

Houston Medical Center boosts revenue by \$850,000 within first six months



Houston Medical Center in Warner-Robins, Ga., part of Houston Healthcare, provides comprehensive inpatient and outpatient healthcare services annually to more than 160,000 people residing in Houston and surrounding counties in Georgia. The hospital sees more than 50,000 patients per year in its emergency department (ED). Their mission is to improve the healthcare of the communities they serve by providing patient-focused, high-quality, cost-effective services while promoting health and wellness.

Quick Profile

Houston Medical Center

Institution profile:

186 beds with more than 50,000 annual ED visits

Key business/clinical drivers:

Eliminate dictation costs, improve patient workflow and reduce completion time of physician documentation

Picis solutions:

CareSuite® ED PulseCheck®

Interoperability:

Meditech with the following integration points: ADT, Picis' ED Rapid Clinical Record, order entry and results reporting for nursing orders and lab/radiology, hospital billing, charge master file update and outbound chart to EMR

Results:

- **Increased ED revenue:** More than \$850,000 within the first 6 months
- **Improved patient flow:** Average ED visit dropped from 3.3 hours to 2.5 hours
- **Eliminated lost and incomplete charts:** Cut from three percent per month to zero
- **Eliminated dictation turnaround time:** From 10 days to 0 - all charts are complete by discharge



► Realizing quick ROI

Houston Medical Center has used CareSuite ED PulseCheck since 2002 for automated patient tracking, nurse and physician documentation, as well as transcription and integration with the Meditech hospital information system (HIS) for orders and results. Prior to the implementation of ED PulseCheck, dictation turnaround time was more than ten days, so the hospital coders did not have the physicians' H & P's, procedure notes or medical decision making with which to assign codes. Now all charts are complete at the time the patient is discharged from the ED, allowing for more accurate charges for patient acuity and procedures. Also, their lost and incomplete chart rate has gone from approximately three percent per month to zero.

ED PulseCheck has helped Houston Medical Center get patients from door to doctor more efficiently, providing a quick return on investment (ROI). "We paid for ED PulseCheck in less than a year's time due to increased revenue of \$850,000 from better charting and coding, a decrease in personnel for transcription and other savings," said Richard Sullivan, M.D., F.A.C.E.P., medical director of emergency services, Houston Medical Center. "We've seen increased patient flow through the department and the ability of the nurse managers to better manage — moving patients through the department and speeding along processes."

Sullivan also credits ED PulseCheck with improved communication within the department, with other departments such as radiology, and between the ED and supervisors. "With ED PulseCheck, physicians are notified when lab and x-ray reports are ready to review, physician tasks and workflow are better organized, and physician H & P's are standardized. Prescription errors are reduced with computerized prescriptions and automatic allergy checking," said Sullivan.

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Leveraging powerful interoperability

In this close-knit community, the 186-bed hospital handles a high volume of ED patients and up to 80 percent of these are "repeat patients" who have a previous record in ED PulseCheck and Meditech's HIS. Houston's physicians needed to easily access pertinent patient information from a central place — without having to look at disparate departments or hunt for labs, radiology reports, etc.

With ED PulseCheck, clinicians can glance at the tracking board to see whether patient information from a previous visit exists online in the Rapid Clinical Record. With one click, they can view a clinical summary of the patient's allergies, medications, previous tests and other important information and can drill down to this detailed data from the Meditech HIS. According to Sullivan the time savings are significant. "Before you had to log into Meditech and drill down to the data you wanted. It probably took 3-4 minutes if you knew what you were looking for. Now with ED PulseCheck it's about 30 seconds and you've got what you need. It's that much quicker." This level of interoperability is available in no other EDIS and demonstrates Picis' proven, sophisticated level of integration experience in accessing data in Meditech.

Focusing on patient care

With the summary information available on one screen, it makes it much easier to not only see what historical information is available on a patient, but also to get to that information. Actual results and reports from Meditech are available through a single mouse click. Having this information at physicians' fingertips is more than just convenient, it helps them do their job faster and allows them to focus on delivering patient care. "It absolutely helps us provide better care. Every shift you are turning up stuff that you may have looked for in Meditech previously, but it would have been a lot more work. It is certainly not every patient that you're going to use it for, it's the older, sicker, more complicated patients," Sullivan added. ■

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