

Performance Strategies



Increase Physician Alignment Using IT Benefits

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Wheaton Franciscan Leverages Clinical Information Technology to Enhance Physician Alignment



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Going Above and Beyond

Offering clinical information systems to physicians has been one of the drivers in attracting and retaining doctors at [Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare](#). But providing a pedestrian set of clinical information systems and run-of-the-mill support would only put our health system on equal footing with other healthcare providers in the area.

At Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare, we strive to lead other providers when it comes to competing for physician allegiance. That's why we are leveraging advanced clinical information systems to give us a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining the services of top-notch area physicians.

To differentiate what we offer from other providers, we:

- Provide a suite of applications to meet the diverse needs of our 3,500 affiliated physicians and more than 450 employed physicians
- Use physician leaders to lead all implementation efforts
- Perhaps most importantly, focus keenly on the needs of physician end users as we roll out the systems

Providing a Comprehensive Solution

Our [physician portal](#) helps to align physicians by tying our IT efforts together and by enabling physicians to securely access information from throughout the enterprise from any location, including both inpatient and outpatient data.

In an effort to exceed our physicians' IT expectations, we are implementing McKesson's Horizon Clinicals® suite of solutions to establish an electronic health record (EHR). Although many other healthcare providers have components of an EHR, we are one of the first in our marketplace to implement an integrated EHR that works across care delivery settings.

The technology package includes [a computerized physician order entry system](#) that enables us to provide clinicians with advanced decision support. In addition, we have developed adaptive order sets and treatment guidelines based on the role of the clinician, the patient's condition and evidence-based clinical knowledge.

Our employed physicians are using [McKesson's ambulatory EHR](#) in their clinics. McKesson's ambulatory EHR provides significant integration with the [Inpatient EHR](#), providing physicians with an online patient record. The ultimate goal is to evolve to an EHR that seamlessly flows across care settings and shares the same clinical content, patient data, clinician tools and technical architecture as the Inpatient solutions.

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To meet the needs of our independent physicians, we are taking advantage of the relaxation in Stark regulations to provide them with [ambulatory EHR and practice management software designed for independent physician practices](#). So far, 10 physicians have taken advantage of the subsidized information technology offer — and many others are expected to take advantage of the offer in the coming months. Direct interfaces to this ambulatory EHR from our Inpatient EHR enable physicians to seamlessly receive lab results and dictated reports from the hospital. Such ease of use encourages the participating physicians to refer patients to our sites instead of using other area providers.

Getting Physicians Involved

To truly engage our physicians, we have called upon their peers to lead the implementation efforts. For example, our chief medical officer, Stephen Cardamone, D.O., is responsible for the overall strategic implementation of clinical information systems.

While the CMO leads the overall clinical IT efforts, other physician leaders are responsible for clinical system implementation in each region of our health system. With each implementation, a committee of doctors also meets regularly to make ongoing recommendations.

As a result of this physician involvement, the systems are built to truly support clinicians in the delivery of high-quality patient care. Perhaps most importantly, we are using the technology initiatives to build consensus around clinical practice standards — and then leveraging the technology to help support the delivery of best practices. With the physicians guiding the implementations, the systems have been designed to improve workflow, which in turn increases the technologies' overall appeal.

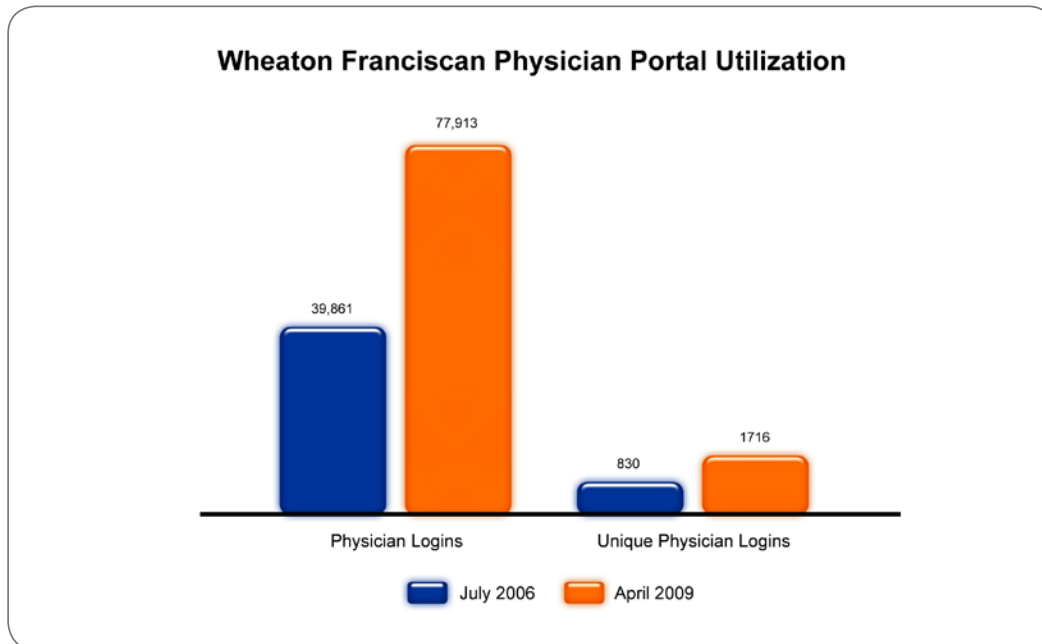
Access to clinical information on a real-time basis from any location is one of the major benefits of clinical IT, according to the physicians. This access means that doctors can make more informed decisions at the point of care and avoid delivering duplicative or unnecessary services.

The use of IT has certainly proved popular with our physicians. Consider the following: In the departments where CPOE is implemented, 100% of physicians are using it. And use of our physician portal has nearly doubled between July 2006 and April 2009.

In the final analysis, though, our physician-focused IT implementation efforts are making it possible for Wheaton Franciscan to provide improved experiences to physicians, who can then offer better care to our patients. For example, we have reduced preventable adverse drug events from 1.5 per 1,000 discharges to just 0.031 per 1,000 discharges. Ultimately, such results increase physician satisfaction as they realize that they are improving health in our community.

John D. Oliverio is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare, a Catholic, not-for-profit organization with more than 100 health and shelter organizations and nearly 23,000 associates in Wisconsin, Iowa, Colorado, and Illinois. Serving the organization since 1984, and President and CEO since 2000, Oliverio has led the organization's move to an integrated business model. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Loyola University in Chicago and a master's degree in management from the J.L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University. A certified public accountant, Oliverio serves as a board member for more than 25 organizations and associations.

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From July 2006 to April 2009, physician utilization of the Wheaton Franciscan physician portal has seen a dramatic improvement. Total physician logins almost doubled, while unique physician logins more than doubled.

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