



Pediatric Health Care at Newton Wellesley A NextGen Case Study

Overview

Practice

Pediatric Health Care at Newton Wellesley
Newton, Massachusetts

<http://www.pediatrichealthcare.com>

Practice Profile

Four board-certified pediatricians
providing a full range of pediatric services.

Business Problem

The need to access patient charts quickly
at any time.

Solution

Implemented NextGen® EMR in 1996,
enabling easy electronic chart access for
multiple users.

Product Distinctions

- ▶ Pediatrics Knowledge Base Model
- ▶ Patient-provider communication portal

Benefits

- ▶ Efficient chart access and use
- ▶ Pediatric-specific content and modules
- ▶ Strong patient communications
- ▶ Better clinical documentation and coding

Pediatrics Practice Finds an EMR Focused on Pediatrics

In 1996, gaining access to patient charts on paper had become a problem for the physicians of Pediatric Health Care at Newton Wellesley (PHC) in Newton, Massachusetts. "Taking care of patients' administrative and medical needs required many people to have access to the chart, often simultaneously, so everyone would be looking for it," says Eugenia Marcus, MD. At the same time, she wanted to enhance the quality of care by being able to access and track missed inoculations, needed laboratory tests and other patient-specific information.

Dr. Marcus found the solution that year in NextGen® EMR, an electronic medical records system from NextGen Healthcare Information Systems, Inc. NextGen® EMR allows PHC physicians to easily create and maintain complete patient records. Its capabilities include prescription writing, referral management, a laboratory interface, patient education and—specific to pediatrics—growth charts, sick and well baby visit templates, developmental milestones, and anticipatory guidelines.

PHC also became the earliest user of the pediatric templates that are now part of NextGen's® Pediatrics Knowledge Base Model, which are in compliance with guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The system met Dr. Marcus' goal of making chart information easily accessible, but she says its greatest strength is its flexibility. "It's easy to make changes," she says. "If you want to document something in a completely different way, for example, you can just change the template yourself. No need to go through the vendor's programmers."



"There's just so much more that you can do now."

Eugenia Marcus, MD, FAAP

NextGen® EMR is built on an open database structure, meaning users can modify or query the database easily, with minimal programming knowledge. This allows users of NextGen® EMR to customize the system to their needs and preferences, adjusting templates, workflows, alerts, picklists, and most anything else. Most other EMRs on the market cannot perform this critical function.

PHC also uses many of NextGen® EMR's other features and modules that have been developed specifically for the needs of the pediatric workflow. Dr. Marcus sees tremendous benefit in the pediatric growth charts, especially for body mass index. She finds it very effective to present to the parent a very clear representation of their child's results, impressing upon the parent the urgency of the situation and getting buy-in on a critical treatment plan as necessary. As the obesity epidemic worsens in America, Marcus has found herself using these charts more and more often.

NextGen® EMR also includes height, weight, and head circumference charts for boys and girls, whereby a particular child's growth over time can be graphed against national averages. Additional templates are specially designed for children with Down syndrome or those born prematurely.

PHC often uses NextGen® EMR's immunization templates and alerts,

to ensure timely patient needs are not missed. And with the allergy and medication modules, contraindication concerns are consistently addressed.

Another feature within NextGen® EMR that appeals to pediatricians is the Family Unit Module. This function enables users to group patients together under a certain name or category. The module can be used in a number of ways, from grouping family members to grouping patients undergoing a selected study. A common use is to quickly identify siblings for follow-ups or orders when one sibling has been diagnosed with a contagious illness.

PHC is also adopting NextMD®, NextGen's® secure patient-provider internet portal, a valuable communications tool. NextMD® provides patients the ability to access portions of their medical records, communicate with providers, and find health-related information. Patients may also request appointments, camp forms, or documents; request prescription refills; review test results and access health reference information and news. And Dr. Marcus believes e-visits through portals such as this are destined to become part of the future of health-care. "And if patients can complete their history forms at home the night before an appointment, their data will be in the system for me to review before I even walk in the examining room," she adds.

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