

## CARE360™ SUCCESS PROFILE

# MetroWest Health Care Alliance

MetroWest Health Care Alliance is an Independent Physician Association (IPA) comprised of approximately 200 primary care physicians and specialists in small practices in the Boston metropolitan area.

The alliance is affiliated with the MetroWest Medical Center, a 319-bed regional health care system that includes Framingham Union Hospital, Leonard Morse Hospital and the MetroWest Wellness Center - an outpatient diagnostic imaging and rehabilitation center.

## SITUATION

### The Search for the Ideal EHR

In 2009, the MetroWest Health Care Alliance was searching for the right Electronic Health Record (EHR) solution to meet the needs of physician offices. The office size ranged from one to five physicians on staff.

Representatives of the MetroWest physician organization had been searching for the best EHR solution for nearly five years. During their evaluations, they found issues with other EHR platforms including a difficulty to share information, long training cycles on complex systems and financial expenses that the smaller practices could not absorb. Doctors were also concerned about the disruption in practice workflows.

Key EHR features required for implementation included:

- Access a proven web-based platform
- Share data across the MetroWest network, not just with a single practice
- Write clinical notes and view lab and radiology results

## SOLUTION

### The Deciding Factor – a Web-based EHR

More than 1,700 physicians in the state of Massachusetts were already using the Care360™ platform to drive key clinical decisions through ePrescribing, electronic lab ordering and results, and clinical messaging. For MetroWest physicians, it was a logical choice to select Care360™ EHR because it was on the same web-based platform that many physicians were already using in the state to manage labs and meds for their patients. Since Care360 was already a key piece of the practice workflow for those offices, it was easier to transition to Care360 EHR rather than start from scratch with an entirely new EHR solution.

In addition, the physicians liked that the Care360 EHR web-based platform would allow for rapid, efficient implementation so that practices could get up and running in a short timeframe with minimal upfront costs. They also liked the anywhere, anytime access (including iPhone support), and that MedPlus was a financially-secure company with a well-known parent company, Quest Diagnostics®.

### A Physician Ambassador Emerged

The adoption of technology can be a challenge for any physician, but Paulo Andre, MD, Neurologist for MetroWest Medical Center, and vice president of the MetroWest Health Care Alliance, was convinced that Care360 EHR was the best solution for MetroWest, and would allow for the fastest adoption by the physicians in the alliance.



## CUSTOMER

MetroWest Health Care Alliance

## QUICK FACTS

- Location: Boston metropolitan area
- Physicians: 200 primary care physicians and specialists in small practices
- Office size: From one to five physicians on staff
- Affiliated with MetroWest Medical Center: 319-bed regional healthcare system
- Massachusetts Survey\* Results:
  - 32% of small physician practices had an EHR
  - 15% of doctors had no previous technology experience
  - Care360™ Labs & Meds was well-established

*\* Survey conducted by BCBS MA*

## CRITICAL NEEDS

- Adopt an effective, affordable and patient-centered Electronic Health Record (EHR) solution
- Remove primary barriers to EHR adoption among small practices such as:
  - Financial constraints
  - Lack of technology/computer skills
  - Lengthy implementations
  - Workflow disruptions

## RESULTS ACHIEVED

- 100 physicians across 40 facilities have selected Care360 EHR
- Average implementation time per office: Less than 30 days
- Transition time from paper to electronic: Approximately Four Weeks
- Electronic prescriptions completed: 31,000\* in a six-month period
- Clinical documents uploaded: 79,000\* in a six-month period
- SOAP notes created: 53,000\* in a six-month period

*\* January – June 2010*

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Prior to selecting Care360 EHR, Dr. Andre had been searching for the optimal EHR solution that could network physician practices with the MetroWest Medical Center, and be able to interface with lab and radiology results at the hospital. Most of the EHRs on the market were not web-based, and he felt it was too complicated to make those connections - mostly via a Virtual Private Network (VPN).

“One factor that influenced our doctors to choose Care360 EHR was that Quest Diagnostics was behind it,” said Dr. Andre. “It’s available online from anywhere, and I just enter the name of the patient to get the information I need. I can check prior lab results, MRIs, my notes or my colleagues’ notes and make a clinical decision very fast. I tried other systems and Care360 EHR is definitely the best.”

Implementation for the IPAs was split into two phases – ePrescribing and Messaging in Phase 1 and EHR with SOAP notes in Phase 2. While acting as the MetroWest EHR physician ambassador, Dr. Andre made many in-person visits to participating offices, provided details about Care360 EHR and its web-based benefits, and eased their fears about workflow disruption and the migration from paper to digital records.

## RESULTS

Today, 100 MetroWest physicians across 40 facilities have chosen Care360 EHR as their solution of choice. When comparing the required medical tasks for doctors and staff in participating offices before and after implementation, the results show that physicians did not just implement Care360 EHR, but have smoothly integrated the EHR into their existing practice workflows to achieve results. For example, over a six-month period from January to June 2010, practices have achieved the following:

- 31,000 electronic prescriptions completed (*multiple medications can be on one prescription*)
- 79,000 clinical documents uploaded
- 53,000 electronic SOAP notes created

The average time for Care360 EHR implementation was less than 30 days, and transition from paper to 100 percent electronic patient files for most offices occurred incrementally over a four-week period.

Overall, these results show that the MetroWest physician offices have minimized the need for paper records - leading to significant cost savings - and created an electronic copy of the patient’s record that can be shared to ensure that the right clinical information is leveraged at the point-of-care.



*“I have been amazed at how simple and straightforward Care360 EHR really is to use, and its one step at a time approach for those of us who have limited computer knowledge. For me, the most important feature is clinical messaging – the ability to exchange information with specialists immediately so they can see exactly what we need and why. You also don’t have to do everything in one day like some of the other systems on the market. I have time to get into the product gradually and absorb it. I am as happy as can be with Care360 EHR.”*

*Bart Alfano, MD  
President of MetroWest Health Care Alliance*

*“The fact that the system is so mobile and virtually requires no paper is one of the best things about the platform. I like the fact that my office is playing a role in being environmentally conscious by using less paper, while also offering better patient care with just one or two clicks of a button. It’s so easy to get everything you need, including immediate access to X-rays and lab reports at MetroWest Medical Center. The system integration with the hospital allows me to see results and offer better patient care in a matter of hours.”*

*Eileen Winston, MD  
MetroWest Health Care Alliance*

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