

Hillsdale Hospital: From Charting Backlog to Physician Efficiency

About

Hillsdale Hospital is a small, multi-specialty healthcare system with nine locations in south-central Michigan. Hillsdale Hospital, which was recently ranked in the top 6% of the nation's rural hospitals, is the only hospital in the county of Hillsdale, Michigan. The hospital sees patients from surrounding counties as well.

Challenge

Hillsdale Hospital both employs and partners with a number of specialty providers so patients can receive expanded services at the hospital without having to travel to surrounding counties for care. This combination of employed specialty providers and specialty service line partnerships helps Hillsdale Hospital keep patients in their local network while increasing the number of services they can provide to their community.

For orthopedics care, the hospital does both: employing two full-time surgeons while partnering with the University of Toledo Orthopaedics for three more part-time surgeons who can take on their own patient load while also supporting call coverage.

One of those full-time surgeons is Dr. Parthiv Patel, an orthopedist at Hillsdale Hospital. Dr. Patel was working with an in-person scribe to assist at the hospital's orthopedic clinic. However, most of the scribe's time was taken up with more operational tasks and the scribe was eventually transitioned to a different position. Hillsdale Hospital needed to find someone to take the previous scribe's place.



Hillsdale Hospital



Rural Hospitals Face Additional Challenges

Retaining and improving bottom line profits is a key priority for rural hospitals that have been hit hard by COVID. Often when considering how to grow, patient outmigration and physician referral leakage are top of mind. Patient retention and well-maintained physician relationships are key to maintaining a strong financial standing, especially for rural hospitals.

"25% of rural hospitals nationwide are at a high risk of closing unless their financial situations improve. Of these hospitals, 82% are considered highly essential to their communities," according to an annual Guidehouse analysis¹.

1. <https://blog.stratason.com/reversing-patient-outmigration-physician-referral-leakage>

Solution

Seth Gibson, director of outpatient services at Hillsdale Hospital, had heard about Augmedix. After viewing a demonstration and speaking with other Augmedix hospital clients, he chose to partner with Augmedix for its real-time **Augmedix Live** solution. With Augmedix, physicians log into a HIPAA-secured automatic service platform via a smartphone or Google Glass. The platform leverages natural language processing (NLP) and speech-to-text technology to generate sentences based on the audio stream from the patient-physician conversation. The entire process is managed by a specialty trained medical documentation specialist (MDS) to ensure quality and accuracy.

Throughout the encounter, the MDS can customize the automated data as needed while also adding relevant observations manually. An MDS can also reduce gaps in data by reminding the physician of the need to capture missing data like medication history or allergies. They can also suggest reminders about overdue vaccinations or other preventative measures.

At the end of the visit, Augmedix allows the physician to dictate medical decisions into the system to complete the note. From there, data service technology organizes and structures the visit data into an accurate, complete medical note for the patient encounter, which is then uploaded to the EHR for the physician's approval and sign-off.

The Augmedix MDS can also provide live clinical support as well by ordering labs, tests, and medications as well as managing referrals and patient reminders. They can even manage charge capture to ensure accurate reimbursement. In a hospital setting, they can manage admissions, discharges, and transfers.

Results

Gibson is extremely pleased with Augmedix. "From my perspective, as an administrator involved with strategy and operations, Augmedix has been great to work with," Gibson said. Implementation went smoothly, as did onboarding for Dr. Patel. "Communication was solid, and we had no issues." In fact, other departments have taken notice of Augmedix success and have been evaluating OB-GYN physicians as the next phase of rollout.

Results have included:

- Working down a large backlog of charts for Dr. Patel
- Significantly improving throughput in the orthopedic clinic, which helps patients be seen more quickly



"Augmedix is saving me a significant amount of time, and in turn making me more effective and efficient with my patients."

Dr. Parthiv Patel
Orthopedic Surgeon,
Hillsdale Hospital

