



Physician Briefing Series



Electronic Health Records

Utilizing an integrated EHR
that benefits physicians
and patients

 **NorthShore**
University Health System

Medical Group

Physician Briefing Series | Electronic Health Records (EHR)

From healthcare reform to the economy to spiraling malpractice costs, these are difficult and uncertain times. For independent practitioners, it's a daily struggle to manage a practice, keep up with paperwork and battle with insurance companies.

In this environment, we believe NorthShore University HealthSystem (NorthShore) Medical Group offers physicians the best opportunity to achieve improved personal economics and long-term stability and security. Our health system provides the infrastructure, tools and support necessary for physicians to leave behind the hassles of managing a practice and focus on what they do best: caring for patients.

One of those tools is our top-notch, award-winning EHR product called "Epic"—NorthShore's Electronic Health Record (EHR) system. Epic offers benefits that simply can't be duplicated with the off-the-shelf EHR "solutions" often implemented by independent practices. And it's a big part of what makes NorthShore Medical Group a better place to practice.

I invite you to read further and to share this information with others you think might be interested in what we have to offer.

Joseph Golbus, MD

President, NorthShore University HealthSystem Medical Group

The Future is EHR...

"NorthShore University HealthSystem's use of analytics exceeds expectations by using the data to not only improve clinical care and operational efficiency, but also learn how to improve the workflow of the physician, saving time and improving documentation," said Philip Bradley, regional director, North America, HIMSS Analytics.

– *Healthcare IT News*, January 16, 2017

Expectations vs. Reality

Most everyone agrees that electronic health records are an inevitable part of every physician's future.

Already, billions of dollars in federal stimulus funds is being directed toward encouraging the use of EHR. And hospitals and private practices across the country are implementing the technology.

But studies cited by the American Medical Association have shown that 30 percent of practices either stop using their systems or remove them altogether within just a year of installation. Smaller practices face an especially difficult time, as leaner operating margins make the financial and productivity investment tougher to absorb.

Add a dizzying array of options on the market, a steep learning curve, the difficulty of integrating a system into a practice's existing workflows and the inevitable glitches that come with any new technology, and it's no wonder so many practices have a difficult time implementing an EHR.

Multiple Challenges, One Solution

Our state-of-the-art Epic technology is in use by 100 percent of our physicians, nurses and other medical professionals.

Plus, it successfully addresses the many headaches and hassles practitioners face in procuring, installing, maintaining and upgrading a system, including those noted to the right.

EHR Implementation and Maintenance

Challenge: The upfront cost is prohibitively expensive.

Our Solution: : Implementing an EHR system can cost tens of thousands of dollars, depending on the size of the practice. But physicians who join NorthShore Medical Group enjoy a fully operational, battle-tested EHR at no cost.

Challenge: EHR involves a steep learning curve.

Our Solution: Any new technology comes with a learning curve, but it's especially difficult when you're going it alone. NorthShore Medical Group provides comprehensive support that includes one-on-one help from expert trainers, online courses, even prebuilt templates from other physicians to make the transition smoother.

Challenge: We can't afford the impact on office efficiency and staff productivity.

Our Solution: We provide your staff with all the training, tools, systems and support necessary to minimize the impact on your practice.

Challenge: EHR requires constant maintenance and tech support.

Our Solution: Supporting a sophisticated EHR system for any size practice can be a difficult and costly endeavor. As a longtime technology leader and an early adopter of EHR, NorthShore employs a full complement of technology specialists and trainers whose job it is to keep the system running smoothly and make the user experience as friendly and simple as possible.

Enhancements to Your Clinical Practice

Challenge: This is one more burden that cuts into my patient and personal time.

Our Solution: Being part of a health system actually multiplies the timesaving benefits of the EHR:

- Analytics runs behind the scenes and displays meaningful alerts so physicians can take real-time, actionable next steps.
- Our physicians can share patient information in real time with practice partners and specialists.
- They can even directly enter appointments into specialists' calendars, including requests for urgent appointments—all without having to pick up the phone.
- They have access to a tailored dashboard to view their patient panel at a population level and drill down to their individual patients enabling review of things like patients at highest risk for readmission and quality scores per measure.
- Medical Group physicians can rest easier when away from the office knowing that their patients are covered by colleagues who have access to their patients' full health history.

Challenge: An EHR will not help my personal economics.

Our Solution: Our EHR helps us optimize allowable reimbursement while demonstrating compliance with government regulations and targets. Here's how:

- It reduces coding errors, helping ensure that procedures are properly billed and physicians are compensated fully for services performed. Plus, our staff of coding professionals provides support to ensure that all revenues are captured.
- The system automatically confirms patient eligibility with their health plan, minimizing costly delays and repeat submission of claims.
- It allows us to track and report quality measures using automated templates, rather than manual systems.
- The system also includes e-prescribing (electronic prescribing) for controlled and noncontrolled medications and automated refill protocols to increase efficiency for patients and providers.



Challenge: It's impossible to customize a system to meet my "real-life" needs.

Our Solution: Many practitioners find that stand-alone products create myriad unanticipated impacts on office workflow. As an early EHR pioneer, we've been working since 2003 with Epic's developers to create a customized system that conforms to the real-world experiences of our physicians and staff. As a result, our EHR works for us, rather than demanding that we adjust to it.

Challenge: It's not integrated with other services and systems.

Our Solution: Our EHR is fully integrated across the continuum of patient care:

- It spans all four of our hospitals and 100+ primary and specialty practice locations, encompassing all services, including inpatient, outpatient, ancillary, medical tests and prescriptions, along with billing, scheduling, e-prescribing and other systems. Affiliated physicians and other ancillary services, such as skilled nursing facilities, are also provided specified access to applicable patient data.
- Physicians can share patient information, documentation and medical opinions seamlessly, securely and quickly to expedite medical care.



Enhancements to the Patient Experience

Challenge: I don't see how the EHR system benefits my patients.

Our Solution: We've enhanced our EHR with several features specifically for patients:

- Our secure patient portal, NorthShoreConnect, allows patients to view their health records, receive test results, renew prescriptions, communicate with physicians, view proxy accounts, and schedule appointments from their home computer and our branded mobile app.
- Our system also delivers health alerts and reminders for needed services and connects patients directly with online education resources.
- It improves clinical workflows, saving time for physicians and staff, and improving patient loyalty.
- Patients have the option of downloading their health record so that key health information is readily at hand when they travel.
- And our system enables physicians to provide an "After Visit Summary" to patients at the conclusion of a visit, a very popular tool that summarizes key findings and shows follow-up appointments and next steps in the care plan.

Bottom Line: *When you combine the customized, fully integrated technology of our EHR with the expertise, infrastructure support and extensive experience of a major medical group in using the tool to benefit both patients and physicians, you get an EHR system that cannot be matched by "off-the-shelf" products. It's just one of many advantages to practicing with NorthShore Medical Group.*

NorthShore: A Technology Leader (So You Don't Have to Be!)

Practicing in a group that's at the forefront of technology allows our physicians to focus on what they do best—caring for patients. Here's just some of the recognition we've received for our leadership:

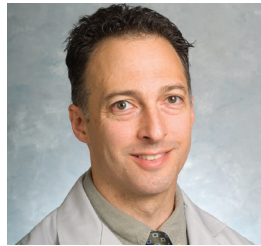
- NorthShore was recognized in 2009 for hospitals and in 2013 for ambulatory sites as the first healthcare system to have achieved full EHR implementation. Presented by the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, which is leading the healthcare industry's national efforts to enhance quality through healthcare information technology, the Stage 7 Award honors best practices in operating in a paperless environment. In 2016, NorthShore was revalidated with this honor.
- NorthShore Medical Group received the 2009 HealthLeaders Media Top Leadership Teams in Healthcare Award for Medical Groups, recognizing the culture of physician leadership, customer loyalty and data-driven decision-making that supports ongoing success and continued focus on being the best place to practice medicine and the best place to receive care.
- NorthShore Medical Group was named the 2008 AMGA Acclaim Award Honoree, an award recognizing demonstrated excellence in providing effective, efficient, timely, equitable and patient-centered care (the six aims of the Institute of Medicine), innovations that were built off of our advanced EHR platform.
- For 14 consecutive years, NorthShore was named one of the nation's "Most Wired" healthcare systems by *Hospitals & Health Networks* magazine.
- NorthShore regularly ranks among the 25 most wireless hospital systems in the nation, according to *Hospitals & Health Networks* magazine.

Physician Testimonials



“The great thing about our EHR system is that it’s essentially a multispecialty group without walls. You function as if everyone’s together in the same building, getting real-time information—from test results to specialist visits—instantly.”

– *Norman Gutmann, MD*



“Our Epic system is no doubt worlds above any stand-alone system you could get in private practice.”

– *Timothy Poland, MD*



“My patients love it. They have 24/7 access to their records, they can make appointments, get test results. The system has actually helped us improve patient communication, while also saving us time.”

– *Donna Bicknese, MD*

NorthShore Medical Group – a better place to practice.