if I were paper based. When you factor in billing, it’s probably closer to two FTEs. With Record, I handle the majority of the billing myself. I do all coding and code matching, then it goes off to another staffer for processing.”

An EHR is at root a tool to help doctors communicate better. MedcomSoft Record has taken this idea to the next level. Record allows Dr. Burwell to communicate so effectively, he rarely has to leave the exam room. As a family practice doctor, he often treats members of the same family. “Many times I’ll have patients ask about other family members, for example a mom will say--that medicine that you gave little Jimmy worked well, what was it called? Or I’ll be asked by concerned spouses the cholesterol or triglyceride levels of their husband or wife, and I can tell them without having to interrupt the front office staff to track down a chart,” says Dr. Burwell.

“It’s in the nature of family practice that during an appointment for one child, his mother will ask me to look at the rash on his sister’s elbows, and will I give her something for the itching. These amount to unscheduled visits, and even under these circumstances I don’t have to leave the exam room.” Instead, if Dr. Burwell needs information not in the chart, perhaps a specialist’s test result, he will use Record’s instant messaging (IM) feature to chat with his staff. “I’ll IM my staff, and they will get it for me. The results will go directly into MedcomSoft Record, while I’m still with the patient. That kind of streamlined efficiency is what I’d hoped we could accomplish with the right EHR.”

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Record also facilitates improved patient care. “Using MedcomSoft Record has helped me be a better physician, without a doubt,” says Dr. Burwell. “I never have to question the dosage of a medication, the last time I ran a certain test, or what a patient’s last EKG looked like. I have it in the chart. The accessibility to information this way is fantastic.”

Dr. Burwell has used the system since 2004, and having watched it evolve over the years, he would not hesitate to recommend it to other providers. “I feel more confident now than I did when I purchased the system that I am ready for the future of medicine, whatever that may be.”

## About MedcomSoft Inc.

MedcomSoft® is an innovative developer of software solutions that are changing the way the healthcare industry captures, manages and exchanges patient information. Through its powerful and flexible suite of products, MedcomSoft provides important tools that enable healthcare professionals to fully automate their practices and to efficiently connect to their pharmacies, laboratories, medical suppliers and insurance providers. [www.medcomsoft.com](http://www.medcomsoft.com)