iPatientCare Helps Brighton Hospital Fulfill Its Passion for Paperless

Practice Profile:

Brighton Hospital
12851 Grand River Road
Brighton, MI 48116-9969

Specialty
Alcohol and substance abuse treatment center

Size
92-bed facility

About the Practice:

Located in southeastern Michigan, Brighton Hospital is the second oldest alcohol and substance abuse treatment center in the United States. A member of Ascension Health's St. John Health System, the hospital was founded 60 years ago and continues to be a standard-bearer and innovator in chemical dependency and dual diagnosis treatment based on the medical model and 12-step program participation. The hospital is a fully licensed and accredited sub-acute care hospital and is staffed by addiction-medicine physicians and addiction-credentialed clinicians. Inpatient, outpatient and long-term transitional housing programs are provided by Brighton in addition to specialty groups, adolescent services and a children's program.

The Challenge:

When Brighton Hospital decided to bring an EHR system into its facility, it was challenged with finding one that was compatible with behavioral health. The hospital wanted to increase its efficiency and patient safety without dramatically changing its workflow. Its staff also wanted to be able to more easily collect data and process a multitude of reports from that data.

"A major advantage we were looking for in an EHR system was being able to report off of any field in the system," explained Melissa Whelan, Associate Director of Health Information Quality and Privacy for Brighton Hospital. "We wanted to have an efficient collection and analysis process that allowed us to evaluate how things were working across our organization while also eliminating paper use and reducing documentation. We had records that were two to three inches thick and had to maintain them for ten years, a process which is very labor intensive. The reduction of documentation was important to us because we have so many clinicians requesting documentation."

In addition, Brighton Hospital wanted an EHR system to improve staff productivity and communication, support clinical safety and excellence goals, improve compliance with documentation requirements and standards, build in flexibility to adapt to the evolving

addiction treatment field and coordinate patient care continuum for life. The system needed to fit in with the hospital's rapidly challenging environment in order to be successful.

The Solution:

Many EHR systems are developed for the acute care setting, so Brighton Hospital had to find a system that fit its specific, unique needs. After researching a number of possibilities, Brighton selected the Electronic Behavioral Health Record (EBHR) system from New Jersey-based Medical Communication Systems (MCS) now iPatientCare. A completely integrated solution with a modular design, EBHR was developed to aid organizations that treat both chemical dependency and mental health disorders. To meet the needs of organizations like Brighton Hospital, EBHR was designed by licensed clinical and medical practitioners, operations leaders, health information specialists and technology experts.

"MCS was willing to work with us to develop the system we wanted, and we had the ability to start from scratch and created a system that works really, really well for us," remarked Barb Shaw, Clinical Manager and Chief Nursing Officer for Brighton Hospital. "Their desire to understand what we do and why was important to us, and they were creative in finding solutions for what we needed, solutions that were better than what we had in mind."

The Results:

Since implementing the EBHR system, Brighton Hospital has noticed a definite increase in its efficiency and effectiveness while increasing patient safety and compliance and reducing medication errors and paper use. After implementing the system's order entry and EMAR components, the organization was able to reduce its nursing staff by 2.5 FTEs and move those staff members to areas where there were not finances available to hire a new employee. Therefore, Brighton has been able to keep its staff levels at a consistent basis at a time when its staff is seeing a lot more patients than they previously did.

The FTE reduction has also allowed Brighton to keep its staff at the same size while adding data analysts and other staff members who have more of an education in health information management. The organization has also been able to give some relief to its inpatient and outpatient areas in managing benefits. Also, since the elimination of transcription at Brighton Hospital, the organization's medication errors dropped a staggering 80 percent.

According to Frank Sanzone, Information Systems Manager and CIO for Brighton, "Everything we wanted in the system, MCS has been able to provide. Most importantly, we've been able to do things that are more valuable than managing paper. With EBHR, we can effectively monitor areas so that issues that arise can be analyzed electronically rather than written chart by chart. From a clinical standpoint, not having to access paper charts has been a huge benefit to the clinical staff who can now access information when they're with a patient rather than leaving to pull a chart, allowing for a lot more face-to-face time with those patients. Most recently, they've been able to help our data analysts report off the system, a huge advantage to us."

Through EBHR, Brighton Hospital has been given the ability for allergy and medication alerts along with the ability to make sure that everything that should be happening with the patient is, so that if something does go awry, its staff can look at the system, figure out why it happened and work with MCS to keep it from happening again. Through the organization's physicians and nurses entering orders for medication, laboratory tests and reports, Brighton enjoys improved compliance and increased patient safety. Plus, the efficiency with which its nurses can go through the medication process results in a shorter wait time for the patients.

Though the organization initially experienced some resistance on the EBHR system from its staff, Brighton quickly got to a point where that staff was pleased with the ease and efficiency of the system. Physicians who had worked at other facilities with other systems liked the ease and superiority of the MCS system over other ones they've used and found that they could trust it very quickly.

"There have been times when we've made frequent changes to the system, and the good people at MCS have been very understanding and accommodating when they could have been frustrated," commented Sanzone. "They're very responsive, always reachable and make sure we have 24/7 coverage for support. We're trying to integrate EBHR with other systems in our facility, and they are always available when we're going live with a new item, fixing things quickly so we don't go backwards in our progress."

The staff at Brighton Hospital has even recommended MCS and the EBHR system to multiple peers and affiliates in the healthcare industry.

"It has been an enriching opportunity to work with an organization like MCS and end up with a system that is so helpful and easy to understand," stated Whelan. "MCS believes it is their job to make us extremely happy as a client. Its been exciting for all of us to work on this system together and has made us a better team because we've been able to work so efficiently with the MCS staff."

"It's gratifying to see our ideas transformed into a system that makes our lives easier," added Shaw. "I am so grateful that we've had this opportunity to create a system that works really well and provides us with new opportunities every day."

Brighton Hospital Benefits:

- 80 percent reduction in medication errors
- Reduction in staff of 2.5 FTEs
- Increased patient safety and compliance
- 24/7 access to patient records
- Enhanced decision making using EHR data

About iPatientCare – Medical Communication Systems (MCS):

iPatientCare – MCS is a privately held medical informatics company, founded in 1994, and based at Woburn, Massachusetts and East Brunswick, New Jersey. Owned and managed by physicians and technologists, MCS is known for the innovations in healthcare IT market space and excellence in software engineering. Previously known

as mMD.Net EHR, iPatientCare EHR was among the first to be certified by CCHIT in July 2006 and is currently CCHIT 2011 Fully Certified and ONC-ATCB 2011/2012 Certified Complete EHR for Meaningful Use. The company has won numerous awards for its EHR technology and is recognized as a pioneer to offer an EHR on a handheld device way back in 1997, the first to offer a SaaS (Software as a Service) based EHR product and is selected as a preferred Unified – EHR and PMS - System by numerous Regional Extension Centers (REC), hospitals/health systems and academies.