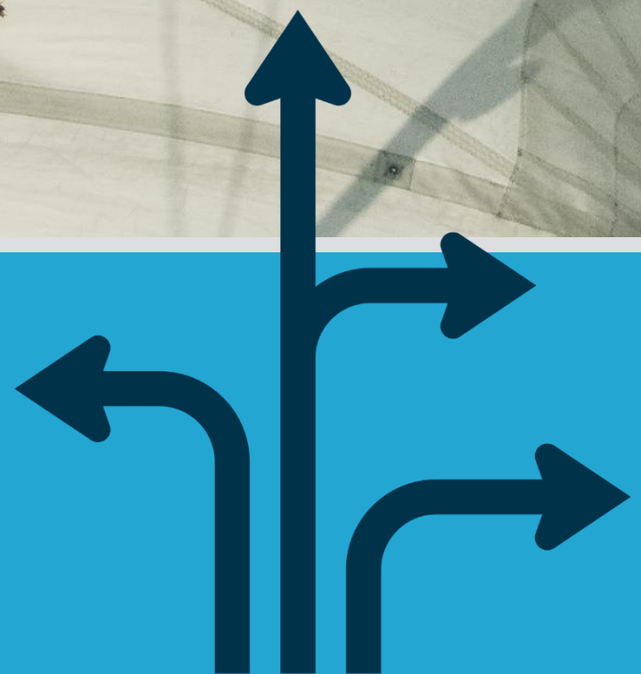
Navigating the EHR Replacement Process
-- How to steer the course to successful replacement



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Accelerating Healthcare Revenues

Content

1. Assess Before You Replace Your HER ____ 5
2. Signs You Need to Replace the EHR ____ 6
3. EHR Replacement Challenges ____ 10
4. The Right and the Wrong Approach to EHR Replacement ____ 14
5. Change Management – Manage Your EHR Replacement ____ 17
6. Replacement EHR Vendor Selection ____ 20
7. Making Your New EHR System Work for You ____ 25
8. Why RevenueXL's EMR should Top Your List ____ 28

Thinking about replacing your EHR? You are in good Company

Recent statistics from KLAS Research show that 50 percent of EHR implementations are ready for upgrades.

A 2015 survey conducted by Software Advice indicates that the number of buyers replacing their existing EHR system has increased nearly 60% year over year.

The report also states that 2015 marks the first time that the amount of clinicians looking to replace an existing EHR outnumbers the amount of clinicians looking to purchase an EHR for the first time.

Replacement process is complex, but one that will pay off

Replacing your electronic health record system is no small task, however. It is a complex process, but it is an investment that will pay off in improved efficiency and enhanced features.

Do you really need a new EHR? Probably, but there is a clinical approach you can take to determine if this is the right time to introduce a new system. Read through this eBook to gain more insights into the EHR replacement journey.

1. Assess Before You Replace Your EHR

Evaluate the issues with your existing system to improve the decision making process and confirm that a new platform is necessary.

- Why is it not meeting your practice requirements?
- Is there a training issue? Do we have new employees who have not received adequate training?
- Is the technical support not responsive enough?

Make an intelligent assessment.

2. Signs You Need to Replace the EHR

1. Inflexible workflow

When you are unhappy with the ability of your EHR System to adapt to the workflow requirements of your clinic, it is time to look for an EHR replacement whose workflow is flexible and better suited to the needs of your practice.

2. Your practice is expanding

Opening up new locations, taking on specialists or networking with a partner facility – these are all goals that improve the stability of the medical practice. If your current EHR constrains your ability to expand, it is time to move on.

3. Poor Technical Support

The software is only as good as the vendor backing it up. Poor customer service means the end users have to find ways to compensate. If you are unhappy with the customer service provided by your current EHR vendor, it is time for a change.

Read this post for more details: http://www.revenuexl.com/blog/bid/207148/EHR-Replacement-9-Signs-That-It-Is-Time-To-Make-The-Switch

4. EMR System and templates do not fit your specialty

77% of dissatisfied providers believe that their system is not useful for their particular specialty. Further, EHR templates continue to evolve, taking on features that make them more efficient, more accurate and far easier to use. Inflexible EMR templates can easily pull an otherwise viable practice under. If your EHR does not provide you with this flexibility, it is time to move on.

5. Health Information Exchanges

They are changing the face of the industry. An EHR platform must be able to integrate with other systems to adapt to the new coordinated care standards. A primary care physician posts medical records later accessed by a consulting specialist. This type of fluidity will improve patient outcomes and enhance medical care.

6. Not Just MU Compliant

The 2015 edition of revised criteria for certified EHRs has been enhanced to help ensure the technology is moving beyond the basic requirements of Meaningful Use and can support your practice's needs to communicate with other providers, technologies, labs, pharmacies and health information exchanges (HIEs). So it would behoove practices to take the new certification rules into consideration when selecting a new EHR vendor – to ensure that the technology remains a viable long-term option, not a here-today, gone-tomorrow regret.

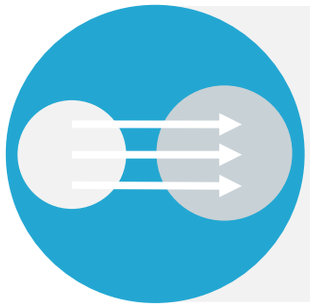
Look for Other Signs

1. Your EHR Workflow is Inflexible
2. Your EHR Is Unable To Grow With You
3. You Are Dissatisfied With Your EHR Vendor
4. Your EHR Does Not Meet Stage 2 Meaningful Use Criteria
5. You Keep Getting New Bills For Hidden Expenses
6. Your EHR Software Is Stagnating
7. Your EHR Does Not Provide Mobile Access
8. You Face Technical Problems Consistently
9. Improving Productivity Is A Dream

If your current system is simply showing signs of age, then yes, it is time to look at replacements.

3. EHR Replacement Challenges

How difficult is it going to be to transition from your current system to new software? It's a process and there are challenges ahead. Implementing a replacement system can actually be much more complex than just the initial installation. Why? Because providers have a better understanding of what they want, so they create a laundry list of needs that didn't exist the first time around.



1. Migrating the Data

Data migration is the biggest obstacle to implementing a new system. Before considering transferring the data, you need to ask the following questions.

- Do your own the rights to the patient records?
- What format is the data stored in? How much of it is structured vs. how much is in unstructured format?
- Can the new vendor transfer the data without losing any critical information? This includes:
  - Medication
  - Allergies
  - Demographics
  - Insurance information and history
  - Procedures
  - Immunization
  - Image files
- Is your current EHR vendor willing to assist in migrating the data?
- What is the cost of data extraction and loading (a.k.a. data migration)?

2. Productivity Loss

Any time that you replace a system, there is a significant impact on user productivity for various reasons. The longer the transition period from the existing system to a new system, the larger the impact, and in some cases can even potentially cripple a practice.

Timing the switch to slow periods or looking for a way to speed up the process will reduce the impact a replacement has on the practice's productivity and finances.

3. Cost

There may be hidden costs in replacement beyond just the installation and data migration.

- Is there an initial charge for customization of the software to fit the practice? Remember that customization includes both templates and workflow.
- Does the vendor charge for training? If so, how much?

The more prepared you are for the change, the better equipped you will be in making the transition.

4. Determine what worked and what didn't

1. Write down the features that are the most useful in the old system and detail the ones that were cumbersome.
    - This will assist you in setting the baseline of features and functionalities that your replacement EHR must support.
2. Conduct a detailed analysis of what went wrong with the previous implementation with your entire team.
3. Establish specific goals you want the new EMR software platform to achieve, such as enhanced metrics and improved productivity and provider satisfaction levels.
    - If you do not set measurable goals, you will not be able to evaluate the metrics of success or failure.

5. Consider the future of new EHR System

Technology evolves naturally. What looks innovative now may be antiquated in a year. A growing medical practice changes over time, as well. Look for a system that is going to grow with the practice. Select an EHR vendor that is innovating consistently and stays ahead of the curve and finds new ways for the physicians to provide even better patient care.

Understanding the challenges of replacing your EHR in advance and creating a strategy will ease the transition and lead the practice into the next phrase of EHR.

4.The Right and the Wrong Approach to EHR Replacement

DO's & DON'Ts

You know what to look for and what challenges you face when replacing your software. Now, it is time to dig in and start researching new systems. There is a right way and a wrong way to approach replacing your EHR.

DO's:

a. Let the staff help define your needs

They know what you need probably better than you do, so let them provide inputs. Differentiate between essential and 'nice to have' requirements. Bells and whistles can wait.

b. Prepare for the challenges

Implementations can be hard on everyone, so make sure you plan ahead and motivate staff to work extra to cope up with the EHR transition related challenges.

c. Use your previous checklists and enhance them

Pull out your checklists or want list from your original EHR shopping and use the experience you have in implementing and using your current system to make that list more comprehensive or relevant.

d. Require an ROI analysis

Work with your selected shortlist of vendors to perform return-on-investment analysis.

e. Create a realistic implementation plan

Use your past experience to pinpoint likely trouble spots in an implementation. Arbitrary deadlines are morale killers and should be avoided.

f. Schedule sufficient time for training

Don't expect that your staff will pick up the new system as they continue working on the old system.

g. Keep patient data and records safe and secure

During the EHR Replacement process, do address issues relating to data security as well as organization weaknesses and potential pitfalls.

h. Establish a mindset for change and reform

Focusing on change and healthcare reform is key for a smooth EHR implementation and transition to an improved system.

Read for more detailed descriptions.

DON'Ts:

a. Don't fail to see the big picture

Price is just one part of the EHR replacement formula. Look at mobility, clinical interface, end user experience and total cost of ownership. Understand the roadblocks faced by all the user constituencies and include them in your final decision-making process.

b. Don't fail to keep realistic expectations

Providers may have to do more with less after EHR replacement:

- More number of disparate systems that may need to be integrated
- May not be able to afford all the bells and whistles in the new system
- May not be able to perform all the advanced tasks
- May need to change their workflow to make the most of the new software they are getting.

c. Don't waste time looking at every solution on the market

Don't waste time looking at every solution on the market - Instead, select vendors and software to consider that meet the need and wants of your practice.

d. Don't assume that replacing your EHR is the only solution

Don't assume that the EHR replacement will completely resolve all your issues. Determine whether upgrades or improvements are sufficient to meet your immediate needs. Before you begin shopping for a new EHR, make a list of new functionality you think you need or problems that are surfacing with your current system and talk to your vendor. In cases where the EHR is meeting many--but not all--needs, upgrading a system consumes less time and money resources than replacing a system.

5.Change Management – Manage Your EHR Replacement

Manage Changes To Avoid Another Failure!

1. An Informed Decision

Understanding the failings of your existing EHR can help prevent the same mistakes from recurring. Keep these flaws -- and strategies to avoid them -- in mind as you select a new system.

Prior to the EHR selection process, clearly define your expectations. After all, it's easier to determine if a particular vendor meets your needs if you know what your needs are.

Discuss with the team of physicians and support staff what functions or features would be most beneficial to their clinical work as well as administrative functions.

2. Manage Your Expectations... And Your Data

The more informed your staff is, the more empowered they'll be as participants in the process. Vendor demonstrations, staff meetings, and open lines of communication can all contribute to staff engagement. Patients should also be informed promptly about changes.

Data conversion is a realistic concern when switching between EHRs, but there are some approaches to help minimize risk during the migration process.

Don't discard your old system yet: it can be of value while you work out the kinks in your new EHR or if patient information needs to be quickly recovered.

3. A Closer Look at ROI

It's also essential to accept that the deployment of new technology comes at an upfront cost. While mindful planning and diligent execution can help contain these costs, It's much easier to accept this investment when you view your new EHR as an asset rather than an expense.

4. A Team Effort

From helping you maintain regulatory compliance to offering techniques for fostering connectivity with your staff, patients, labs, hospitals and other providers, your replacement EHR vendor is your new best friend when it comes to implementing best practices before, during and after your EHR replacement. A strong, multidisciplinary project team is also an essential component in planning and implementation phases.

5. Spend Sufficient Training Time to Help Your Staff Get Comfortable With new EHR

Before you can expect your staff to make the switch, ensure that everyone on your team is capable of performing simple their respective tasks on the new EHR system.

6.Replacement EHR Vendor Selection

Selecting the right replacement EHR vendor will be a critical task. Approach this step with the same due diligence you use when hiring new employees.

6 Essential Questions to Ask Replacement EHR Vendor

Ask these 6 fundamental questions when coming up with criteria and reviewing potential systems.

1. What EHR features are included right out of box?
2. Is the EHR scalable to support your foreseeable needs?
3. What would be the total cost of ownership including data migration?
4. Will the replacement EHR vendor offer a free trial?
5. What is the vendor commitment to meeting future Governmental rules and regulations?
6. Is there a dedicated EHR migration team committed to your successful implementation?

1. What features come with the EHR Solution?

A discussion on the features and functionality offered by the EHR should be followed by one or more demos of the EHR to ensure it will meet your goals. Give the EHR vendor a list of features and functionalities you would like to see, so that they are addressed during the EMR software demo. Also, ask what features are provided out of the box and which ones cost extra. Look closely at the user-friendliness of the technology and opportunities for customizing the EHR to suit the needs of your providers.

2. Is the new EMR System scalable?

The ability to meet your expansion plans as well as integrate with other products means scalability for the practice. Can you add features (building blocks) down the road? What products from other software and medical equipment vendors does it currently interface with?

3. What would be total Cost of Ownership of new EMR Solution?

How much does and will it cost? That question is likely foremost in the minds of those decision-makers tasked with justifying the purchase of a particular EHR technology. Ensure that you include the cost of data migration, re-training, downtime, etc. in the overall cost of ownership and ROI computations. Work with your prospective EHR vendor to compute your expected ROI.

Determining the Total Cost of Ownership

Software cost including:

- Integrated Practice Management or Medical Billing Software
- Patient Portal?
- eRx
- Lab interface with a standard lab like Quest or LabCorp
- Ongoing maintenance and upgrades

Implementation

- New practice specific templates
- Workflow customization
- Data migration from your current EHR / PM system(s)
- Vendor specific LAN / hardware requirements

Training

- Onsite or offsite software re-training
- Meaningful Use training

Staff time

- Any new technical resource positions that may need to be filled

Extra licenses for multiple computers or locations or additional support personnel

The final proposal should be complete to avoid any budget disruptions and unexpected fees. Get a full breakdown of the cost for implementing the new EHR system.

4. Free no-obligation trial

Ask the new vendor:

a. Are they willing to offer you a no-obligation free EHR trial of a fully functional EHR for a period of at least 30 days.
b. If you can export your data if you decide not to continue with the eventual EHR purchase.
c. Will you be entitled to active support from a specialist to answer any questions?

5. Vendor commitment to meet new rules & regulations

The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology recently published the final rule setting the 2015 Edition Health IT Certification Criteria for EHR. Ask your vendor if they are committed to meeting the new certification criteria. Also leverage your resources to determine if the vendor has met its earlier commitments, notably, ICD-10, Stage 2 MU, etc.

6. Dedicated team to assist with migration

As you may have already understood, EHR replacement has its own set of unique challenges and you will need all the support possible for successful migration to your new EHR. Ensure that your new vendor has a dedicated team responsible for migration of data and your eventual successful transition to the new EHR.

7.Making Your New EHR System Work for You

You have gone through this massive process of researching EHR products, interviewing vendors and implementing a new system – now what? How can you put your new software to work and see a return on your investment?

1. Focus on the Prize

A 2013 study conducted by the University of Michigan School of Public Health found that practices that focused on trimming operating costs and growing their business saw a return on their investment with a new EHR system. It means that how you run the practice after implementation matters. You can't get a return on your investment without developing a strategy to save money and expand, as well. Develop a clearly delineated governance plan.

2. Know your system

Don't expect the system to magically work for you. Instead, make it your business to understand the new system and apply it in the most comprehensive, relevant way. Lack of knowledge and understanding leads to inadequate use of EHR functionality and lower ROI. The transition to a new EHR can be complex; focus on promoting slow, steady mastery for best results.

3. Metrics matter

Be sure to use your EHR systems' metrics to help you better understand its functionality. Diligently tracking your EHR usage not only gives you a better sense of how effectively staff is interacting with the system, but also lets you make corrections along the way. Measurements about patient wait times, treatments used, diagnosis, charges billed and much more can be reviewed in detail or as trends over time. Ask your vendor about custom reports to track information relevant to your office, especially if you have a specialty practice.

4. Be Ready for Changes

Choosing a customizable EHR service implies you might need to make changes along the way. As you get the new system up and start measuring its progress, you may find ways to cut costs that didn't occur to the committee during the planning stage. This is why choosing an EHR with great customer support is critical. A good vendor will work with you after implementation to ensure you are getting the most return from your system.

5. Review Often

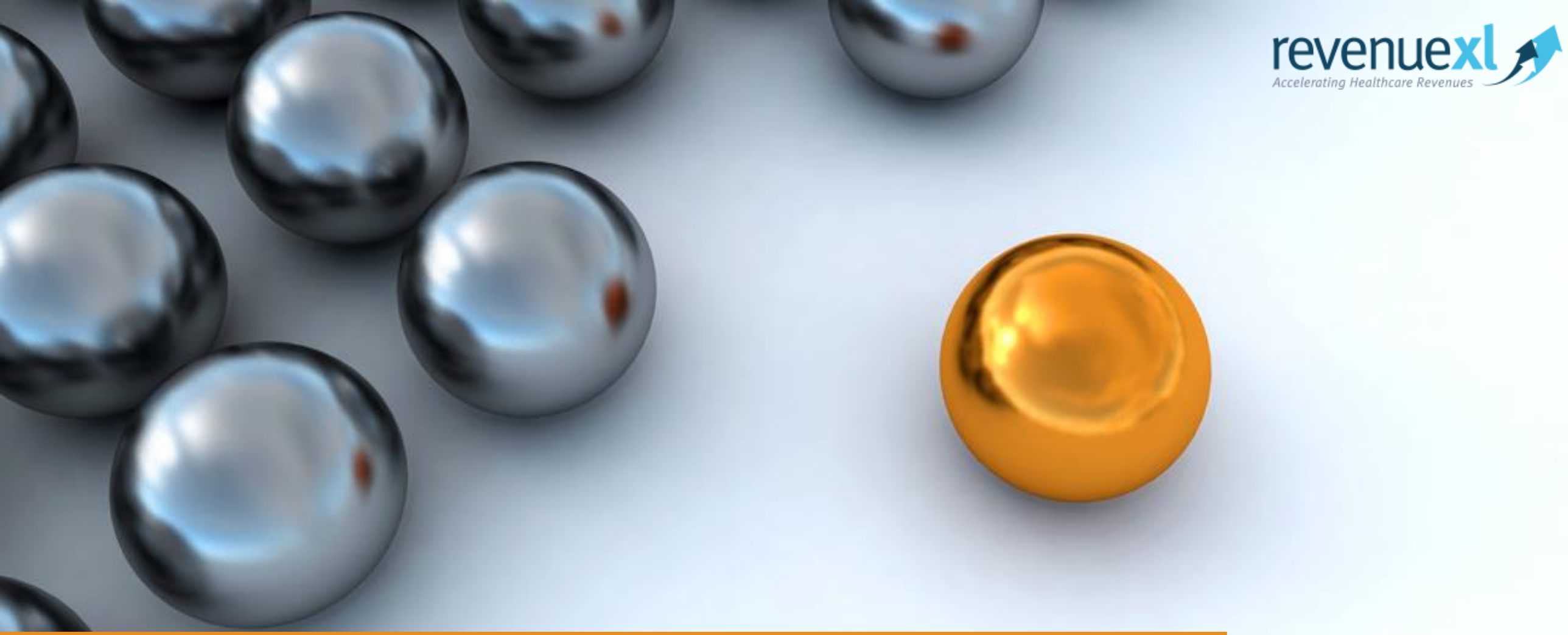
Set up a regular schedule for reviewing the needs of the practice. This will help you stay on track to meet your financial goals. It will also open the lines of communication between different functional areas of your practice to ensure everyone is acclimatizing to the new system and using the system optimally.

6. Connect with local networks for digital records exchange

Build a network of electronic contacts with local hospitals and other providers or join a health information exchange to facilitate safe, secure sharing of patient records. Together, providers can create a comprehensive story of a patient's treatment, increasing viability for multidisciplinary treatment plans and decreasing opportunity for errors.

7. Use all technology offered by your EHR System

Maximizing return-on-investment for your electronic health record software requires using all functionality offered by the EHR package that is relevant to your practice. Technology such as a patient portal, an ePrescription system or integrated practice management tools lets you gain efficiency across your entire practice.



8.Why RevenueXL's EMR should Top Your List

Since its inception in 2005, RevenueXL has stayed ahead of the competition by being in tune with the needs of small and mid-sized clinics.

Why RevenueXL's PrognoCIS EHR?

1. Integrated Practice Management Software – RevenueXL's PrognoCIS EHR Software is integrated with its own practice management software. However if you choose to continue using the practice management software you are currently using, as long as your system is HL7 compatible, the integration will be seamless. You'll experience quicker billing reimbursements, and your staff will enjoy being able to enter payments more quickly, making your coding and billing procedures much more efficient.

2. Your choice of Web-based or Server-based Options– RevenueXL offers both a web-based "in the cloud" EMR solution and one that works on a server residing in your own premises. We understand that all medical practices are different. You have different needs, and different preferences. You'll receive an EHR solution that works for you, based on your unique practice.

3. Free EHR Software with medical billing services – We help you maximize and accelerate your revenue through improved, efficient billing and follow up processes at the most affordable rates. ***Comprehensive Medical Billing Services Starting at 2.5%. All Medical Billing Plans include FREE EMR.***

4. Meaningful Use Package – Meaningful Use Dashboard that is bundled with our EHR helps you track progress towards your goals so you'll know where you need to make improvements and what you're doing well. Everything that you need to achieve Meaningful Use, including a patient portal, is packaged into your EMR Solution.

Why RevenueXL's PrognoCIS EHR?

5. Fully Customized Templates & Workflow– Upon implementation, PrognoCIS EHR will be fully customized according to your specialty and your specific requirements, giving you ALL the templates you need.

6. Mobile adaptability – PrognoCIS EHR Software is completely mobile and offers you many conveniences, including being able to use voice documentation, which will transcribe your spoken notes into text and then insert them into the patients' charts.

7. Exceeding HIPAA security standards – RevenueXL's PrognoCIS EHR Software is designed to exceed HIPAA security standards through some of the most advanced encryption methods in the industry.

HIPAA Compliance

8. Dedicated team focused on your successful EHR replacement – We understand the difficulty involved in deciding to replace your current EHR program. The expense of implementation and the hassle of integration can be a deterrent. RevenueXL assigns a team of specialists to help you figure out if replacement is the right step and how to best accomplish this task while improving your workflow and bottom line.

30-Day Free Trail

9. Free 30-Day Trial: Fully functional version. No Contract. No Upfront Cost. No restrictions on number of patients and encounters.

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