



Case Study

MediNotes in Practice



Vincent W. Gatto, M.D.

When Dr. Vincent Gatto, Obstetrics and Gynecology, began using an electronic health record (EHR) in 2000, he was the only one of 40 doctors in the Bond Clinic, a multi specialty clinic in Winterhaven, Florida to automate his patient records. Four years later, Dr. Gatto is reaping the benefits of an automated system within his own office and says the system has paid for itself many times over.

Dr. Gatto saw MediNotes e, an EHR by MediNotes Corporation, at a medical conference. He was so impressed that he bought the system and began using it almost immediately. A separate interface program was written to allow MediNotes to populate patient charts from data input into his practice management system, MISYS. The interface helped the EHR system get up and running quickly, and allows for one-time data input by a staff member that works for both programs.

By using MediNotes e, his office has eliminated a transcriptionist, saving approximately \$50,000 a year. However, the rest of his staff members are not concerned about job security. Rather, they are using the system to improve the office's entire workflow. For example, Dr. Gatto's midwives are able to access prenatal records securely from home. The hospital accesses maternity records remotely for charting purposes. His staff uses MediNotes to input patient data as well as pull up the correct template for the office visit. Office notes are printed for him to use when he completes his admission history, as well as inputting orders for his surgical patients.

In addition to the transcription savings, Dr. Gatto said his biggest savings comes from time that he and his staff no longer waste on shuffling paper anymore. "Time is saved in being able to immediately access patient records to answer telephone messages or medicine refills. My staff saves so much time in not needing to pull a paper chart every time the telephone rings. They can immediately access patient records right at their workstation, answer that question, and get on with their work. They don't need to put the caller on hold, get up from the desk, look for the chart, and riffle through the chart for the answer before getting back on the telephone with the patient. Of course, sometimes the paper chart wouldn't be immediately accessible, so after leaving someone on hold for five minutes, we had to tell them that we would call them back. This is very frustrating for both patients and staff," said Dr. Gatto.

"Time is money, and therefore, I am saving a lot of money. My office cannot function without MediNotes e," said Dr. Gatto. "A dictation system and reliance on obtaining paper charts to see patients is archaic and inefficient. I can't imagine ever going back to that."

Dr. Gatto estimates that it took his office about two months to feel proficient with MediNotes e, compared to a year or more for other EHR systems on the market. One of the biggest benefits of the system, according to Dr. Gatto, is the ease of use. "New users can't believe how easy it is to use," he said. "People who have no computer knowledge can learn this system quickly."

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