

CHALLENGE

Convert approximately 90,000 active patient charts to digital images with minimal interruption to the physicians and clinical staff while performing this task at a reasonable cost.

RESULTS

Over 90,000 patient charts; over 13.5 million pages were converted in 5 months

\$800k+ operational savings/year

4000 sq.ft. of space reclaimed for clinical purposes

Medical staff maintained critical access to patient charts at all times during conversion process

Seamless integration into their EHR software platform

Fast turnaround with the highest accuracy possible

Physician peace of mind that EHR information is complete

The Mankato Clinic is one of Minnesota's largest physician owned, multi-specialty regional group practices, with over 90 years of history providing exceptional health care services. From its beginnings, the Mankato Clinic has been a pioneer in the industry, beginning as one of the earliest group practices formed in their state. Their tradition of providing leading edge services has continued, and as the world of medical practices evolved into Electronic Health Records, the Mankato Clinic knew they would need top notch professionals to help them make the transition to EHR as smoothly and efficiently as possible. They chose Allscripts' Enterprise EHR software as the platform they would use moving into the future, and the implementation of this leading edge system went even more efficiently than they could have hoped for. The Allscripts' system proved to have a very user friendly interface, with minimal learning time required of their medical professionals, and the day-to-day processes for entering new information into the Allscripts system also proved relatively easy to implement.

The Mankato Clinic thought they had met the need for converting historical documents. For over 12 years, they had been storing chart documents created electronically in-house, including chart notes, letters, labs, x-rays and other critical documents. They assumed importing these electronic documents into the Allscripts' system would meet their needs. It didn't. Soon after their EHR migration, their physicians realized they often needed histories that went back much further or other document types, and they were frustrated with the extra time required to retrieve historical paper charts. The Clinic did time and labor studies to determine the feasibility of scanning their historical documents in house, and they found it would literally take them years to do it. Additionally, it would have required the Clinic to purchase scanning equipment and software. There was a genuine concern that the lack of extended patient histories and other document types in their EHR system could negatively impact patient care, and they sought out a solution to get all those historical charts scanned and into their system quickly, accurately and cost effectively.

The Mankato Clinic turned to DISC for their historical chart scanning needs. With over 50 years experience in the document imaging industry, DISC is an industry leading expert at converting documents into any needed format for easy transition into any EHR platform, and their status as a Certified Scanning Partner of Allscripts made DISC the ideal partner for this critical job. Before scanning could even begin, DISC had to

painstakingly prepare each chart by removing staples and paperclips, unfolding bent corners and pages, repairing torn documents and so forth. High speed, state-of-the-art scanners were used to create images of each paper document with amazing efficiency and clarity. To finish it all off, DISC's expertise at formatting the chart information made the resulting database of historical charts ready for a simple, seamless integration into the Allscripts EHR system. Within a 5 month period, DISC was able to scan about 90,000 patient charts for the Mankato Clinic...with over 13.5 million pages of information!

Choosing DISC as their scanning partner proved to be exactly the right decision for the Mankato Clinic. Having in-house experience in go-forward scanning, the Clinic knew how big a job it was going to be to convert the entirety of their historical charts, but it absolutely had to be done. When DISC was assigned the task, it seemed like their historical charts had been almost instantly converted, ready to load and immediately available to their physicians and other medical staff. The years of work they were facing was completed in just 5 months. And critical to the Clinics' needs, throughout the entire process DISC made sure that the documents they were working on were readily available and in the hands of requesting physicians promptly and efficiently. DISC was incredibly more efficient and cost-effective than their in-house solution would have been, and the job was completed in an aggressive timeline.

Cheryl Jones, Director of Health Information & EHR at the Mankato Clinic summed it up this way: "DISC saved us lots of headaches and lost time. I only wish we'd scanned all our historical charts in step 1 of our migration, right at the beginning of our EHR project, instead of step 301. Working with DISC turned out to be a big win for us!" In the end, the physicians felt much more secure knowing they had complete histories immediately available within their EHR system.

Dr. John Benson, a family practice physician at Mankato Clinic, Board Member and Chair of the EHR Steering Committee summed it up best by saying, "As a provider, there are many things that we get out of the medical record that we need in order to practice medicine. Critical information such as past notes and what we have done in the past to help with a particular problem reside in the paper chart. Patients can't always remember the details. Practicing without the information available was essentially dangerous; having the charts scanned in eliminates this problem."

Practicing without the information available was essentially dangerous; having the charts scanned in eliminates this problem.

*Dr. John Benson
Physician at Mankato Clinic &
Board Member and Chair of
the EHR Steering Committee*