



OntarioMD Success Story: **Optimizing the EMR's potential for proactive preventive care**

THE CHALLENGE

Electronic medical records (EMRs) hold considerable potential to help primary care providers take a more proactive role in preventive care, and treat patients with chronic conditions. EMR tools can be customized to suit a practice's needs and workflow. But this optimization can only be realized if the data in the EMR is up to date.

International Medical Services Family Health Group is a team of four family physicians in Toronto. They have family practice patients, as well as missionary patients who do work around the world and have frequent travel health needs. The practice had been using an EMR for several years, and contacted OntarioMD's EMR Practice Enhancement Program (EPEP) team in early 2016 because they felt they weren't tapping into the EMR's full capability to help them offer the highest quality of care to their patients.

BACKGROUND

OntarioMD is a trusted advisor to physicians, uniquely positioned to help practices realize more clinical value from their EMRs through a range of tools and support services. EPEP analyzes practices' EMR workflow and data quality, and provides hands-on support to help clinicians move beyond data capture to use their EMR to improve patient care and practice efficiency. EPEP has helped over 500 physicians optimize their EMR use since the program's launch in 2016, using a proven five-step process that involves a gap analysis, workflow analysis and mapping, review of EMR data quality against a variety of key clinical measures, the creation of a customized action plan with achievable tasks, and evaluation to measure improvements after participating in EPEP.

HOW THE EPEP TEAM HELPED

During the data quality review, the EPEP practice advisors discovered that the practice was not actively managing its patient roster and all four doctors had more rostered patients listed in the EMR than were recorded on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's capitation reports. Workflow analysis also revealed that the practice didn't have a defined process in place for managing prevention and screening for their patients. As a result, patient preventive care indicators weren't being effectively recorded in the EMR, and the practice wasn't meeting its preventive care targets.

Following the data quality review and analysis process, the EPEP practice advisors presented the physicians with a list of action items focused on patient roster reconciliation, consistent data entry, and improvements to preventive care screening, smoking status capture and diabetes management.

Over the course of several months, the EPEP practice advisors worked closely with the clinic manager and billing coordinator to obtain roster capitation reports from the Ministry, and helped analyze and reconcile the EMR records against these reports.

At the same time, they also worked with the physicians to help design a process for proactive preventive care and screening, and helped to identify and implement EMR tools and functionality that would assist the physicians in identifying and tracking targeted patients. The practice advisors also worked with the clinic manager to create preventive care reminders, and provided coaching to staff and physicians on what to do when reminders pop up, how to create searches, run reminder reports and use the preventive care summary report.

As the table below illustrates, the practice has seen marked improvements across a range of preventive care indicators since the EPEP team recorded baseline measurements in June 2016. All four physicians on the International Medical Services team have realized dramatic improvements in the percentage of smoking status and diabetes diagnoses recorded in their EMR, and have built on that success to provide more proactive patient monitoring and care. As the team continues to apply the proactive preventive care and screening process, these measurements will show further improvements.

The EPEP practice advisors have actively worked with the physicians and staff for more than a year, and attribute their success to a shared commitment to the process, the practice's dedication of resources, their awareness of their data quality, and the EMR functionalities available from a population management perspective as well as at the point of care. The EPEP team is building on the work completed by developing a diabetic toolbar that will ease data entry and provide relevant information at the point of care in just a few clicks. They are also implementing a preventive care tracking tool and a smoking toolbar that will further streamline smoking status capture. With the ongoing commitment of the practice and continued remote and in-person coaching from the EPEP team, International Medical Services is confident the team will continue to see improvements in EMR optimization and patient care.

Preventive Care Indicator	June 2016 Baseline Measurement	May 2017 Post-EPEP Engagement Measurement
Patients with at least two recorded uses of diagnosis code 250, but no diabetes documented in problem list	274 instances across all practice physicians	95 instances across all practice physicians
Smoking status recorded in CPP	Varies per physician in practice, between 2% of patients and 47% of patients	Varies per physician in practice, between 17% of patients and 49% of patients

"To have somebody who's walked that road before you, and then allow them to lead you into that area, that was a big value-add for us."

Dr. Ken Gamble, Family Physician, Toronto

Contact

If you'd like to find out more about how you can work with an OntarioMD EMR Practice Enhancement Program advisor to create an EMR enhancement plan that reflects your unique practice priorities, please contact the OntarioMD EPEP team at epep@ontariomd.com or **1-866-339-1233**.

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