



Providing the Bridge to Greater Efficiency and EMR



SOLUTIONS/SERVICES:

- Document design and conversion
- Implementation services
- SMARTworks® Clinical Enterprise:
 - Patient LinkUp® Enterprise
 - FormsOnDemand Library
 - HL-7 Receiver
- Patient ID wristbands and labels

RESULTS:

- Forms reduced from 1000 to 550
- Eliminated inventories of 450 forms
- 75% of forms now printed on demand
- Standardized, bar-coded forms are EMR-ready
- Simplified registration
- Easier management of patient charts
- Version control problems eliminated
- Improved patient ID and safety

Beatrice Community Hospital & Health Center is a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital in Southeastern Nebraska. Serving patients from more than 150 communities in Nebraska and northern Kansas, this Critical Access Hospital (CAH) has long been dedicated to providing high quality, compassionate, cost-effective care. Now, it is building on that tradition with state-of-the-art technology to improve the delivery of care.

Director of Information Systems Kurt Vogel has a vision for Beatrice. He wants to create a fully electronic health information management system that will facilitate more efficient flow of patient information throughout the hospital and its clinics and, ultimately, to be able to share data with physician-based clinics and the larger hospitals in Lincoln to which they refer patients.

“Standard Register made a huge contribution ... everything is consistent and EMR-ready.”



– Kurt Vogel, Director of Information Systems

The Challenges



In planning for the transition, Vogel knew it would take some work. They wouldn't be moving from paper to paperless overnight. There was a proliferation of clinical forms, difficulties in controlling versions and questions about how to manage both paper and electronic documents as they migrated to Electronic Medical Records (EMR), using McKesson's Paragon solution.

“Standard Register has also given us a better way to identify at-risk patients.”

– Jan Rains, Nurse Manager
Medical-Surgical Unit



“Standard Register made a huge contribution,” Vogel said. “They brought together all of our people, and started reviewing and standardizing forms. We were amazed by all the versions — they identified close to 1,000 forms and consolidated them to 550 before converting them to an electronic format. Now everything is consistent and EMR-ready.”

A New Way to Operate

Standard Register's technology is playing a vital role in the hospital's EMR transition, too. The majority of medical records that go into the patient's chart are now available electronically from SMARTworks® Clinical Enterprise. So there's never a question of finding the most current version. As the Emergency Department (ED) or unit nurses admit patients, the system automatically generates patient kits as part of the process, printing patient demographic information and bar codes directly on face sheets, consents, wristbands, labels and other forms. Then at any time during a patient's stay, clinicians can also easily access the forms they need.

“With everything legible and properly formatted, our medical records people are very happy and so is Nursing,” Vogel said.

According to Jan Rains, nurse manager for Beatrice's Medical/Surgical unit, SMARTworks Clinical Enterprise has really streamlined workflow.

“We've done away with those clumsy addressographs and stamper cards. Now instead of searching through drawers for various forms and stamping every piece of paper, we turn to SMARTworks and search on a specific parameter, such as flow sheets or plans of care, then print them as we need them. A lot of the forms are bundled into kits, which makes it easy to get what we need. Everything flows so much better.”

ED Unit Secretary Peggy Warren agreed. She handles an average of 24 admissions a day. “The new system really simplifies my job. The registration process goes much faster. And eliminating all the paper has freed up a lot of space.”

A Path to Improved Patient Safety

Rains saw important implications for patient safety. “With all the forms clearly identified and bar coded, we are assured that the right forms get into the right chart and nothing is misplaced. When we start bar coding meds, we'll be ready to go.

“Standard Register has also given us a better way to identify at-risk patients. SMARTworks Clinical Enterprise creates the wristband and we add color-coded dots to designate a fall risk, allergies or a no code. So wherever patients are transported our staff is alerted to their risks and, if needed, can check their charts,” she explained.

“Beatrice clinicians had previously used two or three alert bands in addition to the basic patient ID wristband. This makes it simple and it's safe. Our nurses have accepted it all very well,” Rains said.

A Smooth Implementation

Patty Hortman, IS project manager for the SMARTworks Clinical Enterprise implementation, acknowledged she's heard nothing but positive feedback. "It was a lot of work in such a short timeline, but the implementation went smoothly."

She attributed the success to multiple factors — a comprehensive project plan, SR's supportive implementation team and a system that is flexible and easy to use.

"We had aggressive goals. We kicked off in February with a go-live date of June 16. Standard Register provided us with a guide that detailed everything — from what would be in the HL-7 messages, what would go onto the wristband, what the templates would look like, the timelines we needed to meet and who was responsible for what. It was my bible," Hortman said.

When a department had a special requirement, Standard Register was able to respond. "The project manager was so easy to work with — he came up with some good solutions, and SMARTworks Clinical Enterprise gave us the flexibility to adapt it and make it our own," she commented.

As Hortman and Vogel described it, the implementation was flawless. In fact, the week SMARTworks Clinical Enterprise went live, Beatrice was actually able to send all of the Standard Register people home early because there were no issues.

The Measure of Success

The true measure of success has been in clinician acceptance. Beatrice's Health Information Management department has closely monitored forms to gauge SMARTworks Clinical Enterprise use as patient charts have come through for coding. Compliance was 99 percent within two months of its installation.

Hortman was not surprised. "SMARTworks was easy to learn and easy to use. It's such an improvement for our staff."

That pleased Vogel. For him, the success of the implementation was in SMARTworks Clinical Enterprise's use. "You can implement systems, but if people aren't using them, you've not gained any value," he said.

A Foundation to Build On

Clearly, Standard Register's people and technology have delivered the value. "They helped us lay some important groundwork," Vogel said. "They streamlined our processes and eliminated all the problems related to version control as well.

"If I had it to do over, I'd have done it sooner. Having all of our forms standardized and bar coded is truly beneficial. It gives us six to 12 months of paper records we can easily scan and have available for our use," he said.

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– Patty Hortman, IS Project Manager

At the same time, Vogel felt the implementation was a great experience for his IS staff and Beatrice's clinicians. "Standard Register follows the same methodology as our EMR provider, so we will be well prepared as we take on the bigger job of implementing EMR," he said.

Of course, none of the benefits of this implementation would have been realized if Standard Register had not offered Beatrice a subscription program. "From my perspective, it was the only way we were going to be able to do this before we started our McKesson project. The entire administrative staff has been in full support of this from the beginning because they recognized the value. The subscription program was an "added plus" because of the affordability."

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