Encore Teams with Yuma Regional Medical Center to Achieve EHR Implementation Success

CHALLENGE
As with most healthcare organizations, YRMC recognized the inefficiencies and challenges that paper medical record can cause. After a $73 million investment and more than seven years of careful planning, extensive research, system education, and a strong commitment to patient quality, YRMC implemented YRMCCare. YRMCCare included an Epic Implementation for inpatient and outpatient/ambulatory care areas. This system went live in May 2012. As a result, information that had previously resided in a patient’s paper chart was now included in YRMCCare and accessible in one place electronically.

Initially, as part of the system implementation, YRMC managed its physicians’ training. However, once the system went live, YRMC recognized that the medical staff needed specific and targeted training. YRMC wanted as little disruption to the physician “day to day” activities as possible and needed to ensure that the physician community was comfortable with not only how to access to the system and its valuable information, but also to ensure that the training and rollout to the physicians was not burdensome. YRMC knew that the clinical staff could provide some physician support but didn’t want to put all the responsibility on the nursing staff.

YRMC was looking for a consulting firm to assist with physician education and Go-Live support. Because YRMC had partnered with Encore on several projects previously, including an interim Chief Medical Officer, Willow Order Set and Ambulatory Orders Build and Laboratory Order Interface Support, YRMC was familiar with Encore’s partnership approach to projects. The health system knew this type of approach was needed while working with the physicians. Additionally, YRMC engaged Encore based on its implementation and project management experience, physician readiness strategy, and ability to provide peer-to-peer implementation support.

SOLUTION
Encore developed a communications strategy and plan to keep the entire medical staff fully informed of the program underway, provide medical staff education on the YRMCCare initiative, and help prepare the medical staff for the organizational change. The physician-oriented communications plan was integrated into the overall YRMCCare project communications plan to ensure consistency and coordination. Encore called up a team of its physician consultants to provide “At the Elbow” (ATE) support for the YRMCCare project. Encore was able to provide peer-to-peer (or, in this case, physician-to-physician) training at the elbow and assisted the medical staff in all aspects of the Go-Live. Physician ATE resources were contracted to provide physicians with immediate support throughout the course of their clinical day, identifying opportunities for further training and assisting with clinical documentation and order set personalization.

Responsibilities included:

- Creation of the overall ATE staffing requirements, including candidate selection, on-boarding, management, performance evaluation, support schedule, and logistics
- Support plan development, scheduling, staff placement, and overall delivery of post-deployment support
- Screening of approximately 25 resources and made arrangements with Encore and other staffing agencies to bring selected candidates to Yuma within approximately 48 hours
- Active participation in Go-Live planning sessions (“huddles”), including providing valuable feedback from the physician community and offering perspectives and suggestions on specific issues
• Active engagement with physician end users in various care areas
• Communication of system changes and management of issues during post-deployment
• Reporting of any issues or risks to the ATE Project Manager and through the Help Desk.

Encore’s project success was the result of:
• Careful planning and effective execution of communications strategies for physician adoption throughout the project
• Involvement of end users across all disciplines in integrated walk-through sessions of redesigned/new workflows
• Partnering at all levels of the organization -- CIO, Directors, Medical Leadership -- to drive long-term support from YRMC
• Proactive project preparation that included conflict management and training in how to handle unhappy physicians.
• Pragmatic approach to meeting Stage 1 Meaningful Use requirement while carefully addressing clinical adoption using Encore’s CoreQuest® methodology and CoreGPS® tools
• Providing training in a variety of venues and sessions for ultimate flexibility with learning labs, weekend group training, and CME credit
• Committing to Physician-to-Physician support, providing 1:1 training when necessary
• Communicating real life stories and insight to the physician community about to how to optimize the system and refine workflows

IMPACT
With Encore’s leadership and active support in the YRMCCare project, YRMC was able to effectively include its physicians in the system Go-Live, thus ensuring system acceptance by the physician community. The system implementation included Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE), which enabled the communication of patient-treatment orders – both medication and non-medication – over a computer network to medical staff and departments responsible for fulfillment. The successful implementation of CPOE helped YRMC meet a critically important step in today’s federally mandated healthcare reform movement to improve quality while driving down costs. CPOE decreases delays in order completion, reduces errors resulting from illegible handwriting and transcription, facilitates point-of-care and off-site order entry, provides error checking for duplicate or incorrect medication dosing or tests, and it ultimately drives increased efficiency and improved clinical outcomes.

With its new system, YRMC today is well prepared to meet national mandates for the meaningful use of health-information technology this year.

ENCORE CAN HELP
Encore Health Resources, founded by healthcare veterans Ivo Nelson and Dana Sellers, provides information technology consulting services to assist healthcare organizations with a wide range of strategy, advisory, implementation, process-redesign, and optimization activities. Encore focuses on capturing data and establishing the analytical capabilities to meet the evolving information and reporting needs for health care providers to improve and document clinical and operational performance. For more information about Encore, please visit www.encorehealthresources.com.