Best practices for switching your EHR

CGM Insights | White Paper

71%

of practices have used more than one EHR

Switching EHRs

While switching from one EHR to another is never easy, the reality is that so many practices make that decision because they are so dissatisfied with their current systems.

When considering your options for a new EHR, select a vendor that has a recognized reputation for quality, stability, and a customer-centric approach. The technology is important—it must be highly usable at the point of care and it must meet your practice's requirements—but it's also important to recognize that a new EHR vendor also brings the opportunity for a new relationship with a company that should be collaborative and friendly over the long term.

If you're thinking about changing your software, you're not alone.

According to this **Medical Economics EHR Report Card**, 71 percent of physician respondents indicated that their practice has already used more than one EHR. Dissatisfied with their current system, high-level physicians and admins almost always begin the transition process by asking, "What are the best practices for switching EHRs?"

The marketplace has partially answered where to start with an EHR switch. Practices are demanding more **user-friendly EHRs that offer better interoperability**. In other instances, practices are searching for specific functionality to help them thrive. Often, the need to switch EHRs is driven by frustration that your current software impedes rather than speeds your workflow.

Undertaking an EHR switch can feel daunting—after all, it's a big investment. You may be wondering:

- How do I identify the need for an EHR switch?
- What steps should I take to find the right vendor for my practice?
- How can I best prepare my practice to make this change?

To help you on your journey, the following are our best practices for switching EHRs.

#1: FOCUS ON YOUR FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Consider your daily workflow. What types of capabilities does your practice need from an EHR? Of course, physicians want **mobile capabilities, e-prescribing and integration with billing systems** but it's also important to look at the functional needs of your specific practice. List each functionality you want and create a scorecard to rate how well each vendor's solution can meet your needs. Be sure to ask for input from people in a variety of roles at your practice.

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#2: KEEP EMERGING NEEDS IN MIND

Identify EHR software that helps you use **data analytics** to benefit both your patients and your practice. From population health management to **merit-based incentive payment system** (MIPS) reporting that helps practices receive reimbursement for **value-based care**, your EHR's capabilities should offer both the tools and the interfaces that allow you to leverage the power of data. Your practice will also want an EHR with strong internal reporting functionality that allows you to create custom queries and leverage your data in the real world.

#3: BE SURE YOU'RE IN A POSITION TO PROMOTE INTEROPERABILITY

When evaluating new EHR software, ask how the candidate system operates with regard to interfaces with labs and hospitals in your area, how well it handles referral management, and does it support the newer initiatives evolving for on demand data requests such as Commonwell, Carequality, and Surescripts National Record Locator and Exchange. This is important with regard to the CMS Promoting Interoperability, a component of MIPS, compliance guidelines. Read more about how we help our practices with **MACRA/MIPS**.

#4: SEEK A VENDOR WITH A PROVEN TRACK RECORD OF SUCCESS WITH A PARTNER LIKE YOURS

Identify potential EHR vendors by reviewing published ranking lists and awards from third parties such as **KLAS Research**. Insight from your peers is also valuable and can be attained by attending industry conferences, or talking to other physicians in your specialty.

Look for an experienced EHR vendor that will still be here tomorrow. Unfortunately, the increasing complexity of the healthcare industry raises barriers that quickly push some smaller vendors out of the market.

#5: VERIFY EASE-OF-USE

An EHR that checks all the boxes on paper may not necessarily perform to your expectations in practice. When you demo the system, make sure it fits into YOUR workflow versus changing how you practice to accommodate the software. A great EHR is designed with the user in mind, helping you work the way you want to and reducing the time you spend on routine tasks.

#6: ENLIST A VARIETY OF POWER USERS TO GIVE THE EHR A TEST DRIVE

A system that works well for a physician may have shortcomings that only the administrative or billing staff can detect. Conversely, the same EHR that your office manager loves, may also be the EHR the physician loathes. After you've developed a shortlist of EHR products to test, gather people from different areas of your practice to test the EHR for issues. Be sure everyone is on board with the same EHR before making your final decision.

It's not just about looks. Consider each of the clinical workflows that impact your team. Think about ease of use during patient encounters and downstream tasks such as medication refills; managing orders, results, and notifications; messaging; and more.

Keep in mind that not everyone may get exactly what they want. A little give and take may be necessary in choosing the best solution overall for the organization.

#7: CONFIRM THE AVAILABILITY OF RESPONSIVE CUSTOMER SUPPORT

When you have questions concerning your EHR, you want answers as quickly as

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Why make the switch?

If you are frustrated with the lack of user-friendliness or interoperability afforded by your current electronic health record, you join more than half of all providers in sharing the same sentiment.

What are the biggest problems that practices have with different EHR systems?

- **34%** Lack of user-friendliness
- **25%** Lack of interoperability
- **15%** Cost
- **14%** Inability to customize without vendor assistance/add-on
- **5%** Interference with patient information

Source: Medical Economics EHR Report Card

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EHR and Practice Management

About CGM APRIMA

CGM APRIMA offers a uniquely fast, flexible, and powerful EHR designed to complement and simplify your workflow.

Developed to work the way you do, CGM APRIMA frees you from the constraints of templates with an intuitive, free-flowing interface designed to follow the flow of a patient visit.

The award-winning CGM APRIMA sets the benchmark for ease of use, speed, and flexibility.

WINNER:
Highest
Accuracy

SURESCRIPTS
WHITE
COAT
AWARD™
2022

WINNER:
Structured &
Codified SIG
Champion

SURESCRIPTS
WHITE
COAT
AWARD™
2022

possible. Ask EHR vendors whether they have a U.S.-based support team available during regular office hours and, again, look at published lists and rankings that detail the vendor's approach to support.

#8: DON'T SKIMP ON TRAINING

Proper training is essential for every EHR user. Not only can it help reduce the frustration of adapting to a new system, it can help users become proficient more quickly—lessening the impact on your practice and patients. The vendor you choose should offer robust training options to help you experience a smooth implementation. Although everyone who uses the system must attend training, it is also valuable to select a person or persons depending on the size of your practice to be a "super-user" who will cross train on clinical, billing, and admin capabilities.

#9: INVEST IN LONG-TERM GAIN

Although switching your practice's EHR system is a major undertaking, the gains achieved by increased interoperability, more easily sharing patient data and reducing administrative workload can reap long-term benefits. Find the EHR that's the right fit for your practice and focus on the future. Also be sure to consider the experience of the potential vendors in assisting practices in making a change. The path to successful change can be bumpy, but experience and proven processes can avoid many of the potholes along the way.

#10: CONTACT COMPUGROUP MEDICAL

Your next step is to add CGM APRIMA by CompuGroup Medical to your shortlist.

CompuGroup Medical has established a track record of industry praise, long-term client retention, and expertise in helping practices switch EHRs. With this pedigree, CGM APRIMA is an EHR you should know.

Reach out to CompuGroup Medical at (877) 564-4414 or email us at info.us@cgm.com to learn more about CGM APRIMA EHR and Practice Management.

About CompuGroup Medical

CompuGroup Medical is one of the leading e-health companies in the world. Its software products are designed to support all medical and organizational activities in doctors' offices, pharmacies, laboratories, hospitals and social welfare institutions. Its information services for all parties involved in the healthcare system and its web-based personal health records contribute towards safer and more efficient healthcare.

CompuGroup Medical's services are based on a unique customer base of more than 1.6 million users, including doctors, dentists, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals in inpatient and outpatient facilities. With locations in 19 countries and products in 56 countries worldwide, CompuGroup Medical is the e-health company with one of the highest coverages among healthcare professionals. More than 8,500 highly qualified employees support customers with innovative solutions for the steadily growing demands of the healthcare system.

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