



# Case Study



# Time is Money: Hello Health's Rapid EHR Implementation

## The Business Problem

Electronic Medical Record platforms can cost independent primary care practices tens of thousands of dollars in hardware, software and training costs. Several studies have shown that, for an average five-physician practice, implementation can cost up to \$162,000, with \$85,500 in maintenance expenses during the first year.<sup>1</sup>

Just as troubling to many physicians and office managers is loss of time and productivity to slowed workflow as hundreds of hours – sometimes several months – are spent on system installation and staff training. A recent data-mining project for the Missouri Regional Extension Center (REC) found that the average implementation time for its primary care practices was 38 weeks.<sup>2</sup>

<p><b>Practice</b> Woodstock Family Medicine Portland, Oregon</p> <p><b>Profile</b> A mid-sized primary care practice serving children, adolescents, and adults</p> <p><b>Providers</b> 2</p> <p><b>Staff</b> 10</p> <p><b>Number of Patients</b> 5,300</p> <p><b>Locations</b> 1</p>	
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## Background

The Woodstock Family Medicine team, like many primary care practices across the U.S., felt a growing urgency to choose an EHR platform for their practice to avoid federal penalization for non-compliance in the Medicare and Medicaid CMS EHR Incentive Program. “It was essential to the doctors that we go with a system that was not expensive,” says Tammy Ray, Woodstock’s office manager. “And, of course, they wanted to get the EHR up and running very quickly so as not to cause disruption to our patients.”

Woodstock, a busy practice serving children, adolescents and adults had three goals:

1. Achieve practice objectives with a no-cost EHR solution;
2. Attest for Meaningful Use;
3. Experience rapid EHR implementation and avoid workflow slowdowns.

In August 2013, after reviewing the offerings of many other EHR vendors, the practice chose to implement Hello Health, a comprehensive, no-cost EHR solution designed to create practice revenue and engage patients for primary care physician practices. Hello Health is certified as a Complete EHR by the Certification Commission for Health Information Technology (CCHIT®) and meets all criteria for Meaningful Use.

Hello Health’s patient management platform includes an EHR, a complete suite of patient engagement tools, integrated practice management and a full-service medical billing solution. Because it is a patient subscription-based model, Hello Health can generate revenue for physician practices when patients enroll in Hello Health’s fully-integrated patient portal, PortalConnect.

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PortalConnect, an easy-to-use, federally compliant patient portal, allows secure communication between patient and practice. After a 30-Day trial period, Woodstock patients pay an annual charge of \$48, or \$89 per family, billed to patient credit cards placed on file with the practice. Woodstock retains between 25 and 40 percent of each charge, which, between August 2013 and February 2014, has brought them more than \$10,000 in new revenue outside of patient services. PortalConnect makes it easy to:

1. Exchange secure e-mails between patient and practice
2. Make appointments online
3. Receive and access patient lab and test results
4. Access appointment summaries and treatment plans
5. Request prescription renewals

### Time is Money

Woodstock chose Hello Health because of its unique business model. "It was very significant to the physicians that Hello Health was no-cost and did not show ads or other distracting elements within the platform," Tammy says. Just as attractive was Hello Health's promise of rapid installation.

Because Hello Health's implementation team was able to get the practice up and running in six weeks, Woodstock received its federal Meaningful Use incentive payment of \$50,000. And, not only did the practice pay nothing for the EHR platform during implementation, the speed at which they implemented meant very little interruption of office workflow.

Further setting the Hello Health platform apart from other EHRs on the market, Hello Health's patient subscription-based business model meant that Woodstock not only avoided losing revenue during implementation, but practice staff were also able to earn new revenue immediately as patients began subscribing to PortalConnect through Hello Health's iPad kiosk check-in system.

<sup>1</sup> Health Aff (Millwood). 2011 Mar;30(3):481-9. doi: 10.1377/hlthaff.2010.0768.

<sup>2</sup> Alafaireet, P. & Hicks, L. (2014). *Data-mining Applied to Accelerating Health Information Technology Use in Non-adopters*. [Conference handout]. Retrieved from HIMSS 2014 conference website: <http://himss.files.cms-plus.com/2014Conference/handouts/156.pdf>.



#### The Timeline

- Signed contract with Hello Health in August 2013
- Completed installation in six weeks, launching in September 2013

#### The Bottom Line

In six months, Woodstock:

- Earned \$10,000 in annual revenue from Hello Health's subscription-based patient portal, PortalConnect. This number is expected to increase to \$24,000 per year as patients continue to subscribe as the practice grows.
- Was granted \$50k for Meaningful Use attestation.



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