

# Case Study >>>>

## Nevada Health Centers Enhance Care While Improving Financial Outlook

The primary mission of Nevada Health Centers, Inc. (NVHC)—and that of other FQHCs (Federally Qualified Health Centers)—is to provide healthcare services to everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. As such, operating cost-effectively and efficiently, while also maximizing federal funding opportunities, is critical.

NVHC faced challenges tracking payments and appropriately billing claims due to its outdated management software, which at the time was the only solution available for Community Health Centers (CHCs) and FQHCs. Cathy Roe, Director of Billing for NVHC, explains, “When we changed a patient’s financial class, their charges and payments sat in different accounts. Not all claims were billed, and not all the necessary statements were generated. We faced numerous customer service complaints. Also, once children turned 18, it was hard to remove them from the family account. We needed an integrated EPM and EHR solution that addressed these challenges.”

When it was clear that its existing solution was not delivering the ongoing functionality that the clinic required, NVHC requested proposals from other vendors. It also elected a committee to evaluate potential solutions consisting of the Director of Development, the Chief Medical Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, a staff doctor, the Director of Billing, the Regional Clinical Director, and the Director of IT.



### Overview

#### PRACTICE

Nevada Health Centers, Inc.  
[www.nvhealthcenters.org](http://www.nvhealthcenters.org)

#### PRACTICE PROFILE

A private, not-for-profit Federally Qualified Health Center operating 26 medical and dental centers throughout Nevada, including the Nevada Health Centers Mammovan, Miles for Smiles buses, School Based Health Centers, two Health Care for the Homeless clinics in Las Vegas, and seven WIC Centers in Clark County.

#### BUSINESS PROBLEM

Outdated management software created challenges tracking payments and appropriately billing claims. The practice sought an integrated EPM and EHR solution that delivered evolving, up-to-date functionality designed to address its needs.

#### SOLUTION

Implemented NextGen® EPM and NextGen® EHR software and subsequently implemented NextGen® Image Control System (ICS).

#### PRODUCT DISTINCTIONS

- Improved, more secure, data access
- Better clinical documentation, coding, and encounter billing
- Health maintenance/disease management modules
- UDS, HDC, FQHC, DOQ-IT, PQRI, and Ryan White reporting
- CHC and FQHC service, training, and experience
- Improved patient communications
- Ongoing product development/enhancements

#### BENEFITS

- Enhanced quality of patient care
- Upgraded documentation/simplified reporting
- Gained superior customer service
- Improved overall efficiencies/reduced costs
- Increased funding opportunities, most recently through a \$1.4 million dollar grant

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## Seeking an integrated database solution with proven results

It came down to two potential solutions. “We chose NextGen Healthcare because the company delivered an integrated database. Its practice management software featured WorkLog manager, which helps ensure that tasks are completed at the right time, by the right person. Also critical, NextGen software delivers claim scrubbing to search for errors/missing information—and apply required edits—to ensure all claims are accurate and complete,” says Roe.

NVHC kicked off its NextGen EPM (enterprise practice management) software implementation in January 2005 and started with NextGen EHR (electronic health record) software in September 2006. Roe comments, “We employed a ‘train-the-trainer’ approach where NextGen Healthcare brought a core group of our billing and clinic managers up to speed on the solution, and these individuals helped roll out the implementation across our enterprise over a five week period.”

The center is also using the NextGen Image Control System (ICS), which indexes, stores, and manages all scanned documents within the NextGen system.

## Enhancing patient care through improved efficiencies while gaining financial stability

With the NextGen system, NVHC positively transformed key financial aspects of its clinic while improving patient care and reporting. Since implementing its NextGen solution, NVHC enjoys the following benefits:

### *Enhanced patient care*

Today, NVHC can better track patients by key health indicators. Roe explains, “By improving patient tracking using the NextGen solution, we’re providing higher quality care for a larger population, without increasing our staff size. Doctors can access patient information from multiple locations. And better, faster access to patient information also plays a huge role in delivering improved care.”

Dr. Darren Rahaman, a family practice physician with NVHC, comments, “We are already working to track patients with chronic conditions like diabetes to make sure they are receiving regular check-ups and taking the necessary medications. I’m interested in taking advantage of NextGen software’s reporting capabilities to better monitor these types of patients moving forward.”

Dr. Rahaman is also impressed with NextGen software’s prescription templates. As he explains, “A lot of our patients either don’t take—or forget to take—their medication. The templates help me better manage patient care. Plus, we’re excited to start using the NextGen system’s ePrescribing capabilities down the road.”

Patient visits flow more smoothly since the NextGen software installation. “I’m thrilled that the NextGen solution helps us expedite patient visits. Our back office staff now updates patient information before a doctor enters the exam room so that we have patient vitals at our finger tips. This helps us spend more quality time with patients and improve the quality of the care we provide,” concludes Rahaman.



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## *Upgraded documentation and simplified reporting*

When using paper charts, NVHC could not report on clinical quality measures. Now, with NextGen software, this type of reporting is at the top of its priority list. “We can quickly determine if patients with a chronic illness like diabetes are getting the proper exams and treatment.

And, because we can track clinical outcomes—and quickly, easily report on them—we’ve applied for grants that we previously would not have been able to pursue. In fact, NextGen recently helped us win a \$1.4 million grant to expand our EHR implementation across our enterprise,” Roe comments.

Referral tracking is also made much easier thanks to NextGen. Roe explains, “Our previous method of referral tracking involved keeping a stack of charts on a doctor’s desk. Now, with NextGen’s referral management capabilities, we generate an automatic referral tracking report.” Dr. Rahaman adds, “NextGen’s referral process is outstanding. I especially like that patient notes are automatically attached to referral letters. We’re delivering better patient care because this process happens quickly, efficiently, and automatically.”

Pre-NextGen, the NVHC claims process was not efficient or effective. “We could not manage front desk data entry well, and statements weren’t being properly generated, so claims would come back incorrect. With NextGen software, we can run a report of payments received during the time frame of our choice. We can use the NextGen system’s canned reports—which meet roughly 90% of our needs—or easily create customized reports. It used to take a month to manually pull together our Medicaid reports. Now it takes 30 minutes,” says Roe.

Dr. Rahaman adds, “Using NextGen software, we’re able to automate messaging throughout our practice. As a result, I receive messages regarding my patients directly in my inbox in real-time, which has solved a multitude of communication-based challenges for our practice, has enabled me to see more patients, and has alleviated patient complaints.”

Finally, NVHC is saving time and improving patient satisfaction with patient education tools. “These tools have saved me a considerable amount of time, which I used to spend looking up English to Spanish translations. Now, patient information—in the right language—is available at the click of a button,” explains Dr. Rahaman.



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### *Reduced costs and increased revenue*

NextGen software enabled NVHC to eliminate its commercial clearinghouse and begin to execute direct claims. “As a result, we’re much more efficient, and we save \$42,000 a year. We also save a considerable amount of time—payment lag time is down to nine days. Previously, it was 30-45 days. What’s more, without NextGen software, we most likely would have needed to hire more help to handle our growing accounts receivable needs,” explains Roe.

Dr. Rahaman adds, “NextGen EHR software’s coding is great. Previously, it was more difficult and labor-intensive to code a patient visit because it took time to search for—and enter—the proper codes for each patient. Now, the system helps us code automatically. I find that I’m upcoding by one. Plus, automated coding makes the checkout process much more efficient.”

### *Gained superior customer service*

“NextGen Healthcare responds within a half hour to our customer service requests. When it comes to NextGen EPM software support, NextGen Healthcare is one step ahead of its competitors and demonstrates a high degree of knowledge about CHC-related issues,” says Roe.

### *A partnership focused on continuing growth*

“NextGen Healthcare delivers a dynamic product that is always improving. With each new release, and every knowledge base template (KBM) upgrade, the templates keep getting better. As a result, we experience a real, positive impact in how we practice medicine. It is exciting to see things on our ‘wish list’ show up in an actual upgrade,” explains Roe.

NVHC looks forward to continued participation at the NextGen Healthcare Users’ Group Meeting. “We come away from the Users’ Group Meeting with so many great ideas regarding how we can more effectively use—and enhance—the NextGen system based on our needs. We also have the opportunity to share our customizations, such as the dashboard we created to illustrate average patient waiting times,” explains Travis Cox, IT Director at NVHC.

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