

CASE STUDY | PUBLIC HEALTH



The Health Director of a District Health Department continuously works to improve patient care within the public health system covering three counties in the north-western region of North Carolina. The District Health Department has approximately 45 users across all three counties including practice managers, nurses, providers, and others.

They were frustrated with an antiquated system they were using and facing the following issues and had requirements.

- They were using earlier a legacy billing system, and some claims were sent on paper, and had paper-based medical records charting.
- A completely paper-based system requiring practice personnel to re-key patient data multiple times across multiple screens.
- Not having a robust integrated system and lacking many features.
- Manual processes and create operational inefficiencies.
- Not having a centralized and integrated electronic claims processing and submission solution
- The system was cumbersome and very slow and there was no integration of data and reports.
- Being able to support any number of users.

After consulting with the rural health center and a community care consulting physician who had evaluated many commercially available PMS+EHRs, the decision was made to implement expEDlum & Patagonia's integrated EHR, practice management, and billing solution in the August 2012 fiscal year. This integrated solution ranked very highly in terms of technology and support, and it was able to offer a competitive price point for the fully integrated solution.

The solution has built-in Public Health Specific features such as debt set off, bad debt writes, a handful of custom reports, sliding fees schedule, Atypical IDs, and other features, the need for being able to submit claims to insurance companies and get paid and manage the practice effectively.

"...First, as a company, I like customer service. If there's a problem with the system, then we can email the problem with the support ticket, and I usually have a response within an hour, sometimes less, but it's never more than an hour. I also have my list of people that I can call if I need immediate assistance..."



Solution Implemented

- Once the application was up and running, the department rolled out Practice Management to one county and then rolled-out to the remaining counties in a few months.
- Completely transformed from a largely paper-based office to an electronic office
- Improve overall workflow and increase efficiency.
- Gain instant access to financial data within the system.
- Department personnel and providers must no longer repeatedly re-key patient data across multiple screens, which makes scheduling patients easier.
- A very easy-to-use billing system, making the process of billing to third-party insurance companies faster and more efficient.
- Turnaround time to receive reimbursement/payment within a week, at the latest, if not sooner. In the past they were lucky to get payments back within three weeks to four weeks.
- Increases in cash flow/patient collection due to the comprehensiveness of the software.
- Ability to find any errors in the claims and corrections made before submitting them to insurance companies or clearinghouses.
- Now they need reports such as aging, AR reports, and cost analysis, and is user-friendly.



Return on Investment (ROI)

- The biller processes over 1300 HCFA claims a month with less than 6% denial rate compared to the earlier 10% denial rate.
- The biller received Electronic ERAs (that are auto posted) for about 93% of the claims sent and the remaining 7% on paper EOBs (that are manually posted). The 93% auto posting saved 100s of hours of data entry savings every month.

The integrated EMR+PMS solution of expEDlum & Patagonia is the leading software vendor in the public health clinic space in the state of North Carolina and is expanding our public health clinic provider base in other states such as Ohio, Maryland, Kansas, and Illinois. The integrated solution currently has 500 plus providers in 48 counties and processes over 600K claims across all Public Health Clinics combined.

“It has been a big learning curve for some of our providers and staff to go from a largely paper-based office to an electronic office. While the processes and workflow are not yet perfect, we’re committed to this product and Software Vendor.

...Health Director of the District Health Department, North Carolina