

Productivity and Quality Matters.

A Practice Partner Case Study.

Improving Quality Outcomes in a Small Practice

THE PRACTICE

Cookeville Primary Care Associates is a two-provider family practice in Cookeville, Tennessee.

THE PROJECT

Cookeville Primary Care uses Total Practice Partner: Practice Partner Patient Records, Appointment Scheduler, and Medical Billing. The physicians also joined the Practice Partner Research Network (PPRNet) in order to compare their clinical outcomes with those of other practices and to identify potential areas for improvement. PPRNET provides participating practices with quarterly reports that cover 80 preventive healthcare indicators such as heart disease, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and diabetes.

Cookeville uses the quarterly PPRNet reports to help them target areas for quality improvement. The physicians at Cookeville have acted to improve care in several ways:

- Cookeville Primary Care uses these reports to identify patients that are overdue for care such as immunizations, labs, or prescriptions. The practice then uses patient flags in Practice Partner to set reminders for staff to follow up with the patients. For example patients who are over 65 and have not had a pneumococcal immunization are flagged in Practice Partner for a follow up call.
- Lab results from Quest Diagnostics® are downloaded electronically to Practice Partner through an interface. Lab results such as lipid profiles are automatically analyzed in the PPRNET reports without any need for data entry.
- The practice has taken advantage of the twice-yearly site visits by PPRNet project consultants who have extensive experience with Practice Partner Patient Records, and quality improvement in practice. The consultants meet with the providers and staff to review the practice reports and to provide recommendations on how the practice can use Practice Partner to make quality improvements.

THE RESULTS

Using Practice Partner and the data from its PPRNet reports, the practice has dramatically improved patient care in several areas, including the following:

- The proportion of hyperlipidemia patients using anti-platelet therapy rose from 32% to 58%.
- The percentage of coronary heart disease and stroke patients with their most recent LDL < 100mg rose from 57% to 71%.
- The proportion of atherosclerotic patients with an LDL measurement in the past year rose from 56% to 75%.
- The percentage of adult diabetic patients who had a pneumococcal Immunization is 80% compared to the national average of 20%.

The physicians at Cookeville Primary Care use Practice Partner as a powerful tool to provide the highest quality of care for their patients. The practice is well prepared (and excited) to participate in the Blue Cross of Tennessee pay-for-performance program. “Without an electronic health records system like Practice Partner, participating in a pay for performance program would be almost inconceivable,” says Norma Martin the office manager.