

Elation

Implementation Best Practices

Starting or Switching an EHR

Get a primer on the implementation process and strategies for success for your new or existing independent practice.



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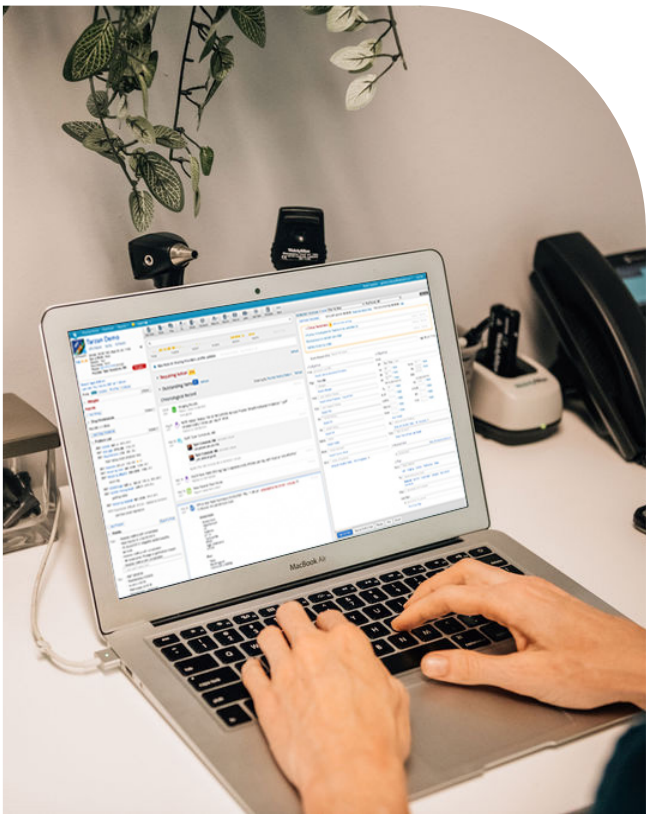
Planning Your Implementation

More and more medical practices are selecting and implementing electronic health records (EHR) than ever before. Statistics indicate that the number of practices purchasing an EHR has doubled over the past three years.



EHR Implementation Stats

- In 2021, 88% of office-based physicians in the United States had adopted EHRs, up from 42% in 2008.
- The average EHR implementation takes between 6-12 months and costs around $15,000-$70,000 per provider
- The top benefits of an electronic health record in ambulatory practices fall within three main categories: improved patient care through more efficient access to accurate records; improved office efficiency; and potential financial benefit
- The top barriers to EHR implementations are the cost of the systems, clinicians' concerns about technically supporting a system, and clinicians' ability to use the new system

Preparing to implement an EHR for your independent practice takes some careful planning. When you use a proper implementation strategy, however, you will have a better opportunity to facilitate the success of your practice as you minimize delays and increase your team's satisfaction with your new system. An EHR checklist for implementation can help your new or existing practice get up and running quickly and efficiently, so you can focus on providing high-quality care for your patients.

EHR Implementation Checklist

Step 1: What to look for in an Implementation

The EHR implementation process starts before you make the decision on which EHR solution to purchase for your independent practice. Here are some of the first things you should consider when planning an implementation plan for your independent practice:

- Tailoring the system to support safe, high-quality patient care
- Ensuring contingency plans are established to address system downtimes
- Determining the care processes your EHR needs to support and then how the hardware and software should be set up to support those process in patient-friendly and practice-friendly ways
- Ensuring the technology properly supports safe, effective clinical processes
- Ensuring the technology complements efficient workflows
- Having the proper implementation support in place to get dedicated support at each step of the way
- Having a timeline in place so that you can get up and running in no time and don't have any reductions in productivity or visit volumes
- Gain clarity on the costs of implementation. Ideally, there will be little to no additional charges
- Ensuring the confidentiality, availability, and integrity of your patient health information as well as to ensure the timely, accurate, and regulatory compliant generation of reports

> "We had zero downtime during the transition to Elation. The support staff is responsive and supportive, readily available to answer questions."
>
> - Susan Sorensen, MD

Step 2: Getting Started

You will first need to determine your goals, assess your readiness, and prepare your team for the technology change. Patients will also need to know that you are implementing an EHR system, so communication and education will be necessary to ensure they are prepared as well. Below we outline the main aspects of getting started with an implementation:

Prepare your team.

Assess your team's comfort level and understanding of computers, workflows, and clinical needs. It will be necessary, once your new system is in place, for your team to be trained on the EHR solution and the process used to optimize its effectiveness. They should be prepared to participate fully in learning how to properly use the EHR.

Prepare your patients.

When your practice implements a new EHR system, there will be changes in the way you interact with your patients and in the way patients access their own medical data. Preparation and communication before implementation will ensure these changes are positive, benefitting both patient and independent practice.

[1] https://www.healthit.gov/data/quickstats/office-based-physician-electronic-health-record-adoption

[2] https://abdalslam.com/ehr-statistics

Develop a plan.

Include a timeline for announcing your new EHR, for training, for testing the system, and for fully implementing and using the EHR solution. Share the plan with all team members in the practice and encourage leaders within the organization to assist in implementing the plan.

Step 3: Tips for Successful Implementations

Now that you have a plan, it's time to install the EHR. Work with your vendor on implementing the new system, migrating your data, and securing training for your team. Here are some tips for how to succeed during and after the implementation process:

Initiation

Account set-up + configuration

- Work with your clinical team to assess their comfort level with technology, including their understanding of computer usage and of the practice workflows. Discuss clinical needs with all members of the team. Schedule training on the EHR solution as well as on the process you will use to optimize its effectiveness for your patients and your practice.

- Educate your patients on the features they can take advantage of, such as accessing their own medical records and communicating with you and your team. Engaging patients in their care plan will help improve their health outcomes as they are able to use your EHR to view their records and clarify d iagnoses and follow-up care instructions.

- The workflow is a critical consideration, from the first point of contact with a new patient. Your practice team should consider how your new EHR technology will handle generating new patient records, patient registration, and retrieval of information. Defining and mapping these processes may detect, mitigate, and prevent problems caused by duplicate records, patient mix-ups, and comingled records.

Onboarding

Data migration + training

- EHR Migrations on average take 5-7 business days. Make sure migration services are HIPAA-compliant for your entire patient panel. Ensure you import all demographics, appointments, files, and notes plus discrete allergies, problems, medications, immunizations, and more during this time. Work with an implementation specialist to make sure that your information is uploaded correctly and you're never without your records.

- Seek best in class training so you can get up and running as quickly as possible. Some vendors also offer education portals — complete with on-demand video tutorials and step-by-step walkthrough guides so you and your practice can learn at your own pace.

[3] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/1472-6947-9-15

[4] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/1472-6947-9-15

Adoption

Go-live + ongoing optimization

- After you go-live, take advantage of ongoing support services so you can seek assistance and guidance when you need it.
- Ensure that you take advantage of the ongoing support available to also optimize your new EHR tool.

"I cannot say enough good things about the Implementation team. They got my practice up and running quickly... faster than anyone believes when I tell them! Switching to Elation has been a true joy."

- Gregg Alexander, DO

About Elation



Elation Health is the most trusted technology platform for high-value primary care. Since 2010, the company has delivered clinical-first solutions — built on a collaborative EHR platform — that help practices start, grow, communicate, and succeed in delivering the highest-quality personalized care to patients. Elation Health supports primary care clinicians in upholding the craft of medicine while thriving in an evolving
healthcare landscape.

Today, Elation Health serves 24,000 clinicians caring for millions of Americans.

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