



Akron Skin Center

Practice Gets Second Wind Thanks to Kareo & EMA

Dermatology

Just because a physician retires doesn't mean that the practice has to close. In fact, buying into an existing practice is a great way to get started on your own. It provides a solid patient base and existing reputation that a new provider can build on, but it also comes with some of its own challenges.

Dr. James Libecco found this out firsthand. Following his residency, Dr. Libecco joined the staff of the Cleveland Clinic where he was the Director of the Psoriasis, Phototherapy, and Cutaneous Care Center as well as Director of the Clinical Research Center. It was interesting and challenging work, but he soon realized he wanted to move from the large enterprise environment to a smaller practice. "I wanted the opportunity to have more personal relationships with patients and customize the practice to my style," he explains. He opted to buy two practices and combine them into the Akron Skin Center in 2009.

Challenge

Both practices were completely paper-based, which was not what Dr. Libecco was used to, coming from Cleveland Clinic. "They were still using a paper scheduling book," he recalls. "I'd been on an EHR since 2002 and was very involved in the EHR launch at Cleveland Clinic so I wanted to get automated."

He decided to partner with another practice that was already using MicroMD. The EHR they chose was called Workflow, which integrated with MicroMD. He wasn't thrilled, "MicroMD was not a bad solution, but it was expensive, and Workflow kept promising features that never materialized."

The partnership didn't last and Dr. Libecco was happy to drop MicroMD. He opted for the Workflow practice management system. It was ok, but the company decided to shut down the product in favor of another system, which he didn't like at all. "I decided I really needed to move on and find something that would better meet my needs," he says.

Solutions

Just as Dr. Libecco was deciding to leave those systems behind, Modernizing Medicine was launching EMA. He was impressed, "They had built a really solid product so I signed up as one of the first customers." He had an EHR but he still needed a practice management system so he asked Modernizing Medicine for suggestions. They recommended a couple systems that interfaced with EMA.

KAREO SOLUTION



Modernizing
Medicine EMA EHR



Kareo Billing



"It gives me the flexibility to get the best solution possible for my practice."

Results

“We looked at the systems and did the demos,” Dr. Libecco explains. “Some of them were really expensive, but Kareo offered both the features we needed and an affordable price. It was also really easy to get up and running.” They were up and running really fast he says, which was just what they needed with a practice that was already thriving.

According to Dr. Libecco, “The technology we have now allows me to manage my practice and staff and see about 50 patients a day.” In addition he has added one mid-level provider who sees another 25 or so patients a day. Because of the streamlined technology they can do this with only one biller and three other administrative staff. “I sometimes think we are actually a little overstaffed because we are so efficient but I prefer to have a little more than we need,” he adds.

The bidirectional interface between Kareo and EMA is a big piece of the efficiency. “The superbill piece is super-efficient,” says Dr. Libecco. “I finish a note and sign off, it goes to Kareo in seconds, and we submit claims daily.” With their old system, it was almost like using paper it was so inefficient he recalls.

Dr. Libecco feels like his technology makes him smarter. “EMA is built the way an EHR should be,” he says. “It is very smart. It is built for my specialty, and when I enter a diagnosis it automatically knows what labs, meds, etc. I need.” He believes he actually is able to diagnose and treat patients more effectively. There is also the added benefit of being able to see trends from his peers and compare his own decisions against theirs.

He also really likes the simplicity of Kareo and the ease and speed with which he can create reports and monitor his billing. He says he gets what he needs when he needs it, “I get what I need without much fuss, it never goes down, and it is very quick and responsive, which is great for me because I am really involved in the day-to-day operations of my practice.”

Dr. Libecco knows his practice’s key indicators and likes to stay on top of the billing, which is easy to do with the Kareo dashboard. “I can look and see that our average days in A/R are about 35, which is a little high for us,” he says. “I can also see that 80% of our insurance claims are paid in less than 30 days and less than 3% of our claims are denied or rejected.”



80%
claims paid <30 days



<3%
denials/rejections



1
location



2
providers



4
team members



75
daily visits

Conclusion

Akron Skin Center has become a very successful practice, and Dr. Libecco attributes this to a combination of, “taking good care of patients, taking care of your providers and staff, and providing really good service.” And, he believes that choosing your technology wisely is a key piece of all three of these things.

“People sometimes ask if I’d rather have an EHR and PM from the same vendor, but I actually like that EMA and Kareo are separate but integrated,” he explains. “It gives me the flexibility to get the best solution possible for my practice.”