

IDNs reduce avoidable patient transfers through use of remote video consults with rural affiliates

“Many transfers can be avoided when a specialist is consulted in a timely manner. Using Diagnotes, specialists from major health systems can provide vital clinical expertise in support of regional medical center clinicians to decide if transfers are necessary or if patients can continue to receive needed care closer to home. These timely remote video consults support the Client’s mission of extending services to their network affiliates and partner organizations.”

Dave Wortman
Chief Executive Officer
Diagnotes, Inc.

SITUATION

Diagnotes serves a major health system (the Client) that is expanding its network of care delivery through strategic affiliations with referring, regional medical centers. The purpose of these affiliations is to make the expertise and speciality resources of a larger health system available to smaller, regional facilities. The Client is focused on improving outcomes for all patients throughout their care network and continues to seek ways to add value and better serve affiliated organizations through innovative models of care delivery.

CHALLENGE

When a patient in a regional medical center has an illness or condition that requires attention from a specialist, the facility may seek to transfer that patient. Transfers are time-consuming and complicated for providers to arrange; they typically require multiple phone calls, paging protocols and on-call schedule checks. Tools intended to improve this workflow are met with skepticism and low-adoption on the part of the clinicians who are wary of technology that may impede their abilities to provide quality care. Additionally, transfers are disruptive and expensive for the patient, taking them further away from their family, social support network and familiar doctors. Without a timely consultation with a specialist, otherwise unnecessary transfers are often made, particularly in pediatric and complex cases. Avoiding an unnecessary transfer is preferred by the patient, the patient’s local medical center and the Client.



The use of video conferencing between medical centers and off-site, on-call specialists can reduce patient mortality rates and length of hospital stays, as well as lower costs of care.

Wade et al. BMC Health Services Research, 2010.

Providers waste **91 minutes daily** with inefficient communication and workflows.

Ponemon, The Economic & Productivity Impact of IT Security on Healthcare, 2013.

Breakdowns in communications are the root cause of **over 70% of treatment delays**.

Joint Commission, Sentinel Event Data Root Causes by Event Type, 2004 - 2013.

Nearly **half** of discharged patients experienced a medical error from a breakdown in communications.

Kripalani, et al. Journal of Hospital Medicine, 2007.

“ Our client tells us how gratifying it is to offer consults via Diagnotes secure video to determine as a team whether a patient needs to be transferred. The patient, their local physician and the consulting specialist all participate in the decision. The last thing anyone wants is to transfer a patient who can be effectively treated at their local medical center.”

Marc Kleinman
Chief Client Officer
Diagnotes, Inc.

SOLUTION

Diagnotes helps hospitals and health systems streamline workflows, improve care and minimize risks using a single platform for secure text, voice and video communications.

The Client began using Diagnotes in 2015 for secure text, voice and video communications. In 2016, a team of specialists began using the platform's secure video functionality to offer real-time, remote video consultations to affiliated regional medical centers. For example, clinicians at a regional medical center more than an hour away from the Client's main campus use Diagnotes to consult via secure video with specialists to determine if a transfer is needed. Diagnotes, which can be used on any iOS, Android or web-enabled device, effortlessly connects regional providers to specialists. Nobody is forced to navigate a complicated maze of disparate communication platforms to connect.

The Client's specialists assess the factors in the case, review test results and speak face-to-face with the patient and the local care team about the transfer decisions. The patient benefits by having a specialist "in the room," which often results in a decision to continue care in the current setting. In the event a transfer is warranted, the receiving facility is already briefed on the details of the case and can begin preparing an appropriate care plan prior to the patient's arrival.

RESULTS

Decreased costs

In the first three months of use, the regional medical center successfully avoided nearly 40 patient transfers. Risks to patients and costs associated with these transfers were avoided, allowing these patients to be treated in the most affordable and appropriate care setting. Costs associated with the time spent arranging a transfer were also avoided.

Enhanced experience

Patients received a higher level of specialized clinical care while remaining in their local facility and avoiding the additional burden of a transfer. The clinicians in both settings were able to provide the highest quality of care utilizing technology that is simple and easy to use, improving rather than inhibiting their capabilities.

Increased revenue

The Client delivered reimbursable speciality care services in an effective and timely manner to their affiliate while maintaining available space and specialized resources for highly complex patient cases. The regional medical center was able to continue receiving reimbursements for appropriate-level care, maintaining the highest level of care at the lowest cost.

Diagnotes[®] is a secure communication platform for healthcare provider organizations. Reach anyone, anywhere, anytime.

Visit our website at www.diagnotes.com or call 317-395-7080 to learn more.

