Is your ASC as efficient and profitable as it should be? What is preventing surgery centers from moving their ASC to an EMR system?

**How an EMR can help your ASC**

Without any elaboration, an EMR solution should be designed to support the way you work. It expedites the documentation of each and every patient encounter so that you can continue to provide the same high standard of care to your patients as you always have. The current healthcare environment places significant pressure on ambulatory surgery centers. Greater scrutiny by CMS, leaner staff, and increased competition are just some of the many challenges facing ASCs. An EMR has the ability to support an ASC’s efforts to improve in all of those areas. Simple yet intuitive tools can help a surgery center realize its full potential.

Some surgery centers are concerned about implementing an EMR because of their comfort with paper records and the cost associated with transitioning. The concern is moving from something the surgery center staff knows and is comfortable and efficient with, to learning something completely new.
A good place to start when selecting an EMR is to look for a software that mirrors paper charts and has all the required documentation on one single screen. This reduces the amount of clicking and scrolling staff would be required to do during the surgical visit. Achieving a centralized, intuitive method of charting is a fundamental objective for iMedicWare, a New Jersey based operator of Ophthalmology specific EMR/PM and ASC software. iMedicWare’s iASC allows you to create a care plan customized to each patients’ needs. Your entire staff can then follow a single care plan. Post-surgery patient’s post-operative notes, surgical super bill, and iASCLink details sync back into iDoc, the practice side software with all information automatically transferred. iASCLink enables ASCs to allow outside practices to maintain their own booking sheets for surgery, and allows for their clinic and pre-surgical information to be synced to the ASC so the surgeon has everything available to them, regardless of their practice EHR. Patients are tracked through each step of the process in iASC, synchronizing your staff’s efforts and greatly improving patient care. Additionally, this reduces the learning time required of all surgery center staff.

**Patient, Staff & Physician Satisfaction**

**Enhance Patient Safety**

Look for an EMR that is self-policing, or a system that is set up to ensure you do what you’re supposed to do at critical points during a visit. An EMR must greatly reduce errors by standardizing processes, while alerting the user of missing steps or other factors that can risk a patient’s safety. For example, iMedicWare’s iASC audits all charts in real-time, assuring the nursing administrator that the chart has been appropriately completed. The system makes sure that surgeons’, nurses’, and anesthesia providers’ chart notes have been entered and signed; any inconsistencies and inaccuracies are highlighted so that they can be quickly corrected, saving countless hours of tedious chart reviews. EMRs must ensure that at the time a patient is discharged, all their records are complete and timely with nothing left to be completed. The clearer and complete the patient information, the better the care will be when they move on to another care setting to see another doctor.

**Reduce Costs**

We all know time is money and profitability comes from efficiency. Not only should an EMR improve the quality of patient care, but it should also improve the ASCs bottom line. It should provide access to statistics that allow ASCs to better perform detailed case costing and analysis, optimize scheduling of patients, surgeons, rooms, staff, equipment and anesthesia personnel. Electronic preference cards aid in reducing inventory therefore eliminating waste and increasing revenue. Most providers report 100% return on investment within 12 to 18 months if EMRs are implemented correctly.

**Seeing is Believing: Track Improvements**

For the leaders of ASCs that invested in EMRs, making the switch is a decision they have seen reap benefits throughout their centers — benefits that will help them provide efficient, high-quality, compliant and profitable care. Increasingly, it has become apparent that if you do not have an EMR in the ASC it becomes a deterrent to physician recruitment. Reducing legal exposure, eliminating regulatory sanctions, improving compliance with HIPAA, demonstrating adherence to rules & regulations – an EMR should help do it all. It begs the question: why spend more money to get inferior results?