

### **Physicians Improve Productivity and Patient Care Using gloEMR**

When Thomas Perkins, D.O., joined the Michigan Knee and Shoulder Institute in Auburn Hills, Michigan, as an associate, the practice operated much like every other orthopedic group. Like many physicians, Dr. Perkins and practice founder John Samani, M.D., each examined an array of patients and took notes on paper as they went. At the end of the day they would dictate their notes to micro-tapes which were then sent to a transcriptionist to type for the doctors' review and eventual filing in the patient's chart.

A year later, with government-mandated deadlines looming, Drs. Samani and Perkins wanted to take a progressive stance regarding the conversion of their practice to electronic medical records (EMR). Dr. Samani had been following the technology for six years; now the two practice leaders searched for a technology that would work best for them. They wanted to eliminate the paper and charts involved in operating a medical practice, improve their ability to provide patient care and simultaneously maintain normal working hours.

The physicians spent two more years investigating EMR solutions, discovering that the early offerings would have slowed them down rather than made them more efficient, compromising their overarching goal of providing better patient care. Following their analysis, they purchased a product that immediately allowed them to eliminate their high transcription costs—as much as \$30,000 a year—through a voice-recognition capability.

Despite its transcription cost advantages, the system crashed relatively frequently, and support technicians were located far away in Dallas, Texas. When the system was down, the doctors would lose multiple hours—even multiple days—waiting for remote repair service, again compromising their goal of improved patient care through technology. Moreover, even when the system was up and running, it was cumbersome to use. “We had to go through verbal gymnastics to save, close or send a note, requiring three or four extra steps and negatively impacting our productivity,” Perkins recalls.

At that time, Yaw Kwakye, a talented developer with a gift for translating doctor feedback into usable software created his own EMR company and application – one that was physician-friendly and actively promoted improved patient care, allowing doctors to spend more time with patients rather than taking notes. Kwakye named his newfound company gloStream, and delivered gloEMR, the organization's flagship product, to Drs. Samani and Perkins. The Michigan Knee and Shoulder Institute thus became a test site for the gloEMR solution.

As gloStream has grown, and with technology veteran Mike Sappington hired in 2006 as gloStream's CEO, the Michigan Knee and Shoulder Institute has grown as well. Today, work-life balance is achieved, productivity is much improved, and product support and service is local and much more accessible. Most importantly, Drs. Samani and Perkins have met their critically important self-set goal of enhancing the patient care experience through technology.

A primary driver of successes in productivity and patient care lies in gloEMR's voice-recognition technology which has proven to be 98 percent accurate. Drs. Samani and Perkins can see their dictation on a computer screen as they talk, and can make immediate edits to any uncommon words. Transcription costs have been eliminated completely, since a document is produced in real time as the physician completes dictation during the exam. Thanks to the accuracy of gloEMR's voice recognition capability, Drs. Samani and Perkins can spend more quality time with their patients and less time manually dictating and taking notes, promoting improved patient care.

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“Any time dictation is transferred or leaves the office, there’s always the possibility you won’t get it back,” Samani warns. “With gloEMR, we no longer need to send out dictation. We receive 10 to 12 requests a day from referring doctors, workers’ compensation inquiries and patients themselves for copies of records. Previously, it would take a month to get the copies back from a transcriptionist. Now, with gloEMR, the records can be sent to those requesting them immediately.”

Drs. Samani and Perkins also have used gloEMR to customize a number of templates that has made note-taking during the examination far easier than the practice’s previous paper-based system. As the doctors conduct examinations, assistants in the room complete the template forms on a computer.

“gloEMR’s templates have eliminated the time-consuming task of manually completing a patient’s record, allowing me to spend more time solving their problems rather than simply documenting them,” Perkins reports. “I can take care of an entire plan for a patient at the click of a button. Surgical consent forms, orthopedic complaint forms and more are available with just one click.” Samani estimates that each of the physicians has gained back an additional two hours each day.

The time savings inherent in gloEMR allows the doctors to spend more time delivering quality care to their patients. Dr. Perkins expects gloEMR to pay for itself two times over in a period of two-and-a-half years. He is especially happy with the local-service capability, should he ever need it.

“Ninety percent of our previous system’s problems could be fixed via the Internet, but the remaining 10 percent would cause us to shut down for hours or days. From a patient care perspective, any interruption in service compromises our ability to provide the best care to our patients, as critical patient information such as allergies or prescription records would be unavailable. gloStream’s local partnerships for technology support set it apart from other EMR systems on the market, providing real value to physician practices’ requirements for uninterrupted patient care and service.”

“gloEMR has allowed Dr. Perkins and me to improve the care we provide our patients, and to drastically increase productivity within our practice,” Samani says. “At the same time, we’re able to eliminate two hours of medical recordkeeping activities per day, allowing us to spend our time with our patients or our families rather than paperwork, which is very important to both of us.”

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