

Case Study >>>>

Eye Center Gains Financial Rewards and Improves Patient Care with EPM/EHR System

As a result of rapid expansion, Barnet Dulaney Perkins (BDP) Eye Center needed a more efficient means to generate reports and manage patients. The practice utilized a UNIX-based system called PRISM, which for several key reasons, such as a company buy-out and increasingly out-of-date technology, became insufficient in meeting BDP's needs.

Mark Rosenberg, Administrator at BDP, comments, "Prism's platform was not delivering the interconnectivity we needed among our offices. As our number of users expanded, we maxed out the system's capacity. Plus, we couldn't easily create customized reports, and we worried about Prism's long-term stability."

BDP assigned an internal team to explore potential solutions, led by accounts/receivable (A/R) director and software system administrator, Carrie Clark, a 17-year BDP veteran. After a year investigating solutions, evaluating pricing, conducting site visits, and presenting research to practice partners, only one company was left standing—NextGen Healthcare.

Clark explains, "Five important criteria solidified our decision. NextGen Healthcare delivered an integrated electronic health record (EHR) and enterprise practice management (EPM) solution, which is open database compliant; the company has a history of financial stability; the software can easily meet the needs of multiple practices; and the scheduling system was unparalleled."



Overview

PRACTICE

Barnet Dulaney Perkins Eye Center
Phoenix, AZ
www.goodeyes.com

PRACTICE PROFILE

Serving Arizona for more than 30 years, the physicians of Barnet Dulaney Perkins Eye Center are dedicated to providing comprehensive eye care at each stage of life. From regular check-up examinations to surgery within multiple sub-specialties of ophthalmology, its doctors and surgeons are dedicated to providing each patient with a treatment plan that is customized to maintain visual health for years to come.

BUSINESS PROBLEM

In the face of rapid growth and increasingly outdated technology, Barnet Dulaney Perkins required a more efficient means to achieve connectivity among its offices, generate detailed reports, and manage patients.

SOLUTION

Implemented NextGen® EPM and NextGen® EHR software and gained an integrated practice management and electronic health records solution capable of meeting the growing needs of its multiple practices.

PRODUCT DISTINCTIONS

- Improved, and more secure, access to patient data
- Ophthalmology-specific content and modules
- Better clinical documentation and coding
- Comprehensive interfacing

BENEFITS

- Improved processes through paper elimination
- Increased revenue/reduced expenses
- Improved collections/billing
- Gained ophthalmology-specific content
- Automated document generation and reporting
- Enhanced exam/scheduling speed and accuracy
- Alleviated staffing challenges

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Rosenberg adds, “Also critical, we needed an enterprise-level system with a priority and focus on ophthalmology. We wanted a technology partner committed to keeping pace with advancing technology via continual upgrades. When evaluating providers, we were most concerned about IT deployment because, at the time, we had about \$22 million in revenue and roughly 210 employees—and we expected to double in size over the next five to ten years. What’s more, roughly seven years ago, we were one of a small number of businesses operating Citrix systems, and NextGen software was one of the few products that could function on a Citrix platform. After speaking with existing NextGen Healthcare customers, we saw a solid blueprint for implementation—and as a result, the decision to go with NextGen Healthcare was clear.”

Gaining an integrated, proven solution

First, BDP implemented NextGen’s Windows-based EPM solution, which delivers superior return-on-investment by streamlining front and back office administration, improving efficiencies, reducing A/R days, and enhancing the quality of patient care.

Two years later, BDP implemented NextGen’s EHR solution, which delivers all the patient information needed to make effective care decisions. By integrating with BDP’s EPM system, NextGen EHR helps streamline workflow, increase productivity, and enhance the quality of care.

BDP also deployed NextGen’s image control system (ICS), which indexes, stores, and manages all scanned documents within the NextGen system—as well as NextGen Optik, which manages BDP’s optical shop inventory.

Achieving financial rewards, while improving patient care

Since implementing its NextGen solution, BDP doubled its offices to 14 locations and expanded to 320 employees—all while enjoying ongoing financial and patient care benefits.

Increased revenue/reduced expenses

Since implementing its NextGen solution, BDP’s administrative costs (as a total percentage of revenue) have gone down each year as revenue continues to increase.

In addition, programs such as PQRI (Physician Quality Reporting Initiative) deliver continuing financial rewards. Rosenberg comments, “We initially resisted implementing PQRI because we believed that its administrative demands would not justify any financial gains. But, because NextGen software already incorporates PQRI, we implemented it system-wide within two weeks. As a result, we are quickly and easily enjoying bonuses offered by Medicare.”

The NextGen system’s ability to interface with key BDP systems saves the practice \$200,000 a year in expenses. Rosenberg explains, “NextGen interfaces with a computer-based intelligence system used to execute Lasik surgical plans. This intelligence system reviews and tracks post-operative Lasik results and develops surgery strategies that optimize future outcomes. Once that system was integrated with the NextGen system, we brought our rates for second surgical refractive enhancements—a procedure we try to avoid—down by 20 percent. Today, our second enhancement rate is less than three percent. We’ve eliminated the manual data entry required before NextGen and we now save \$200,000 a year in expenses.”

Clark adds, “NextGen EHR software helped us to reduce paper expenses. Particularly, having the capacity to scan insurance cards is a huge benefit.” Despite the considerable financial perks NextGen software delivers, BDP notes that the biggest return on investment comes from improving patient care through better documentation and enhanced operational processes.

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Improved collections/billing

Since implementing the NextGen solution, the cost of running BDP's billing department—including posting and collections—runs around three percent of revenues. "This rate is significantly below industry norms. I attribute our success in this area to NextGen software's outstanding utilities and to that department's excellent team leadership," comments Rosenberg.

"With the NextGen system, we save time, effort, and energy in expediting our billing and collections process. We automatically post EOB (explanation of benefits) without pulling up each patient in the system," says Clark.

Gained ophthalmology-specific content

NextGen EHR software's built-in ophthalmic-specific content addresses common problems and diagnoses; chief complaints; history of present illness; review of systems; eye exams; social and family history; allergies and medications; and symptom and treatment plans.

"The NextGen EHR software's knowledge base content—out of the box—was light years ahead of us. Since implementing NextGen EHR, we've been able to enhance and customize our templates to meet our specific needs. It's amazing that NextGen Healthcare delivers stellar content for all of our sub-specialty areas. Specifically, NextGen software has strong general ophthalmology content—a specialty that relies on speed and efficiency—as well as outstanding retina content—a specialty with an incredible degree of complexity. I attribute our success using NextGen software to its well-thought out templates, remarkable built-in workflow features, and easy customization that allows us to streamline our efforts without requiring too much deviation from the core product," says Rosenberg.

Automated document generation and reporting

With NextGen EHR, referral letters, chart notes, prescription refill orders, educational materials, and consent forms are generated automatically. "NextGen's WorkLog Manager makes tasking much more efficient. Plus, with this solution, it is easy to generate and manipulate reports," says Rosenberg. Clark adds, "The ability to run fast reports on trends and conversion rates is critical to our practice."

Dr. William Schiff—one of the first BDP doctors to go live on NextGen EHR—comments, "With NextGen EHR, documentation across providers is very consistent, making it easier to understand another doctor's notes. This is very important, especially when I'm on call tapping into NextGen EHR from offsite, in order to effectively take care of another doctor's patients. In addition, NextGen EHR helps expedite patient exams with its fast documentation. And, it makes it easy to print an exam, if necessary, without the use of a photo copier. Finally, generating referral letters is as simple as clicking a button—previously doctors would need to dictate the letter and an administrative person would type it up."



Many BDP doctors are enjoying the system's ease of use. Dr. Schiff comments, "I was comfortable using the system in about a week. You soon realize how NextGen helps expedite processes that were previously slowing you down."

Enhanced exam/scheduling speed and accuracy

With NextGen software, the surgical scheduling process is dramatically improved and streamlined. "Now, it is easier to check-in patients and schedule surgeries, especially for doctors who travel. We have many locations and bill under several tax ID numbers—so the ability to have one logical hub for appointment scheduling is a significant improvement," comments Clark.

Alleviated staffing challenges

Training users on the NextGen system was straightforward and trouble-free. "The concise logic of the NextGen system makes training new users simple. Plus, since the NextGen EHR software implementation, we haven't had to hire as many auditors. We have quadrupled in size without adding staff—this would not have been possible without NextGen software," explains Clark.

Rosenberg concludes, "Today, our ratio between revenue and the number of full time employees (FTE) is clearly better than the industry standard. Most billing departments have one FTE per million, and we have a

million and a half per FTE. I'm thrilled that we expanded revenues without adding additional staff overhead—the net result is that the NextGen solution helped us experience proportionally more growth, with incrementally less overhead."

Looking forward

Rosenberg comments, "I have confidence that NextGen Healthcare will be current with industry demands 10 to 20 years from now—I don't believe other companies will evolve in the same manner. Since the company's inception, it has been ahead of the ballgame—and it continues to be at the technological forefront. There's no question that NextGen Healthcare delivers the best products of its kind, especially for those who want to make an intelligent long-term investment. In that respect, I believe NextGen Healthcare stands alone," says Rosenberg.

Clark concludes, "Seven years after our implementation, NextGen Healthcare's support is still unbelievably high quality. The company is always available to help us modify our system and the product itself delivers the flexibility needed to continually improve. Plus, I've really appreciated the opportunities that the company provides to constantly train and grow with the system via meetings throughout the year, both at the annual Users' Group meeting, and through regional training."

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For full information about the features and functions of NextGen Healthcare's products and services, please contact us at www.nextgen.com/contact.

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