

- Eliminating information gaps* ■
- Connecting community physicians* ■
- Improving patient care* ■



## Hunterdon Healthcare connects physician EMR systems inside and outside the hospital with Ensemble

Hunterdon Healthcare is a healthcare system with facilities in 26 locations in Hunterdon, Somerset, Warren and Mercer counties, New Jersey, serving more than 350,000 patient encounters annually. Hunterdon Medical Center, with 178 beds and more than 2,000 employees, provides comprehensive medical, diagnostic, surgical, behavioral health, rehabilitative, and preventive services for inpatients and outpatients.

Hunterdon Healthcare is focused on providing the highest quality patient care with the highest degree of safety. A major part of reaching these goals, and maintaining them, is Hunterdon Healthcare’s visionary strategy for providing continuity of care. Continuity of care ensures that every physician caring for a patient has access to a complete picture of that patient’s medical status, including laboratory test results. “Our aim is to optimize communication and health information exchange (HIE) with all of the clinicians in our network, as well as with other

healthcare providers,” explains Hunterdon VP and CIO, Glenn Mamary. “Only with access to all relevant information can physicians make the best clinical decisions.”

Hunterdon Healthcare relies on InterSystems Ensemble to help make its vision a reality.

### **Transparent information sharing**

Providing continuity of care for patients can be a challenge any time multiple physicians, in multiple locations, are part of the care team. It requires closing the information gaps that normally exist between providers and facilities, and often bridging between disparate clinical systems.

Hunterdon Healthcare faced a similar challenge in giving its affiliated outpatient physicians access to the same patient information as its hospital staff, and enabling hospital staff to see key patient information from outpatient visits. “This type of integration is one of the most important things we need to deal with for continuity of care

and patient safety,” says Mamary. “It has to be transparent to our clinicians and patients, and we rely on Ensemble to make this happen.”

Ensemble connects Hunterdon Healthcare’s QuadraMed Affinity hospital information system (HIS) and a major laboratory information system with its physician groups’ electronic health record (EHR) and enterprise practice management systems from NextGen. Part of this project includes giving the affiliated physician groups the option to place orders with the hospital lab using their NextGen systems, and view the results back in the NextGen EHR.

### **Better, more efficient patient care**

“The ability for doctors to see all the information related to their patients, including lab results ordered during an outpatient or inpatient visit, closes the ‘circle of care’ for us,” explains Mamary. “There was a gap before in getting lab results from inpatient encounters before the eyes of community physicians, and vice versa. Now physicians can view and compare inpatient and outpatient test results from the comfort of their own EMRs, eliminating information gaps and decreasing unnecessary testing.” This connected healthcare system provides medical center staff and affiliated physician groups with additional benefits, including:

- **Automated Primary Care Physician Notification** – Ensemble notifies a patient’s primary care provider automatically when that patient is admitted to the hospital. Physicians and patients are reporting improved satisfaction based on the enhanced communication.
- **Employee Utilization Notice Alerts** – Ensemble queries the Affinity HIS and payroll systems for information such as time worked per employee, overtime hours and other employee utilization data. Reports are sent to Hunterdon managers who use the information to improve management of employee overtime, leading to significant savings in terms of overtime hours.

### **Teamwork and Ensemble for project success**

In the first phase of the project rollout, Hunterdon Healthcare went live with the integration of three affiliated practices. Since then, a new practice has been integrated every few weeks, and integration of non-affiliated private practices is under way. “This project required a great deal of teamwork,” says Mamary, “with team leaders representing medical center physicians, nurses, IT, and affiliated physician practices.” The success of the entire project is serving as a model for collaboration and integration throughout the various divisions of Hunterdon Healthcare.

“Because quality of care and patient safety are so important,” notes Mamary, “a primary concern for me is ensuring that our HIS is effectively integrated and information flows transparently throughout the hospital and into the outside medical community. InterSystems understands healthcare, and has built Ensemble to enable the information sharing we need, with the performance and reliability healthcare demands.”

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