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Customer Testimonial – Cornerstone Family Practice

About Cornerstone Family Practice

Dara Welborn, M.D., established her practice, Cornerstone Family Practice, near her hometown of Las Vegas, Nevada in January 2006. A lean, yet efficient practice specializing in a holistic health approach, Cornerstone is home to Dr. Welborn, one licensed physician’s assistant, a general surgeon sharing space and five additional full-time employees caring for its patients.

Being Different, Being Better

Cornerstone is quite unique, not only in its use of electronic medical records (EMR) but also in the handling of its patients. Most primary care physicians spend an average of just seven to nine minutes with a patient. With that short timeline, they can address only the episodic situation, rather than any underlying conditions. Welborn is determined to improve that inherent medical challenge by staying focused on her patient’s overall health and prevention, and Physician’s Trust gives her the tools to do just that.

With close to five years of private practice expertise under her belt and an “I can do better” approach, Dr. Welborn set up her own private practice in Henderson, Nevada with one goal in mind – do everything above and beyond the standard of care. That meant making each individual patient a priority, from getting to know their complete medical history and spending quality one-on-one time hearing about health issues and concerns, to making sure they were taking proper advantage of their insurance coverage to get the care they needed.

Dr. Welborn knew she would need a comprehensive method to obtain and maintain the level of information required to provide this kind of personal medical care and service. Not wanting to get bogged down in patient paperwork and insurance processing, Welborn decided a paperless office was the only way to conduct business right from the get-go.

The Power of Information

In healthcare, everything begins and ends with the chart. Physicians make care decisions based on information stored in the chart – details such as a patient’s description of an illness, test results, historical and social information on that patient, family history, and more. Dr. Welborn was determined to improve the care of her patients through better access to information, proactive alerts and health maintenance reminders.

“Information is the lifeblood of any practice,” emphasized Dr. Welborn. “I wanted to make sure that my patients’ charts were accurate and comprehensive at any given moment. Paper charts are cumbersome and leave too much room for error. Electronic charts give me the tools and assurance I need to make the most relevant diagnosis and recommend the best corresponding treatment for my patients.”

Additionally, with electronic charts she wouldn't need a chart room and instead could put that space to better use as a triage room where vitals, blood pressure and pulse oximetry would automatically feed into the EMR system. So rather than wasting space on expensive "medical arts," she would use it to generate revenue.

After investigating multiple EMR products, Physician's Trust was the most responsive to Welborn's needs. From the start she had the company's full attention, and felt confident and comfortable that this company was going to meet her needs and be quick to respond when she had an issue. And even before opening her new office doors, the benefits of the Physician's Trust solution were apparent.

What Migration Time?

As anyone's who has dealt with construction knows, deadlines tend to slip and Dr. Welborn's office was no exception. From general contractor issues to city approvals, the completion date was postponed about 90 days. It was frustrating but proved useful as well, providing ample time to not only transition existing paper charts to electronic charts, but to also get the staff thoroughly trained.

During construction, the Physician's Trust team stayed on its original implementation schedule and worked to get Dr. Welborn's team up and running smoothly well before the office would open. By setting up a wireless training environment in her IT consultant's office, the Physician's Trust team created and installed the patient database, and then trained the doctor and her staff hands-on for five days.

When construction was complete, Physician's Trust helped move all the hardware, as well as the newly-created database, into the new practice. With the database completed in training, Cornerstone opened its doors with an electronic system already in place.

"I didn't want any paper charts; I just wanted to do it clean from Day One," said Wellborn. "The construction delays ended up being a terrific benefit – I guess everything happens for a reason."

Run a Tight Ship

With two doctors, a full-time physician's assistant and five additional staff members, Dr. Wellborn is running her practice with about half the national average of employees typically found at similar practices. She credits that easily to going electronic. The staff's familiarity with the system and its ease of use are significantly streamlining the practice, allowing the doctor to spend more quality time with each individual patient.

A full-time medical assistant with scribing duties affords even greater efficiency. The nurse can physically access pre-ordained templates so that when Dr. Welborn provides a diagnosis, it can be entered on the spot, eliminating much of the data entry previously required by the doctor. And with the EMR solution's templates, macros and clinical decision support, coding is much more accurate than in a paper chart-based office where physicians generally under-code because they do not document everything they do in a visit. With EMR, documentation is much easier and can be coded appropriately for each patient visit, providing an increase in revenue and a much clearer snapshot of the patient's health and treatment.

Lab tests, prescriptions and referrals are all ordered, documented and handled in real-time, taking patient care to a whole new level of efficiency and excellence.

With labs interfaced into the EMR solution, orders and subsequent results are now electronic and instantaneous, greatly enhancing the turnaround time to communicate results (and treatment, if necessary) to the patient. This is all managed via the "orders management" section of the EMR which tracks the ordered labs throughout the process so nothing falls through the cracks.

As a small, hands-on practice, Welborn also recognized the importance of having remote access to her patient charts. With EMR she would be able to access all the information on any given patient no matter where she was and especially in case of an emergency. Prescription refills are also managed electronically, allowing for “one click” approval on refills, drug to drug interaction checking, and a view of the patient’s refill history.

The Patients’ Perspective

At first, patients found it amusing to see Dr. Welborn’s and her staff walking around the office with laptops. But thanks to the technology, they’ve spent more time with the doctor, and have greater confidence and involvement in their care. She is taking that relationship a step further by building a web presence that will further automate the practice workflow and eventually provide her patients access to their information.

“I think the key for this primary care office is being able to focus on patient relationships as our foundation of care,” added Wellborn. “We absolutely need to be the front runners and now we have a way to make that happen – we’re here to help you, we’re here to take care of you. And we want you to play an active role along with us.”

In addition to helping her meet her practice’s goal to put patients first, Dr. Welborn has been able to make a more personal commitment to her family – work-life balance has now become a reality. She can routinely leave the office when it closes, enjoy the evening with her family and log back onto the system later to sign off on documents or approve RX refills. EMR has improved her own quality of life by giving her the freedom to be more than a doctor.

About Physician’s Trust

Physician’s Trust, Inc was founded on the premise that technology alone is not the answer. Physicians desire a turn key solution to manage the complexity of adopting Healthcare Information Technology. A true partner will provide the people and the processes to ensure success and maximize the return on investment. The Partnership is ongoing, evolving as the practice evolves and embraces change.

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