Surgical Notes

MEDICAL CHART AUTOMATION SYSTEM ELIMINATES COSTLY MEDICAL RECORDS EXPENSE

Sequoia Surgery Center selects Surgical Notes for transcription, coding, and document management solutions

SNChart
Web-based Transcription & Management System

SNCoder
Full-service Coding & Coding Audits

ScanChart ASC
Chart Automation & Document Management Tool

Corporate Profile

Visalia, CA

Multi-specialty Outpatient Care

3 Operating Rooms & 1 Procedure Room

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Office Manager,
Sequoia Surgery Center

Facility Overview

Desirae Vazquez knew there had to be a better way to manage medical records. Every month, her ASC — Sequoia Surgery Center in Visalia, Calif. — was spending a tremendous amount for paper medical charts and their storage.

Sequoia is a multi-specialty ASC with three operating rooms and one procedure room. It performs approximately 525 cases per month in orthopedics, gastroenterology, and plastic surgery. With a limited amount of space for the surgery center's busy business operations, the printing and

growing storage expenses seemed like a necessity, says Vazquez, the ASC's office manager.

Then she learned about Surgical Notes.

Filling Needs

It was 2016, and Vazquez's supervisor had returned from a national Becker's ASC Review conference with information about Surgical Notes. Sequoia was looking for help with its transcription and coding services. "We were looking to combine our specific coding needs and transcription services

with one vendor for a better price," Vazquez says.

Surgical Notes met this objective. Vazquez took the lead on implementing two Surgical Notes solutions: SNChart, a web-based transcription and management system, and SNCoder, a full-service coding solution. Implementation of both was completed in November 2016.

While SNChart and SNCoder brought about significant improvements in the ASC's transcription and coding operations, the medical chart

expense problems remained. Vazquez saw an answer in ScanChart ASC, the chart automation and document management solution from Surgical Notes. She reached out to her Surgical Notes sales representative to schedule a demo for her team and the ASC's managing partner.

"I must have reviewed ScanChart ASC with the Surgical Notes sales rep three or four times," Vazquez says. "He was very patient with me. We came away from that demo thinking ScanChart ASC would be super beneficial for our small office as we knew it would allow

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us to cut those printing and storage costs. There were also so many great functionality aspects of the solution which we figured would be a nice bonus."

The project of adding ScanChart ASC became, as Vazquez describes it, her "baby." She pitched it to other members of the ASC's leadership team and put together a comprehensive return-on-investment (ROI) analysis. When she presented it to Sequoia's board members, they signed off on the project.

Bringing the Baby Home

From the moment Sequoia began to move ahead with the implementation of ScanChart ASC, Vazquez could tell that the Surgical Notes staff members assigned to the project were special.

"The team was absolutely amazing from start to finish," she says. "The product speaks for itself — it's terrific. But the people Surgical Notes employs may have been the best part of the implementation experience."

The project manager provided frequent updates on the implementation progress and detailed tasks the ASC needed to perform every week. "Her approach suited me perfectly," Vazquez says. "I think in checklists, crossing off to-dos in my head as they are completed. She really helped take some of the project's weight off me. I knew exactly what we were supposed to do on a daily basis."

For the implementation itself, Vazquez says the software installer assigned to the project worked hand-in-hand with her and the ASC's staff.

"He always explained everything very clearly, answered all of my questions no matter how many times I asked the same thing, and never made it seem that I was at it alone," she says. "We were able to get a lot of the major preparation work done together, which I understand now is one of the biggest hurdles in a smooth launch."

Vazquez says she really appreciated the installer's approach to educating her on using the solution. "He never said 'get out of the way, let me do it.' He would say 'here's what I need you to do' and then sat with me until I understood how to do it. You learn so much more when doing the work yourself."

Dreaded Go-Live? Not So Much.

Go-live for Sequoia's ScanChart ASC was on a Monday in mid-July. Despite the great experience leading up to that point, Vazquez was still preparing for a bumpy launch.

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"You always hear that go-lives are difficult and stressful because there is so much that needs to happen," she says. "For us, it felt particularly daunting because we were making a huge transition, moving from a paper system and process that had essentially been in place since the ASC opened in 1994. This was a huge undertaking."

While the first two days were very busy, "things were humming" by Wednesday, Vazquez says. Sequoia was on track with printing chart packs and working out remaining minor issues with clinical staff. On Thursday and Friday, the installer worked with the Sequoia team member overseeing medical records. "We are lucky to have an amazing staff member who just jumped on board and even kind of shocked the installer with how quickly she picked up the system," Vazquez says. "He gave her some great suggestions to make her work even more productive."

The installer, who remained on-site during the entire go-live, played a critical role.

"Having him here as our point person while we introduced the system to the business office and clinical staff was amazing," Vazquez says. "I couldn't have picked a better fit for our office. He fit in so well with all of our personalities. Any corrections that needed to be made were fast and easy. Before we knew it, the system was doing the work for us, just like it should."

Immediate Returns

From the moment ScanChart ASC went live, Vazquez knew she was achieving a positive ROI. "It's already saved us tremendously, from reducing the ordering of medical chart supplies to eliminating our storage needs."

It's too early in the solution's use to quantify the ROI with hard numbers, but Vazquez couldn't be happier with what she's already witnessing.

"Every day brings a new revelation of how to become more efficient with our business office processes," she says. "We are loving ScanChart ASC. I think we already have a great grasp on how to use the system and will only get more efficient with time. I want everyone to know about Surgical Notes and how awesome they are — both their solutions and their people."

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