

Ohio Pain Center Discovers “Pain Free” EMR and Practice Management Solution



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DR. AMAR GOYAL, M.D.

Ohio Pain Center, founded 2009

Pain Management practice in Toledo, Ohio

If you are a pain management specialist in your own solo practice and you see about 25 patients a day, what do you do when a patient returns for a visit and tells you that she doesn’t need a cane anymore? You want to expeditiously access her information from the last visit. Was she using a cane? If so, which side of her body did the cane support? Did you administer an epidural?



Do you want to rifle through paper charts to get answers to these critical questions? For Dr. Amar Goyal, the answer was a resounding, “No.” He wanted to access the information quickly and efficiently via an EMR.

Dr. Goyal opened Ohio Pain Center in Toledo three years ago to treat patients with back, neck, knee and joint pain, as well as pain from herniated discs, arthritis and fibromyalgia. Like any new business owner, he had enough problems to deal with just getting his practice up and running. The last thing he wanted was to waste time using paper charts.

Growing Pains

“I faced the problems of getting insurance to pay me and taking care of my overhead. I had a lot of expenses when I opened,” stated Dr. Goyal. One of his expenses was purchasing an X-ray machine that he uses to do office-based procedures.

Armed with the philosophy, “Restoring function and reducing pain should be an integral part of a community, for improving productivity and quality of life,” Dr. Goyal had the foresight to know that implementing an EMR and practice management system would make it that much easier to accomplish his mission.

Smooth Operation

Dr. Goyal surveyed a dozen EMR companies before choosing Waiting Room Solutions. “I did a demo. I wanted to see how easy it was to use and to go from charting to scheduling to billing. WRS was easy to navigate through. I liked the way it was set up. It flows seamlessly. That’s a good thing,” Dr. Goyal asserted.

Eliminating Charting Woes

Because he is a pain management specialist, Dr. Goyal also needed an EMR with customized templates to make his charting easier. “Because patients have pain I can customize the templates to my needs-- to examinations and procedures. It can be done by going into the ‘Physician Exam’ where you can choose more options such as ‘straight leg raising task,’ or ‘neurological exam.’ Under ‘Physical Exam’ I have a column where I can input whether a patient uses a cane, ‘yes’ or ‘no,’ and if so, on which side they use the cane. It helps me to be more thorough in my exams. If I do a treatment and a patient comes back and says, ‘No, I don’t need the cane anymore,’ I go into my last exam and see whether she was using a cane. If I did an epidural I know that the treatment helped,” said Dr. Goyal.

Receiving and storing a bundle of MRI test results is another challenge a pain management physician must come to grips with. Having a fax capability eases the angst. “I give my MRI facility a fax number which comes directly into the EMR fax queue and the MRI gets transferred into patients’ charts.”



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Patient Safety and Compliance

Assisting patients to be compliant with their medication regimen, so that they can be free of pain, is the end goal of pain management physicians. Dr. Goyal is utilizing WRS e-prescribing capability to increase patient compliance as well as to automatically identify safety issues. "I don't have to worry about the patient losing a script. The script is already there at the pharmacy," he said, adding, "I like the e-prescribing capability. It's efficient. I like the idea of automatic refills. I can check interactions before I e-prescribe and once the interactions are checked, it gives me a better sense of comfort and confidence."

A Quick Fix

If a problem occurs when a medical practice uses an EMR for billing functions, that can be a strain on a physician and his staff as well as the practice's bottom line. So nothing but the fastest customer service can be tolerated. While Goyal boasts that it's easy to use the billing component of the EMR he said, "If a problem arises we file a ticket online and WRS responds promptly. That's one of the features I really like. They make sure that if my practice has filed a ticket for a problem then they will give a response."

Attracting patients to a pain management practice is a job in itself, and one that most physicians clearly do not have much time to devote to. To hear Dr. Goyal tell it, the experience doesn't have to be grueling. In addition to referrals, he advertises and uses the power of his website to attract patients.

Reining In Costs

When it comes to shelling out money for an EMR, Dr. Goyal is content that he was able to get a complete EMR and practice management system that is affordable. Although Dr. Goyal learned that Practice Fusion is free after he had already selected WRS, he is not in the least bit envious of doctors who are using Practice Fusion. "I hear from other physicians that every time they try to do something there is a pop-up ad. That would drive me insane," he said.

Finally, to skeptics who are leery about whether an EMR can really translate to a better quality of life for a pain management doc, Dr. Goyal had this to say: "I think an EMR has value. WRS has helped me. I don't want to use paper charts. I like the electronic format better. And Waiting Room Solutions EMR does make me more efficient."