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CASE STUDY

MultiCare Health System Implements Dragon NaturallySpeaking Medical and Dramatically Enhances Efficiency of Their Epic EMR System

Speech Recognition Solution Enables the Organization's Ambulatory Group to Decrease Reliance on Transcription by 50% and Pays for Itself in the First Month of Use

CHALLENGE

Improve the efficiency of a hospital's 70 physician ambulatory group by reducing the need for transcription services by at least 50%.

STRATEGY

Deploy Dragon NaturallySpeaking to all of the physicians so they can dictate progress notes for medical records directly into the organization's Epic EMR application – thus bypassing the need for transcription services.

RESULTS

Dramatic reduction in costs. The organization saved approximately \$500,000 by reducing their transcription costs the first year – with the software paying for itself the first month of use. The organization anticipates a substantial future savings from deploying the solution to an additional 400 employees in the next year.

Tacoma's first hospital was the Fannie C. Paddock Memorial Hospital. Founded in 1882, it was named for the wife of Bishop John Paddock, who journeyed from Brooklyn to bring medical care to a booming Pacific Northwest logging town. The healthcare mission that Paddock began has expanded over the years and now, more than a century later, has evolved into the MultiCare Health System. Over the years the MultiCare family has grown to become the first comprehensive outpatient medical center, urgent care and physician office facility of its type in Washington State. Today, MultiCare Health System consists of a diverse network of doctors and nurses, clinics and hospitals, working together to provide exceptional health services—just as they have for more than 120 years.

“The value of Dragon NaturallySpeaking to me as the medical director of the organization is tremendous. The software has helped us reduce our annual transcription budget from \$750,000 to less than \$200,000. Even though we have only been using it for a month, it has already paid for itself.”

JD Fitz,
Medical Director
MultiCare's ambulatory group

As is the case with most healthcare organizations, MultiCare must do more with less. Healthcare service providers face constant pressure to improve patient care, increase staff efficiency, and reduce costs. Today healthcare organizations spend far too much time and money on manual transcription services. On average, a single physician spends upwards of

\$25,000 per year to digitize patient information. MultiCare is no exception. In 2004 they spent over \$750,000 on transcription in the organization's adult ambulatory group alone. During the annual budget process the clinic's senior administrators identified transcription as an organizational operating cost that had dramatically spiraled out of control. Not only was the process negatively affecting their bottom line, but it was also hurting the quality of their patient care. As a result, they crafted a plan to dramatically slash operating costs by reducing MultiCare's reliance on transcription. They told each of the clinics's operating groups that for 2005 they would receive only 50% of the money they spent the previous year for transcription. Anything above the 50% threshold would come directly out of the physician's pockets – not the hospital's.



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Dragon Dictation Solutions

According to JD Fitz, Medical Director MultiCare's ambulatory group, "The executive committee of our organization mandated that we reduce our transcription operating costs by 50%. We knew there were a number of voice recognition technologies on the market that could help us eliminate transcription, so we began searching for a solution that could be easily integrated with our Epic Hyperspace electronic medical record application. There were no serious alternatives to Dragon NaturallySpeaking and it was selected without further consideration." MultiCare is currently in the process of deploying the technology to over 100 of its physicians. To date, about 70 licenses are successfully being used at the ambulatory group. The remaining 30 licenses are going to be part of the organization's residency program teaching new doctors the technology as part of their initial training.

"The physicians in the ambulatory group are using Dragon NaturallySpeaking to dictate progress notes for medical records into our Epic EMR application. Personally I'm using the software in conjunction with my Microsoft Office applications

for producing Word documents and corresponding by email. I answer up to 80 emails per day, write letters and create documents with it. Besides the gains I've experienced in productivity, I am also reducing the risk of repetitive stress injuries to my wrists and fingers by using Dragon NaturallySpeaking. I love working with the software and am very happy with its performance." Not only has the software increased productivity of the ambulatory group, but more importantly, it has saved a significant amount of money. Dragon NaturallySpeaking has been so successful at MultiCare the organization has purchased an enterprise license so the solution can be deployed to their entire physician base of 500 employees. Adds Fitz, "The value of Dragon NaturallySpeaking to me as the medical director of the organization is tremendous. The software has helped us reduce our annual transcription budget from \$750,000 to less than \$200,000. Even though we have only been using it for a month, it has already paid for itself."

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