

Transplant Center*

After implementing eHealth Connect,[®] this nationally-ranked West Coast Academic Medical Center evaluates and lists transplant patients in weeks instead of months.

With eHealth Technologies taking the burden of medical records retrieval off of patients and staff, transplant patients are being evaluated for transplant in just 2–3 weeks instead of months.

“It’s hard enough to tell a patient the devastating news that they likely need a kidney transplant—but to make matters worse, then you tell them they need to gather all their medical records from the past decade or more before they can be evaluated to be added to the list,” says the nurse manager at a West Coast Academic Medical Center. “These patients are very ill. And you need all those tests, all those images and reports to take the next steps to getting better—it’s overwhelming. Many patients go into total emotional shutdown.”

That’s exactly why this West Coast Transplant Center turned to eHealth Technologies for record retrieval and organization. The eHealth Connect solution has helped reduce its record retrieval from 8–10 weeks, down to as little as 3 days, taking the burden of manual collection off both the patient and staff.

“We’re taking the workload out of the patient’s hands, but not putting it on our nurses’. It’s had a great impact because nurses can focus on their patients as opposed to looking for data.”

—Nurse manager, West Coast Academic Medical Center Transplant Center

Complex Records from Many Sources

As one of the nation’s fastest growing transplant centers, more than 200 kidney transplant are performed each calendar year. But getting on the transplant list is no simple task. The process is long and time-consuming, and having access to the most accurate and complete patient records is the first critical step to evaluation.

Transplant patients are some of the most complex medical cases, with records from multiple providers spanning many years. For this center, the burden to collect these records often fell on the patient.

“Patients are very sick and often sitting in a dialysis chair three days a week. They would ask us, ‘how am I supposed to get all this information?’,” says the nurse manager.

In many instances, patients would arrive at their first appointments with only some or none of their records in hand. It was a frustrating process that resulted in rescheduled appointments and delayed evaluation and treatment by months. Even with the assistance of nursing staff, it could take 10 weeks or more to manually gather the most basic information required by the regulatory authorities.

*A nationally-ranked West Coast Academic Medical Center. eHealth Technologies shares success stories while protecting the confidentiality of our clients as needed in a competitive business environment.

C A S E S T U D Y

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Searchable and Organized

When collected manually, records and data are received as faxes, CDs, postal mail, and electronic reports. Clinicians must then scan and organize hundreds of documents for each patient—a lengthy and time-consuming process that can take hours a day.

“We would receive a 300 page stack of paper from one doctor for one patient,” says the nurse manager. “It was a lot to sort through.”

As the Transplant Center moves to a complete electronic medical record, eHealth Technologies gathers and indexes the records and delivers them directly to its EMR. Clinical information for each patient is organized in a searchable format this is easy to use. “The records are categorized and organized by eHealth Technologies,” says the nurse manager. “Nurses can go in and pull what they need. It saves so much time.”

Decreased Wait Times for Evaluation

The Center receives nearly 250 kidney transplant referrals a month. Nurses work with an average of 60 patients a week awaiting evaluation.

Once a patient’s records are received, his or her case is presented to a selection committee where patients are either added to the transplant list or referred to another provider for care. By working with eHealth Technologies, clinicians have access to the full picture of their patients’ health and histories within days, reducing the evaluation period down to 2–3 weeks instead of several months.

Even once a patient is on a transplant list, it takes years before the right match may be found. During this time, patients must stay healthy and keep current with annual labs and exams—such as cardiac studies and cancer screenings. The eHealth Connect solution helps keep current records on each patient and ensures they are ready if the right match is found.

“With eHealth Technologies all the information is there,” says the nurse manager.

Giving Back Time and Saving Money

“Before eHealth Technologies, we were relying on the patient to retrieve their medical records or manually getting them ourselves,” says the nurse manager. “Financially, it costs a lot of money and staff resources to be contacting individual providers.”

Nurses have been able to reallocate their time to connect with patients and have more time to see patients and present cases for evaluation.

“We’re taking the workload out of the patient’s hands, but not putting it our nurses. It’s had a great impact because nurses can focus on their patients as opposed to looking for data. They love it,” says the nurse manager.

