



## CASE STUDY:

# Reluctant family solo practitioner embraces EMR, improves workflow and quality of care

"Now I see every lab, every X-ray, every consult note. With the EMR, it's faster and easier to review a chart or enter a reminder for my assistant. I can access records from home when I get a call from the local ER. I feel like we're absolutely able to deliver higher-quality care."

*Stephen H. Mascio, D.O.  
Family Practitioner*

### ORGANIZATION

The family practice of Stephen H. Mascio, D.O., Follansbee, West Virginia.

### OBJECTIVE

Improve prescribing, save staff time, enhance the practice's operational capacity, and elevate the quality of patient care.

### SOLUTION

Upgrade the practice management system and invest in an EMR with broad functionality supported with generous customer service, MicroMD® PM and MicroMD EMR from Henry Schein.

### RESULTS

Fast, accurate e-prescribing that makes patients happy and staff more productive; patient volume increased by two to four more patients per day; time to review revenue cycle issues and improve them; more physical space in the office; better quality of care.

"I've never had much interest in computers," says Dr. Stephen H. Mascio. "And I didn't have a strong desire to pursue an EMR. But in retrospect, I'm glad Debbie pushed me." Both Dr. Mascio and Office Manager, Debra Snider, recognized that their practice had room for improvement. But Dr. Mascio was concerned about the learning curve. Their solution: invest in a more reliable practice management system and an EMR backed with the service and support they would need.

### Objective

With the EMR, we wanted to improve prescriptions," says Dr. Mascio. "Our medical assistant was spending far too much time calling them in and dealing with paperwork."

For her part, Snider looked forward to more precise charting, more compliant record keeping and a more streamlined operation overall.

### Solution

Dr. Mascio could have opted for either a bargain solution with inadequate customer service or an expensive package with more bells and whistles than he needed. Instead, he and Snider chose MicroMD PM, which they implemented in November 2007, and MicroMD EMR, which followed in January 2008.

"The support from Henry Schein turned out to be great. We're convinced that they really want to collaborate with us, and that ultimately makes the product better."

*Debra Snider  
Office Manager  
Stephen H. Mascio, D.O.*

Snider and the doctor decided to make the transition rapidly rather than gradually. "We know of other practices that have been making the transition for a year or more. They can't walk away from paper, so haven't reaped the benefits yet. So we decided to rip the band-aid off," says Dr. Mascio.

During the transition, he reports "feeling like a data processor" for a while as the practice built its database. "Then, one day I realized as I was driving home at 6:00 p.m., all the encounters were done, all the prescriptions were sent, all the phone messages were taken care of," says Dr. Mascio.

"The support from Henry Schein turned out to be great," says Snider. "We're convinced that they really want to collaborate with us, and that ultimately makes the product better."

### **Result**

With e-prescribing, Dr. Mascio can "click and send," avoiding hours spent on the telephone for the medical assistant. Patients love that the prescription is ready when they reach the pharmacy. Dr. Mascio will also enjoy an unanticipated benefit when CMS begins rewarding e-prescribing with bonus reimbursement.

MicroMD EMR saves time in other ways. "We're generally more efficient," says Dr. Mascio. "It's fair to say that we see two to four more patients a day because of the EMR. Just today, we saw 19 patients in half a day." On the claims side, Snider adds that reimbursement turnaround times are now faster because the practice sends out more "clean" claims — and as a result, she spends less time reworking them.

Snider shares that, for the first time, they have time to sit down and review the operation: "We can now look and see where we might have missed a code, so in the future we can do a better job of filing claims and getting paid appropriately."

The new workflow also saves valuable space. Dr. Mascio and Snider were able to relocate several thousand paper charts. "That opened up a space large enough for two desks," says the doctor. "We were running out of space, now we won't need to lease a bigger office."

From the office manager's perspective, the practice is in order. "Everything is streamlined and standardized, so we're ready for any kind of insurance company audit or HIPAA compliance review that might come our way," reports Snider.

Dr. Mascio also believes MicroMD EMR has an impact on care. "When I worked with a PA, I didn't have first-hand knowledge of everything because we shared visits. I felt disconnected from my patients," he says. "Now I see every lab, every X-ray, every consult note. With the EMR, it's faster and easier to review a chart, or enter a reminder for my assistant. I can access records from home when I get a call from the local ER. I feel like we're absolutely able to deliver higher-quality care."



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