

EPIC PERFORMANCE

At the heart of Epic is the systemwide introduction of a single electronic medical record (EMR). The system provides every patient, every time....one record for all caregivers. With a shield of confidentiality in its design, the EMR is instrumental in faster diagnosis and treatment, greater safety in medication administration, an ongoing tracking and evaluating of processes and the sharing of key data between and among all care providers.

Cassandra ("CJ") Morris, RN, BSN, CPN, Clinical Educator for General Pediatrics at Children's Hospital, feels that Epic means safer care for patients. In addition, the ease of navigation for the Epic system allows nurses to have more time for direct patient interaction.

Where will Epic take us next? It will be with our patients as they become more involved in their care through OSF myHealth. It will be with us as standards of care are developed and refined within OSF HealthCare. It will enable OSF HealthCare to transform health care to improve the lives of those we serve.

Epic arrived at the patient's bedside and in their physician medical office in the middle of the night. Silently and unnoticed. When the sun arose, Epic was still there, as if it belonged. Because it did.

Epic is a powerful health care tool that, for those we serve, is a silent and unnoticed partner in care. It quietly resides with our primary care offices, in our prompt cares and emergency departments, and throughout our hospitals and specialty offices. To our caregivers and support staff, however, Epic has proven to be much more; as an integrated medical record system Epic has been a "game changer."

The invisibility that cloaked Epic for hospitalized patients and physician medical offices during its midnight implementations was by design. When done correctly, the transition from one system to another is "seamless" and unnoticed by patients. And so it was within the OSF Healthcare System with the introduction of Epic.

But the training that led to the implementation was by no means invisible to thousands of OSF HealthCare employees and physicians. Months of meticulous planning were prelude to each facility's activation date, with strong on-site support by staff throughout the system for the weeks that followed.

Nationally, 220,000 physicians are on the Epic Electronic Medical Record, about 1 of 4 physicians in the United States. Approximately 33 percent of the U.S. population will receive care at an organization using Epic's EMR.

Epic is providing new ways to serve patients in and out of the hospital with innovative methods of communicating vital, life-saving information. It is giving patients direct access to their medical records and an avenue to connect with their doctors. The implementation of Epic has been as significant as its name implies. Epic has improved existing connections and introduced new opportunities.

The planning for Epic has been described as going beyond knowing "what button to push." Planners realized Epic was a powerful tool, but the processes and people connected to that tool bring it to its greatest potential. Providing education and support to the entire organization during the steps leading to training and final implementation was as important as the actual activation of the tool.

Epic has not been static, nor was it meant to be. It has been a parent to other innovations, some of which are discussed in these pages. Epic made possible the computer connection for patients called OSF myHealth and is becoming an important partner in the Heart Failure Disease Management Program. It is allowing non-OSF physicians to access patient data through OSF eLink. It is sending key patient information ahead of helicopters and ambulances so hospitals are better ready to receive critically ill or injured patients.

To some extent, Epic remains a silent partner, unseen by our patients but impacting them every hour they are in our care. OSF HealthCare has a Vision of strong connections between caregivers and those we serve. As we continue to connect people, process and technology, Epic is a powerful tool in converting our Vision into reality.