

Forward March: Clinical, Financial Performance Moves in the Right Direction with DeVero EHR

**Health Related Home Care Achieves Five Star Medicare Rating,
Named to the Top 100 of the HomeCare Elite**

One step forward and two back. This is not the momentum that Health Related Home Care wanted to achieve when it started using an electronic medical records system back in 2006. Unfortunately, though, this backward progression was exactly what the Abbeville, South Carolina-based home care agency experienced.

The problem: While home care nurses were documenting patient progress electronically, the process was more cumbersome than paper documentation.

“One nurse’s note would be eight to ten pages,” said Lynn Blanton, Clinical Director at Health Related Home Care. “When documenting, if a nurse said ‘yes’ to something, the electronic medical record would ask more questions, making the nurse go deeper and deeper and deeper. So, it didn’t incentivize the nurses to chart well because if the nurse said yes to something, she would have to answer more questions and keep adding information into the electronic chart.”

Saddled with this burdensome documentation, Health Related Home Care leaders pined for days gone by – when paper documentation was a simpler affair. More specifically, leaders appreciated their old paper MED-PASS home health clinical documentation forms. However, they realized that electronic medical records could ultimately bring value. They just had to find the systems that would deliver on the promise of increased efficiency and enhanced clinical care. So, the home care agency began to explore its options.

Exploring options

Leaders searched for an alternative EMR system – and struggled to find something that fit the bill. However, when they came across DeVero at a National Homecare Association meeting, they realized that the system would let them have the best of both the paper and electronic worlds.

“What we liked about DeVero is that they customize the forms for you. With other companies, if you want something changed, they have to get buy in and then change it for everybody that is using their system. With DeVero, we just send them the MED-PASS forms that we like and they transform them into electronic versions,” Blanton said. “We know that these forms worked in the past. And, what’s great about DeVero is that we can still hold on to some of our past.”

In addition, the ability to continually tweak the system is proving beneficial for Health Related Home Care. In fact, the agency has worked with DeVero to create a plethora of customized electronic forms. “It’s almost like you’re getting to develop your own software – except you have someone who knows how to do the technical part of it for you,” Blanton said.

With this model in place, the agency’s staff frequently work closely with DeVero to fine-tune the EMR. Fortunately, this process is a simple one, as DeVero provides top notch customer service. “We don’t even have to create work tickets. We just call and someone starts addressing our issue right away. Sometimes,

About Health Related Home Care

Health Related Home Care is a trusted leader in providing personalized quality clinical care and support services at home for children and adults of all ages. Our home care professionals live right here in the communities they serve, and chances are, the person who will be caring for you or your loved-one will be someone you already know and trust. Health Related Home Care provides a variety of services including:

- Board Certified Wound Nursing
- Pediatric – Geriatric Nursing
- Oncology Nursing
- Maternal/Child Nursing
- Home Telemonitoring
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Home Health Aides
- Medical Social Services
- Life Line®

Specialty Programs

- Congestive Heart Failure Program
- Joint Rehab Program/SHIFT
- Safe & Steady Balance Program
- Alzheimer's Program
- Pet Therapy for Autistic, Alzheimer's & Dementia

they can solve the problem right then and there on the phone," Blanton said.

In addition to the stress-free customization, the system is very easy for staff members to learn how to use. "With our previous system, trainers had to sit down with staff members and go over each detail. With DeVero, it is all very intuitive and staff just start using it right away," Blanton said. "We sometimes use staff that come to us from agencies that are using one of the big EMRs. And, they always tell us that the system is so easy to learn. It's even easy for nurses or therapists who have never worked in home health before."

The fact that staff members can access the system from any location or device also enhances usability. With many other EMRs, access is restricted to a certain device or location. Information, therefore, is not updated in real-time. "With DeVero, you can get into the system on your laptop or your phone. So, our staff members can log in anytime and update records anytime they want to. It's

just like having a bank account," Blanton said.

Realizing results

Most importantly, DeVero makes it easy to continually improve clinical performance. Consider the following: The agency has worked with DeVero to create a report that analyzes hospitalization rates with congestive heart failure patients. The report enables clinical managers to identify what patients have been identified and if the nurses are using the prescribed clinical pathways with those patients. As such, "we can educate the nurses and have an immediate impact on the hospitalizations," Blanton says.

Such initiatives have enabled the home care agency to achieve stellar performance. In fact, the agency has achieved a five-star rating from Medicare on both patient satisfaction and clinical quality outcomes. In addition, for the last eight years, Health Related Home Care has been named to the HomeCare Elite, a list compiled annually by National Research Corporation and DecisionHealth to recognize the top-performing and most successful home care providers in the United States. Working with DeVero has also helped the home care agency achieve 36 percent profit on its gross earnings – which compares favorably to the industry average of just two percent.

While it has been easy for the homecare agency to use the DeVero EMR, leaders are still hoping to leverage the system for more. For example, the agency is looking to leverage some of the best practices that DeVero has uncovered while working with other agencies to eliminate as many manual processes as possible and further improve efficiency.

"Overall, we feel like DeVero has been a partner with us and has helped us achieve the successes that we have enjoyed over the past few years. And, they have helped to position us for continued success in the future, especially as we move toward pay for performance models, which will determine reimbursement based on clinical performance and outcomes. We are standing ready to succeed in that realm," Blanton said.

About DeVero

DeVero delivers intelligent, adaptable technology that revolutionizes healthcare data capture, management and integration. Over 80,000 providers, payers and government organizations leverage DeVero to power real-time data intelligence that drives measurable business value. Based in Silicon Valley and founded by tech and healthcare experts, DeVero was born to create innovative solutions to common business challenges. **Visit www.devero.com or call (800) 219-0664 to learn more.**