



Dr. Hugh Durrence, M.D.

Dr. Durrence knew his medical practice needed modernization. With his staff spending more time “hunting” for paper documents, instead of meeting with patients, frustration grew! Today - with Dr. Durrence’s high-tech vision, his office is not only HIPAA compliant, but his employees are back to what they do best - caring for patients.

High-Tech Tools Allow Doctor to Focus on Patients, Not Paperwork

High-Tech Tools Help Visionary Doctor Focus on Patients, Not Paperwork

Back in 1999, an Intel study suggested that doctors were reluctant to adopt Web and network technology. Unlike his colleagues, however, Charleston, S.C., physician Dr. Hugh Durrence quickly recognized the benefits. With more than 1,600 patients (and their associated medical record volume), Dr. Durrence’s staff was already frustrated, engaging in increasingly cumbersome manual file retrieval and management. As his community family medicine practice grew, Dr. Durrence hired an IT consultant to guide him toward a total electronic communications format.

The Business Need

With a staff of 8 high-level professionals, Dr. Durrence was anxious to utilize his staff’s time cost-effectively and enable them to spend more time on patient care. In the past, they routinely spent countless hours (especially during their lunch breaks) trying to locate a patient file, which usually contained faxed documents or notes that needed to be sent to other medical offices or insurance providers. Conversely, when medical information was faxed to Dr. Durrence’s office, one or more of the staff had to stand by the office’s two standalone fax machines to receive, review, and file the information.

By 2003, Dr. Durrence had incorporated a comprehensive electronic practice management system but was still struggling with getting paper-based patient medical records into an online format. He was also anticipating the impact of the impending federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which would place even greater demands on his staff to comply with new standards for electronic healthcare transactions and patient privacy. Finally, there was the matter of “consumables” - paper and toner for the fax machines, and the telecom costs associated with having two dedicated fax lines.

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What they say about Zetafax

“Zetafax makes it easy to send and receive medical records and charts securely - no more loose paper hanging around, and no more missing charts - making HIPAA compliance a breeze.”



The Solution

One of the first steps Dr. Durrence took was to implement Alpha-Doc, a medical practice document management software program that distributes inbound and outbound documents to patients' electronic medical records. Next, Dr. Durrence added a five-user configuration of Zetafax Release 8.0 to handle all inbound and outbound faxes. Integrating Zetafax with Alpha-Doc enables Dr. Durrence's staff to receive and view each incoming fax, assign it a patient code, and have the information stored in the electronic patient file. There is always a link to (copy of) the document on record for the nurse's or doctor's review as needed. More important, the Alpha-Doc/Zetafax integration enables Dr. Durrence's practice to be HIPAA-compliant.

The Result

Within six months of incorporating Alpha-Doc and Zetafax into his practice management system, Dr. Durrence has experienced significant gains in productivity and decreases in direct and indirect costs. His staff can scan more than 100 documents into their system in an hour - a process that used to take up to four hours. Outbound faxing time has been cut by 50%. And Zetafax's email gateway cuts down on staff time for inbound faxes too: only one person is needed to view and code a fax, therefore users check their inbox to view incoming faxes sent to their attention. Those who need to see the file may do so when they have time; there's no more crowding around the fax machines or wading through stacks of incoming faxes. Then there are the indirect cost savings: Dr. Durrence has reduced paper usage and toner costs by one-third just by decreasing the volume of paper faxes!

Finally, Alpha-Doc and Zetafax enables Dr. Durrence's growing practice to send and receive medical records and charts securely - no more loose paper hanging around, and no more missing charts - making HIPAA compliance a breeze.

What's Next?

Since Zetafax and Alpha-Doc can be integrated with virtually any medical practice software, the possibilities are unlimited. So while many of his colleagues still struggle with 20th century technology, Dr. Hugh Durrence continues to move forward with his vision of "e-medicine."

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