

Case Study

An EMR “As Close To Perfect as Can Be”: Installing MedcomSoft Record at a Hematology/Oncology Practice

Customer:

Dr. Amer Rassam founded the Tallahassee Cancer Institute in 2005, after many years of specialty practice in hematology/oncology. The Institute employs a nurse, a medical assistant, and an office manager, and sees an average of 60 patients per week.

Challenge:

Dr. Rassam had been using an online practice management tool since he'd opened his practice, but he was not satisfied with its results. “The system did not give us the coding support we needed. Too many claims were being rejected because we made mistakes with ICD-9 codes, for example.”

Dr. Rassam knew he needed a practice management system that was integrated with an electronic medical record (EMR), and that would be suitable for his hematology/oncology practice. “I was looking for a complete system, one as ideal as possible out of the box, so I went through six months of elaborate and often tedious research, and participated in a number of demos before finding MedcomSoft Record.”

While impressed with the system's capabilities and functionality, Dr. Rassam did not select it right away. “I was reluctant because the software was missing one element that was crucial to me: a spell check function. When I told my MedcomSoft representative that although I liked Record better, I was considering another system that had a spell checker, within two weeks MedcomSoft added that function. This, to me, was truly impressive,” says Dr. Rassam. “MedcomSoft not only listens to their users, but they improve the software based on our feedback.”

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Dr. Rassam continues, “After I had decided to purchase the system, I'd mentioned another issue — one that was rather minor, having to do with the color of certain text on the chart's narrative page — in 20 days, MedcomSoft had upgraded Record so that I could choose any color for that text.” In less than one month, “two improvements were made because of my comments,” says Dr. Rassam. “It was clear to me that MedcomSoft was the right company, and their support would be outstanding.”

Solution:

According to Dr. Rassam, “There is no 100% perfect software for any physician. But compared to other EMRs currently on the market, MedcomSoft Record is as perfect as can be. Any doctor will find tremendous depth in this software. For example, I rely on body surface area calculations to determine chemotherapy dosages. MedcomSoft went so far as to include a body surface area calculator, which is used in rather few specialties.”

MedcomSoft Record includes a vast selection of encounter forms, and “many wonderful forms designed specifically for hematology and oncology visits — something I could not find in a number of major software vendors.” Further, Record allowed Dr. Rassam to integrate his chemotherapy regimen tables into his encounter forms, “which has helped me immensely,” he says.

MedcomSoft Record’s fully customizable forms enable users to chart at the click of a button or tap of a stylus. Results are stored in a numerically codified clinical nomenclature, Medcin. “The Medcin database is extremely detailed. I go into very specific detail in my charting, and I use specialized terms and techniques. Medcin contains all of the granular elements for the diagnoses I see. For example, all of the cytogenetic analysis and flow cytometry that is required for a hematology diagnosis is in the database. Now, every time I order a CT scan or an MRI of a specific region, I find it in Medcin. When I have a diagnosis that is very rare, I find it in Medcin. It is a very complete database, and I discover more of its depth the longer I use the system,” says Dr. Rassam.

What is Medcin?

A hierarchical, numerically codified nomenclature designed to facilitate the capture of qualitative and quantitative medical data at the point of care, Medcin has been under development for more than 25 years. Featuring 280,000 discrete terms, Medcin reflects the clinical experiences of scores of physicians from institutions such as Johns Hopkins, Cornell, Harvard, and others. Each Medcin term is linked to clinically related terms, resulting in a comprehensive web of more than 73 million SOAP links, useful for decision support and intelligent prompting.

Results:

Dr. Rassam credits MedcomSoft Record with improving the way he practices medicine. “I am more accurate in my charting, and I chart more quickly. A new patient may take 15 minutes and an existing patient may take five, which is a big improvement. This allows me to spend more quality time with each patient, and it saves me the cost of dictation. I have colleagues who are paying more than \$10,000 a year in dictation fees, which is a great deal of money.”

Using MedcomSoft Record, the practice has seen rejected claims taper significantly. “We are seeing almost no rejections now. Why is this? It is because MedcomSoft Record checks compliance, and prompts us if our ICD-9 or CPT codes might be rejected. Now, we can go back through the note, find the proper code, and see that it really is more appropriate.”

The practice had also been under billing. “This was something I discovered after we implemented Record. Because I am charting in Medcin, after doing a complete review and physical exam, the system automatically queries the CMS algorithms and gives me a precisely accurate code, fully supported by the note,” says Dr. Rassam. Dr. Rassam has taken billing in-house. “The office manager does all the billing herself. Whenever we have a question, MedcomSoft is available and very responsive”, says Dr. Rassam.

“We are really very satisfied,” says Dr. Rassam. “If my colleagues are considering a move to an EMR, selecting MedcomSoft Record will make their lives easier.”

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