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Alego Health is one of the nation's premier full-service Healthcare IT Solutions and Services Providers. Specializing in top-level Healthcare IT Consulting, Implementation & Support Services, IT Services, Staff Augmentation, and Human Resource Services, our team is adept at working with healthcare organizations of all sizes to advance the continuum of patient care through the adoption of technology.

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University Hospitals Health System:
Data Conversion Case Study

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Customer Name
University Hospitals

Division
IT&S

Web Site
www.uhhospitals.org

Industry
Healthcare

Number of Employees
More than 24,000

Annual Revenue
$2.1 billion

Address
**11100 Euclid Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44106**

Phone Number
216.844.8447

BUSINESS SITUATION: University Hospitals engaged Alego Health to convert data from the paper health records of more than 215 ambulatory practices owned by the health system into the hospital's electronic health record. Each of University Hospital's practices either utilized disparate, individually maintained record management systems, including electronic databases to house patient information, or paper, which created significant information access challenges to health data across the system. Alego Health's team was responsible for converting each practice's patient data, contained on paper charts, ancillary systems or otherwise, structuring it and placing it into University Hospital's EHR. Additionally, the team supported the implementation and go-live at each practice as it connected to University Hospital's EHR. Within 26 months, the system-wide data conversion and implementation was completed to the satisfaction of practice and health system leaders.

COMPANY PROFILE: Based in Cleveland, University Hospitals serve the needs of a significant portion of northeast Ohio. The health system continues to grow through practice acquisition and increasing the type of services offered, having transformed from a single-site academic medical center into a multi-site in and outpatient health center. With 1,032 beds, it is an affiliate of Case Western Reserve University, employing more than 24,000 physicians and employees and its partnership hospitals rank it Northeast Ohio's second largest private sector employer. The University Hospitals perform more than 4.5 million outpatient procedures and 63,000 inpatient discharges annually.

TECHNICAL SITUATION: University Hospital owns more than 200 ambulatory practices, most of which used paper health records to collect patient information. Inspired by a lack of exchangeable electronic data and prodded by federal mandates, leaders at the health system determined that making all health information electronic and structured would best serve the organization's mission of achieving continual growth while providing the best patient care. Of the practices using technology to collect patient information, their systems were primarily standalone databases that locked and siloed information from others in the network; therefore, technological innovation and advanced patient care was unattainable.

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TECHNICAL SITUATION CONTINUED: To overcome lack of access to patient health data, information from each record required extraction: patient histories, shot records and physician notes needed scanning or importation into the EHR. Alego Health was charged with extracting all pertinent data and verifying that information was ported according to the health system's guidelines, as well as guiding each practice through go-live of their connection to the EHR. In addition to physically scanning records into the EHR, Alego Health's team developed customized electronic extraction methods when possible to collate information trapped in the databases as needed.

Providing on- and off-site support throughout the conversion process, Alego Health's staff worked alongside practice and hospital leaders to determine which information from the practice's health record was required in each record then performed all physical elements of the conversion, including managing data collection and collation from paper, databases and ancillary systems.

SOLUTION: From go-live through completion of the two-year project, Alego Health's staff culled, sorted and converted more than two million patient health records, most of which were encased in paper files, by bringing the data into the University Hospital's electronic health record. By partnering with each practice's staff, Alego Health determined the data sets requiring conversion, which records needed physical scanning and those that could be electronically ported from the databases. Alego Health wrote customized code, as needed, to port unstructured health information from any electronic databases and ancillary systems being used, ensuring complete and structured records were imported into the hospital's EHR.

Thus, to meet the complex demand of freeing patient information and allowing caregivers the ability to better navigate their practice's patient health records, Alego Health's team included dozens of clinically experienced and EHR-trained professionals who assessed each project phase, offered customized support that evolved with the project and responded to each practice's needs while maintaining the objectives set by University Hospital.

Alego Health's deeply experienced team provided flawless execution of the data conversion while meeting various aggressive timelines during multiple simultaneous practice conversions and implementations. Throughout the project, practices were able to maintain normal business operations with no impact to patients. Addressing each practice's needs, Alego Health provided a variety of end-to-end support, both remotely and on-site, throughout the duration of the project, as well as addressed any technical needs or challenges that arose.

Also, rather than focusing only on technical components of the conversion, Alego Health provided practices with additional "wrap around services," ensuring that providers could access records across the system and add to them without interruption to patient care.

RESULTS: Alego Health ensured that the patient health data of each University Health ambulatory practice was converted into an electronic, exchangeable format, connected each practice to the health system's EHR, and verified that each record converted was complete, structured and met the standard of use for University Hospitals. By converting data from more than two million health records, Alego Health eliminated the need for each practice's disparate data collection systems, while meeting each practice's objectives and protecting the integrity of each patient record. Alego Health's team also supported the EHR implementation at each of the more than 200 practices post-data conversion. Even though Alego Health developed a specific program process for University Hospitals, the approach remains scalable for any health system.

ALEGO CONTACT

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