

Implementation of an Electronic Record System for Orlando Health



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Kishwar Joonas
Ahmed Y. Mahfouz
Nakiyah Patterson
Prairie View A&M University
(kajoonas@pvamu.edu)
(aymahfouz@pvamu.edu)
(npatterson3@pvamu.edu)

Orlando Health, in Florida has a total of the 3,850-bed system and is the largest hospital in the USA. Orlando Health is also a major teaching hospital, offering medical education in seven different specialties. To manage thousands of beds and patients daily, Healthcare Information Technology must also change and adapt. This case study will discuss how EPIC systems' Electronic Health Records (EHR) allow doctors and staff to complete their daily interactions with patients virtually, and how COVID-19 increased the use of technology for virtual doctor visits. The utility of EHR for various healthcare stakeholders is also discussed.

Keywords: Electronic Health Records (EHR), Technology, Implementation, EPIC systems, Management Information Systems, Marketing.

1. Introduction

1.1 Industry Background

The healthcare industry is made up of organizations that are creating medical products or providing medical services for patients such as treatments, rehabilitation, diagnosis, and prevention. These facilities include practitioner offices, hospitals, nursing homes, specialty treatment, and residential care facilities. While hospitals only make up two percent of the overall health industry, with a total of 6,093 hospitals as of 2022 – it is also 59 percent of all revenue earned for healthcare. The healthcare industry may be among the biggest industries globally. It comprises the single largest industry in the United States, and is worth \$1.7 trillion (globalEDGE, 2021).

To satisfy the need for health and well-being, the healthcare industry is made up of several sub-sectors that are divided into divided by level of qualification and nature of service provided. The sectors can be categorized by: Hospital Activities, Medical and Dental Practice Activities, and Other Human Health Activities (American Hospital Association 2022). While the industry continues to grow, care levels and service expectations are increasing. Therefore, in 1960 the Electronic Health Record was introduced, and Mayo Clinic was the first health system to use an EHR. The system was so expensive that only those hospitals with government contracts were the ones to purchase them, and at this time EHR was only used for billing and scheduling patients. Later in the 1960s, the “problem-oriented” medical record system was created, which

is why we have full-cycle systems that are continuing to improve and grow to increase the patient experience.

1.2 Description of the Company's Business: Orlando Health

Orlando Health system is in Orlando, Florida with 3,850 beds in several award-winning hospitals (Orlando Health, 2023; Vara, 2022). Being able to have the only Level 1 Trauma Center in central Florida, emergency rooms, physician offices, nursing facilities, and more – they also treated more than fifty Pulse nightclub mass shooting victims. The organization has over 23,000 team members with expertise in their field. During Quarter 1, 2021 the hospital catered to over 160,000 inpatients and 3.6 million outpatients. Orlando Health implemented its first EHR system in 2010, from Eclipsys Corp – at a time when only six hospitals and 2,000 physicians could use the software (Goedert, 2021).

1.3 Motivating Factors

Hospitals around the world were documenting and keeping patient information in folders and writing everything down. This caused sometimes, the loss of patient documentation – patients had to go to various doctor's offices to provide printed copies of their paperwork from one provider to the next. This caused a delay in patient healthcare and the experience when going to the doctor. By 2008, 73% of United States hospitals started to transition over to an EHR system. Pushed by the government to make these improvements Hospitals around the world began their implementation process. These EHR systems included various new transitions for scheduling, registration, patient billing, and documentation.

Hospitals around the world began to start their implementation, motivating Orlando Health to do the same. For this case study, it will be a complete dive into the following:

- How did Electronic Health Records allow Orlando Health to improve patient satisfaction?
- How much did revenue increase by adding in electronic patient billing software?
- How did Orlando Health's new Electronic Health Record system, EPIC improve its workflows and streamline timelines?
- How did Orlando Health handle the COVID-19 impact by using technology for their patients?

2. Description of the Study

Currently, patients go to the doctor's office, and there are computers and iPads where they can check in, schedule their appointments online, check wait times, and more. We can have an expedited check-in process due to new and improved electronic healthcare records. When you go into older practices without an EHR system – you may notice there are patient paper folders, a receptionist that must check in with everyone, and a doctor who may have to take more time to write down notes for every patient they see. If an office is only open for eight hours per day and they must use paper it will cause the doctor to only see a limited number of patients per day.

Fast forward to several implementations and investments our healthcare is better than before. We have several technology systems where healthcare providers can have smother processes during their day-to-day. For example, now doctors/nurses have

computers they can bring to each room and document real-time regarding patient care. Instead of having to go to every patient’s room and back to their room (Net Health, 2021).

Due to wanting to compete with other hospitals and government requirements, Orlando Health began to implement EHR systems as well. Allowing patients to begin booking their appointments online, tracking their health records, and being able to have doctors contribute and look at each other’s notes manually. This alone increased patient satisfaction.

Now Doctors around the world can see different patients throughout the day and their files will be in their database giving them access to quickly look up patient records from various hospitals across their systems. For example, if you are going to the hospital but they are also under the same management as the primary care doctor – the hospital will be able to communicate with the PCP and inform them their patient has been admitted to the hospital and they can also access these records.

3. Solution

3.1 Strategy for Change

The strategic steps that Orlando Health took to compete with its competitors and follow the government’s protocols for making the healthcare process sooner and more effective way to complete healthcare services. They implemented phases of the EHR systems, and most recently they implemented their new EHR system called EPIC.

The leadership team took several years when selecting a new record system for their hospitals. For their first software implementation, it took two years to select one software out of seventeen other solutions that would work best for their providers. Leadership even received input from their current providers, by asking which software looked the best for them – out of 157, 150 providers picked their first software, Allscripts to become their record systems for the years to come.

Table 1 Capabilities and use of EHRs in 1992 and 2015

EHRs in 1992 State of the Art	EHRs in 2015 Differences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly developed and used at academic centers • Hybrid of paper and electronic data • Hierarchical and relational databases • Based around billing and scheduling systems, some clinical systems • Large mainframe and minicomputers with limited data storage • Personal computers with graphics used as monitors • Data entry through keyboards and mouse • Used in inpatient & outpatient facilities • Local area networks & Internet, web-based 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EHRs used in primary care exam rooms and by insurance companies, nursing homes, hospice, homeless population, departments of corrections • Mostly vendor EHRs • Personal Health Records interfaced to EHRs • Intra-facility data sharing with standards more common • Data mapping to SMOMED & LOINC • Digital pathology, mental health, external labs, e-prescribing, order-sets, family history, genetics, biobanks, bio surveillance, public health • Increased Clinical Decision Support • Natural Language Processing • Big Data • Mobil devices

Source: Evans, 2016, *Electronic Health Records: Then, Now, and in the future. Yearbook of Medical Informatics.*

Electronic Healthcare Record Systems (EHR)

There are many benefits when implementing a new healthcare records system, that can improve patient care and employee satisfaction. Not only does it also provide better providers with a better way to provide the best care for their patients. The following Table shows how EHR changed between 1992 and 2015. (Evans, 2016).

Patients

Hospitals make most of their money based on patient service – since this is how they are making most of their revenue the main goal is to improve patient satisfaction. There are several hospitals, physician offices, and healthcare offices are the world making competition for patients a number one priority for leadership. There are several ways to increase patient satisfaction, and a lot of complaints for various healthcare providers are wait times during their appointments. The average wait time for a doctor’s appointment is 26 days, this is an increase of 24% compared to 2004. As more patients wait for their appointments and doctors are overwhelmed there must be some improvement overall during the patient experience (Nguyen, 2022).

Table 2 Patient Perceptions of Quality of Care, Quality of Interactions, and Recording Errors

Net Improvement Reported - Percentage of Adult Respondents					
Metric	Average	18-29 years	30-49 years	50-64 years	65+ years
Change in Quality of Care	39	57	37	35	34
Net Improvement Reported - Change in Interactions	37	48	33	33	33
Total Incorrect Records Reported - Percentage of Error Type					
Medical History	9				
Personal Information	5				
Lab/Test Results	3				
Medication Information	3				
Billing issue	Less than 1				

Source: *Heaton, 2019. How patients view EHRs: The Pros and the cons. Clinician. Chart Logic. (September 24).*

We present below a few statistics based on patient perspectives regarding Electronic Health Record.

Patients around the world are coming together to say that their providers may have switched over to an EHR, but it may or may not have increased the quality of the care. But the numbers also show that those in the age groups between 18-29 have seen a better change in the quality of care and do not believe that an EHR system has made it worse that percentage is at (0%). Are hospitals around the world now targeting Millennials and GenZ since they will be using hospitals longer and do see the benefits of having their systems? These generations have now learned how to use technology in their day to days compared to older generations who are used to paper and pen. For example, those aged 30-65+ have high percentages ranging from 9-10% regarding a worse change in interactions compared to those 18-29 who have a 1% worse change in interactions category. The way patients are receiving care is forever changing, but will they not go to the doctor because of these changes?

Technology

How could Orlando Health stay ahead of its competition and make sure that its software was easy to use not only for its patients but for its providers as well? Leadership was essential during the times for implementation of every software they added to their healthcare branches. Not only did they have leadership with knowledge of the healthcare information system process but also had individuals who were nurses at Orlando Health on the leaderboard to help with choosing new software. There are a lot of times when going into any implementation that the users using the software complain about how leadership built out the software without any input from those using it. Orlando Health made it where there was input from their teams and how the teams see which software will be useful for their day-to-day.

3.2 Role of Technology**Allscripts**

One of the first implementations of an Electronic Healthcare Record system for Orlando Health was a system called Allscripts. In 2006, Allscripts was known as the leading provider of clinical software and helped physicians around the world improve their healthcare services. The software was signed to help Orlando Health connect around 135 staff members in their 20 practices across Florida.

The implementation of Allscripts allowed all the physicians across Orlando Health's system to have instant access to all the patient clinical records – from their current locations, hospitals, and any remote location. Although many patients fear because of this access anyone would be able to go through their records but to access these records, they would have to sign in through their physician portal.

Clinical Communications System

Another software that increases productivity for Orlando Health was PerfectServe, which went live in 2011. PerfectServe is known as an integrated clinical communications platform that allowed healthcare providers to communicate via message by both text and voice. Previously, Orlando Health employees had to find various ways to communicate with each other – making it harder to go day to day when seeing patients. Leadership understood their frustrations and began to do more research on how to make their employees have less work trying to communicate with each other and more time to provide the best care for their patients (Kinser, 2011).

Before PerfectServe the nurses at Orlando Health would call physicians based on a list, not knowing who would be working during that specific shift or who they sometimes needed to speak to. Once PerfectServe was implemented it knew which physician was covering the shift and how to reach them.

PerfectServe allowed Orlando Health physicians and nurses to connect and hospital staff through a phone number. Incoming phone calls were then automatically sent to the correct provider immediately - increasing productivity and allowing real-time messages to come through. Since this implementation, Orlando Health also was able to communicate with the M.D Anderson Cancer Center – not located in the hospital. The teams were able to connect with several physicals over 600 times per day.

Previous Day to Day

While using Allscripts and the clinical communication system – Orlando Health struggled with having their employees using multiple systems throughout the day. When going on-site to these locations, you would see how much time it would take to toggle from browser to browser with a lot of systems having a time limit on how much inactivity the end user can have before logging out. If an employee is spending seconds or even minutes logging into each system between patients there is not enough room for error or to have any patient interaction. This also will cause errors within the billing side if there are employees who cannot document right away.

Orlando Health saw this as an opportunity for growth and began to complete research for their new software trying to improve the day-to-day for their employees.

EPIC

After several years with their first electronic healthcare record system, Allscripts – Orlando Health signed over to the now main leader of streamlined care, EPIC. The hospital is now fully implemented with the EPIC platform and now has all its practices, hospitals, and outpatient care centers under one software. With this software, patients will not have one healthcare record for all their doctor visits. Using EPIC also allows providers to easily exchange patient information to improve patient interactions. Also, allowing providers outside of the Orlando Health network to be sent documentation electronically instead of faxing it on paper for every patient.

Besides, improving the communication between physicians EPIC also allowed Orlando Health access to an online patient access portal. This has not only become a big increase in patient satisfaction it allows patients to look at their records and print them off at home as well. With this portal patients are also able to schedule appointments and pay their bills all from the comfort of their own homes.

EPIC has improved the overall way Orlando Health completes business and how the providers are completing their day-to-day. With Allscripts, the hospital had several different software for each solution. Therefore, employees would have to go from one screen to another to access this software. With EPIC, employees now only must look at one location for their patient's health records for any branch of the Orlando Health hospital system. Another feature that EPIC will offer, consists of working as an "ATM" for hospitals and can send over patient information to any hospital outside of Orlando Health as well.

Other features EPIC allows for Orlando Health is "Healthy Planet" – allowing their doctors to have a population health management tool. This tool allows hospitals and their doctors to manage high-risk patients before those patients end up back in the hospital, this tool will allow the team to prevent that (Keller, 2020).

Training

During the EPIC implementation, Orlando Health had to meet with consultants for various solutions to customize their workflows specific to their teams. For example, patient access and ambulatory solutions such as registration or surgery. Each department has specific workflows they would need to follow for their solution. Because of this, EPIC had to train individuals throughout each team and branch. Making the implementation longer because not every hospital or location could go live with the software at once. This had to be done in phases, which is why a hospital keeps its health

record systems for more than two years because the process alone takes a long period. These various training options were done virtually, in person, and through the computer for employees to be able to learn how to use their software. There are also handbooks for employees to have as a training guide on how to use the software for their day-to-day.

COVID-19

The earliest case of COVID-19 was verified on the last day of 2019. Doctors and leaders around the world did not know what was coming and how it would affect the world. Many people may remember going to work like it was a normal day one day and then the next day everyone began to work from home. Families began to not be able to see other family members and hospitals were getting several patients that were passing away due to COVID-19 and no one had a cure for this disease. With the lockdown, only essential workers were able to go outside to go to work – leaving many that were not essential furloughed and unemployed for months to come. Healthcare offices around the world were not prepared for this or even understood how they were able to see their patients.

In March 2020, Orlando Health launched COVID-19 virtual visits for patients showing symptoms of COVID and was looking for assistance from a physician. This system allowed those who were showing symptoms but were not allowed to the hospitals because they were not showing more symptoms to seek professional help and understand what to do.

Orlando Health also added virtual visitation during 2020 since a lot of family members no longer could come for visitation for the hospitals. This allowed family members to see their loved ones who were hospitalized without having to travel from the comfort of their own homes. This improved patient satisfaction overall due to the restrictions of who could come into the hospital and a lot of patients that may or may not have phones. For those who could not work the tablets themselves, the staff members were able to help with the navigation of the tablet, so the patients were able to speak with their loved ones.

COVID-19 changed the way everyone around the world completed business. Orlando Hospital allowed more flexibility for their patients to take appointments from home, check on their loved ones, and have a consultation from a provider anywhere.

3.3 Implementation

Orlando Health had a lot of systems overall before switching over to one main system called EPIC. This implementation was led by core leadership who helped with discussion-making during the process which ended in 2021. Every hospital, clinic, etc. that is under the Orlando Health care name is using EPIC. The switch to different health record systems was the decision to improve the overall patient experience within the hospitals and clinics.

Many patients that go to their provider may not know what system their provider uses or never asks. EPIC was founded in 1979 with just 1-2 employees in a basement – with the main goal of helping healthcare providers improve their healthcare solutions. Currently, 300 million patients have an electronic record within EPIC. This software can be found in medical centers, hospitals, rehab, dental, mental, retail clinics, and

more. There is a fair chance that if you have gone to any hospital or organization, you may have a chart within EPIC or CERNER.

EPIC is behind all the healthcare new software and is currently supporting more than 4,500 users within Orlando Health. This portal allows the users to now have access to records, referrals, ordering, and reporting software tools. Another tool is the Healthy planet tool which warehouses millions of medical and pharmacy claims.

Orlando Health not only implemented the software but also with the implementation came costs to various items needed during this implementation process the hospital did not want to disclose. The hospital had to purchase an increase in bandwidth, new computer screens, back-end processing, and integration. As well as 10-week Epic training for all the 31,000 employees the hospital currently employs.

Although, these may seem like a major expense it allowed the hospital to go from paying for 1,200 or more different systems to one overall system where everyone can be on one altogether. This implementation also increases the claims loaded into the one system with a total of 145,407,754+ as of 2021. This alone increased the revenue for the hospitals. While the claims generated were 6,842,089 within the current system – meaning that the new system was able to load in all the previous claims within the hospital to push them out so the hospital would be able to get paid for these services.

4. Outcomes

The goal when investing millions towards an electronic healthcare record system is to always provide better care for patients and increase revenue. After a two-year process of completing the implementation for Orlando Health – they saw a big increase in their claims being processed properly and patient care. The time when workers were completing their workday through different systems was cut because now everyone was working in one system. The training provided by the EPIC team allowed the process to be smoother during the go-live, while also having go-live and post-go-live support.

Not only did the Orlando Health team begin to make the process digital they also worked faster transitioning into the digital world once the pandemic began. The team was able to see the problem of patients not being able to see their loved ones and started to act by approving how they could access them. This worked out perfectly for patients since there were restrictions on who could enter the room and who could not.

Another toll the pandemic took on the implementation was the access to their EPIC support team going on-site. Only certain members could have access to being on-site for a while due to the pandemic, because of several hospital restrictions. Not only did EPIC begin to start completing implementations mostly virtually allowing the team members to get the same support but. But certain situations did go wrong with this virtual support, due to it being call lines and having to log a ticket for some situations and waiting to receive a callback. This makes it harder and more frustrating for those who are working and cannot complete these steps without the assistance of someone else.

5. Lessons Learned

When completing an electronic healthcare record system implementation there are always a few lessons learned regarding patient information in the healthcare industry. One lesson learned can be to not have employees only transport their patient files during

the go-live date and to complete this step before. All the patient files may not be transported over before go-live, but it gives employees a head start before transitioning into their new system. The point of the new system is to have all the patient files in one space, and if a patient comes in and all their records are not within the system the providers and staff must go through multiple systems once again until the patient records are accurate. Therefore, it is important to not turn off the legacy system completely until everything is working correctly during the final post-go-live process and as a backup space for historical data. Most hospitals will keep their legacy system for a few years so their staff to have time to complete this process.

Secondly, make sure that all staff has online training completed before the system is live. There are times when employees are only offered a training call months before their go-live date and they do not practice on the system after that. This causes delays within the go-live workflow process because they no longer remember how to work the system. It is essential for the team to be able to complete their day-to-day and make sure the patients understand they are on a new system, but they will have little knowledge of the system because they have been practicing.

Lastly, make sure that the patients are always of the change and do not just walk into the doctor's office without knowing. Sometimes, insurance does not transition over into a new system and patients will need to bring updated insurance cards, and more. Most patients do not carry their insurance cards day to day because they know their doctor has this information. If they are not aware of this change this can cause billing issues and they may not be able to attend their appointment due to lack of insurance. Not only does that waste the patient's time when going into the provider's office, but the provider now does not have a patient for that specific time slot.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, Orlando Health successfully implemented a new electronic healthcare record system known as EPIC. They have changed the way their patients can interact within their practices and through technology. The hospitals and offices, now have advanced technology where patient information can be stored throughout their record system and can be seen through multiple doctors within the same Orlando Health system. It also gives the patient piece of mind that all doctors and staff can speak to each other faster, and if they have different providers under the same health system, they can keep each other updated with their own status. The way healthcare has changed over the years is amazing, there is no longer a need to wait at the hospital when a person can check in from your mobile device and check your status online, upload insurance information and speak to loved ones miles away. It is very interesting to see how technology and the pandemic have shown us how we can improve the patient experience within the healthcare field. Our study of the Orlando Health case is useful to students of healthcare, in understanding the role of technology. It will be helpful to healthcare industry professionals and strategists for integrating technology in achieving customer satisfaction. Finally, it will form a springboard for scholars and academicians in healthcare, management information systems, marketing as well as general business areas, in converging research with industry practices in a dynamic and demanding environment.

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About Our Authors

Kishwar Joonas is a tenured Associate Professor of Marketing at Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas, USA. She has a doctorate in Business - Marketing from Louisiana Tech University, U.S.A. She has a Master of Management Studies in Marketing, and a Bachelor of Commerce, both from Bombay University, India. Her research interests include consumer behavior, cross-cultural Marketing, flow theory, marketing information systems, environmental and healthcare marketing, statistical modeling, as well as marketing education. Dr. Joonas has presented scholarly research in eminent conferences. Her research appeared in quality journals such as *Asia-Pacific Journal of Management*, *Health Marketing Quarterly*, *Technology in Society*, *AIMS International Journal of Management*, *Hospital Topics*, and *Journal of Higher*

Education Theory and Practice. Dr. Joonas has been recognized with several grants, as well as prestigious international awards in her experience of over 25 years of in teaching, research, as well as university, professional, and public service.

Ahmed Y. Mahfouz is an Associate Professor of Management Information Systems at Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas, USA. He has a PhD in Information and Operations Management (MIS) from Texas A&M University. He has an MBA and BS in Management Science from Virginia Tech. His research interests include information systems, flow theory, online consumer behavior, and cybersecurity. His research appeared in *Computers in Human Behavior*; *Journal of Internet Commerce*; *Technology in Society*; *International Journal of Technology, Knowledge and Society*; *International Journal of Business Continuity and Risk Management*; and *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice*. He is a Co-PI/activity coordinator on a U.S. Department of Education's Title III PVAMU grant, DoED FY 2013-2019, \$531,000; and a recipient of several COB Summer Research Mini-Grants. He has won numerous research, teaching, and service awards.

Nakiayah Patterson is currently a Graduate Research Assistant and an MBA Candidate at Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas with an anticipated graduation date of December 2023. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Saint Elizabeth University, Morristown, New Jersey, and an associate degree from Bard College through Bard High School Early College, Newark, New Jersey. She is a Business Technology Leader Intern at IBM, Dallas, Texas, leading the planning and implementation of an improved onboarding process for new hires to achieve targeted goals. As Consultant, Government Services at Cerner Corporation, Kansas City, Missouri, she prioritized, managed, and delivered DoD and VA projects through scope management and cross-functional collaboration. In addition, she established, led, and scaled a new diversity and inclusion team to achieve final deliverables as per specified requirements. Her experience includes healthcare software implementation. As a Graduate Assistant, she collaborated with Texas A&M University on data analytics studies on social media and disaster management. She plans to continue her journey as a full-time employee at IBM as a Business Technology Leader in the Client Engineering department.