

# Eye Center South Conquers a Mountain of Transcriptions

**NextGen Mobile supports a strong referral loop, the patient visit, and on-call physician responsibilities.**

## THE CHALLENGE

### The sheer volume of transcriptions was overwhelming

Eye Center South is determined to become a regional force for better healthcare. The ophthalmology practice began in Dothan, Alabama about forty years ago. They've expanded to include 14 locations throughout Alabama, Florida, and Georgia. In the last two years, they have incorporated optometry and vision care, with plans to continue to add more services in the future.

With growth comes inevitable administration challenges. For Eye Center South, one challenge was the sheer volume of medical transcription. The vast majority of patients come from referrals, which means results of each office visit, procedure, and surgery must be communicated back to the referring provider. Doctors dictate tons of notes. Three or four staff people were needed to transcribe letters and other communications. Even with these dedicated human resources, the practice often fell behind on transcriptions.

## THE SOLUTION

According to Travis Wright, clinical director at Eye Center South, the practice has been on the NextGen Enterprise platform for several years. "NextGen® solutions allow us to make our doctors more efficient and increase our patient load. All the typical things you hear their platform does, we've actually done," says Wright.



## CLIENT PROFILE

### Eye Center South

- Began in Dothan, Alabama; now has 14 locations across Alabama, Florida, and Georgia
- Provides effective treatment for cataracts, glaucoma, retina disorders, and more; services include eye exams and surgical procedures
- 29 providers in ophthalmology and optometry

### NEXTGEN HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS

- NextGen® Mobile
- NextGen® Enterprise EHR
- NextGen® Automated Document Sharing

## HIGHLIGHTS



**4 FTEs** reallocated to tasks other than transcription—tasks more directly related to patient care and revenue generation



**Stronger relationships** with referring providers



Cellphone pics of eye **uploaded directly into EHR**—saves on cost and helps generate revenue



**Greater convenience** for on-call physicians

When first presented with NextGen® Mobile, physicians and staff at Eye Center South were eager to try it out. Set up for NextGen Mobile takes around 60 days, from signing a contract to be up and running. During this time, testing takes place and provider preferences are determined. NextGen Mobile offers different options for transcription, including editing of a voice-to-text transcript by a professional service. This option is highly customizable according to each provider's preferences and practice needs.

## THE RESULTS

### Ease of referral letters

Travis Wright explains: "After the physician sees a patient, for example, following up on a corneal procedure or a cataract surgery, he or she walks out of the room, cellphone in hand, clicks a button on the NextGen Mobile app, starts dictating, and then moves on to the next patient. Right then and there, the physician can get quick, accurate information back to the referring provider. Alternatively, the physician can complete dictations after seeing patients, from the convenience of their home, if they wish.

"If a custom letter must be sent out, it goes to NextGen Healthcare's transcription service, they type it up, and within 24 to 48 hours it's back and ready to be sent out. The process takes about 48 hours from start to finish. Before we had NextGen Mobile, it took a week and a half, or more."

Many options are available. For example, physicians can request STAT turnaround, with correspondence back in 2 hours, with an additional cost.

Sebastian B. Heersink, MD, cataract and laser refractive surgeon and cornea specialist at Eye Center South, lists ease of closing the referral loop as the number one benefit of NextGen Mobile. "I see a patient, spend about 45 seconds dictating, and it's done. The most significant aspect is ease of use. Press two buttons and it's handled," says Dr. Heersink.

While providers can use pre-formatted, out-of-the-box templates, transcription services enable them to create custom letters and add a personal touch to their correspondence. Dr. Heersink often does so; for example, asking the referring physician about their family's wellbeing or sharing insights into the patient under their care.

Speed, accuracy, and personalization of correspondence helps strengthen relationships with referring providers. With about 95 percent of Eye Center South's patients coming from referrals, these relationships are extremely important, both to each individual physician's success and the practice as a whole.

Once correspondence is ready and approved, Eye Center South uses NextGen Automated Document Sharing to send it out. This solution automates all steps in the process from within NextGen Enterprise EHR, using rule-based programming.

Thanks to NextGen Mobile and NextGen Automated Document Sharing, Eye Center South was able to reallocate four full-time equivalents (FTEs) to tasks other than transcription. The organization no longer needs to employ any transcriptionists. Staff resources were reallocated from administrative support to functions that support patient care more directly and help generate revenue. "When you consider the savings that result from reallocating FTEs, the expense for NextGen Mobile is far from unreasonable," says Travis Wright.

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**Sebastian B. Heersink, MD**  
Cataract and Laser Refractive  
Surgeon and Cornea Specialist  
Eye Center South

## Cellphone support for patient care

According to Dr. Heersink, another key benefit of NextGen Mobile is that allows him to take pictures during an eye exam using his cellphone, show the images to patients, and have them seamlessly integrate into the EHR.

“I have an adapter that slips right on the slit lamp camera, so it takes literally five seconds to take a picture of the patient’s eye. With NextGen Mobile, I can make an annotation right on the picture—for example, noting a corneal ulcer, age-related macular degeneration, or cataract,” explains Dr. Heersink.

“Of all the things we do, this may be the one patients find most impressive. They think the technology is mindboggling, which is quite funny when you think of all the super-expensive technology we use in our practice.”

Within a matter of seconds, pictures can be sent to the patient’s chart in the EHR. Before NextGen Mobile, photos would be emailed to office staff who would upload them to the EHR, adding to the practice’s labor costs.

Dr. Heersink points out that clinical photos uploaded to the patient’s chart in the EHR help generate revenue. These photos can also be shared with colleagues in support of clinical care.

## Less hassle for on-call physicians

Questions and refill requests from patients during off hours are triaged by techs, who forward them to an on-call physician as needed. Using NextGen Mobile, the physician can conveniently pull up the patient’s profile, access their chart, approve or disapprove the request, and send a message back to the staff with guidance.

“The ease of being on-call is a huge benefit,” says Dr. Heersink. “When a call comes in, instead of having to stop what I’m doing, find a computer and a wi-fi connection and log in, I can just look up what I need on my cellphone. I find the patient’s chart, determine what meds they’re on, order a refill, or answer the request as necessary.”

“If I’m reading a bedtime story to one of my children or even with my family at the movies, the interruption is not a big hassle. I can answer the question and quickly get back to what I’m doing.”

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# HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

Partner with us at **855-510-6398** or **results@nextgen.com**