



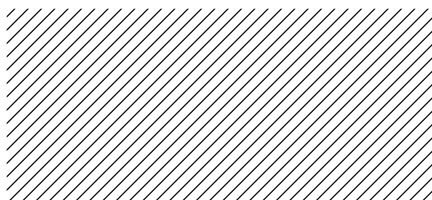
PODCAST

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EMRs

FOR MENTAL HEALTH



CLINICTRACKER

addresses the following challenges for mental health and chemical-dependence agencies:

- HIPAA compliance
- Tracking caseloads
- Managing treatment plans
- Processing medical claims
- Medicaid billing
- Paperwork compliance
- Generating useful administrative reports

Source: www.clinictracker.com



MICHAEL GORDON, Professional Consultant with JAG Products, speaks to *Future Healthcare* about how electronic medical records (EMRs) as part of a clinic-management system can benefit mental-health and chemical-dependence agencies, and why these clinics have special requirements

Future Healthcare What are the advantages of a clinic-management system for a director of a mental-health agency?

Michael Gordon You can't manage what you don't know. When it comes to mental health services, there are all kinds of bits of information that you need to know to manage it well, and also to stay out of hot water with the regulators who come by to make sure your documentation is in line and that your services are compliant with regulations. Having a clinic-management system like ClinicTracker allows you to have your finger on the pulse of your operations. It lets you know your patient flow and how your staff is doing. It allows you to manage and it gives you the data on the critical elements of the operation to manage it in an efficient and effective way. The system also automates things that are easily automated, but often aren't. Most operations require all kinds of separate spreadsheets and word- »



“THE MOMENT (CLINICIANS AND SUPPORT STAFF) REALIZE THIS IS GOING TO MAKE THEIR LIVES EASIER, THEY’RE WITH IT, AND THEY’RE VERY ENTHUSIASTIC.”

processing programs, and letters that go out one way or another. It’s not seamless, and there’s a lot of duplication of effort and copying of information. ClinicTracker allows you to run an operation that’s paperless, that works and flows easily and doesn’t require people to be doing things that computers can be doing easily enough.

FH Do mental-health and chemical-dependence agencies have special requirements for an electronic medical record?

MG They do. Various agencies that oversee mental-health operations have requirements for a very complicated, time-sensitive paper flow. From the moment a patient comes in, there needs to be documentation; there have been various notes, summaries, treatment plans and discharge summaries that happen at specified intervals. A system that doesn’t take into account the unique paper flow isn’t going to work with a mental-health system. In the rest of a hospital system, you essentially have progress notes and office notes for every patient contact and you’re about done. That’s one of the reasons why clinic directors find it impossible to use hospital systems very effectively.

FH Before ClinicTracker, what had been the experience of most mental-health clinics that used a computer package?

MG It hasn’t been a good experience. Most computer packages are add-ons to a billing package, or they’re part of a hospital-wide package that is just not tailored to the needs of a mental-health

or chemical-dependence-type operation. Most people who have tried to get into it quickly run into a circumstance where the computer system is costing them time rather than saving it.

These aren’t programs that were designed by clinicians. With ClinicTracker, the program that we’ve developed, this was all designed by people who actually do this work day in and day out, whether it is the support staff or the clinicians or administrators. Oftentimes, the other programs are abandoned and the users revert back to paper files.

FH How does ClinicTracker pay for itself in efficiencies?

MG It pays for itself quickly, and in a variety of ways. We’ve tripled our clinical staff and our patient flow in the last five years and haven’t added any administrative infrastructure. There’s no wasted effort. The clinicians very quickly go through their own reports. There is huge amounts of time saved that we would otherwise spend trying to keep compliant with the various regulations. We used to have to hire people to go through every single chart to make sure we had a progress note that matched every visit, so that we wouldn’t have any problems with Medicaid or Medicare. We used to spend huge amounts of time and money doing things that now we just do with the press of a button. If clinicians are not doing paperwork, they’re seeing patients. And those patients generate income.

FH How do clinicians and support staff respond to ClinicTracker implementation?

MG Some responded warily at first, as you might imagine. Some people aren’t very computer-savvy, and a lot of people don’t like doing something different. They feel they have less control, at least at the beginning. With ClinicTracker, people realize within a few days that this isn’t hard, it’s an incredibly intuitive system and they figure it out very quickly. They realize they are saving time and they’re not laboring over every summary and report because the system is templated and leads them through. They are not even having to spend time figuring out what paperwork they owe, because they press a button and the system will tell them. The moment they realize this is going to make their lives

ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS

EMR systems lie at the center of any computerized health-information system. Without them, other modern technologies, such as decision support systems, cannot be effectively integrated into routine clinical workflow. The paperless, interoperable, multi-provider, multi-specialty, multi-discipline computerized medical record, which has been a goal for many researchers, healthcare professionals, administrators and politicians for over the past 20 years, is however about to become reality in many western countries.

Source: www.openclinical.org



MICHAEL GORDON, PH.D. is a clinical child psychologist who directs a child and adolescent psychiatric service in upstate New York. An experienced clinical researcher, he has collaborated in the development of a clinic-management system, ClinicTracker, which completely automates operations and allows for real-time tracking of all clinic activities. He has also used the system to generate research on critical elements of clinic functioning, such as predictors of missed appointments and the amount of collateral time required for quality case management.

“WITH CLINICTRACKER, THE PROGRAM THAT WE’VE DEVELOPED, THIS WAS ALL DESIGNED BY PEOPLE WHO ACTUALLY DO THIS WORK DAY IN AND DAY OUT.”

easier, they’re with it, and they’re very enthusiastic. They like the capacity to be able to know where they stand and how they are doing. With ClinicTracker, all the information is right there. You are not chasing down files. Everything is on your desktop. If a therapist wants to know what the prescriber is doing, they don’t have to hunt them down. They just look at the last progress note on the system, and they can use the system to communicate with the prescriber.

It makes the whole process easier, and it also improves quality of care.

FH How important is access to support and customization?

MG It’s key. Every mental-health or chemical-dependence agency has unique attributes and needs. When you talk to people who don’t have ClinicTracker, what you hear early on is frustration that they can’t get it tailored to do what they

want. This is a system that was built with flexibility in mind, so if you need a customized report, you get it quickly and almost automatically. Much of the customization you can do on your own, so you don’t need the support. Everybody who uses this system just marvels at how quickly things happen — whether that be to get something to work that is not working so well for the agency, or just to move ahead. You can always customize the system and get it to work the way you want it to work. **FH**

Find Answers to All Your Clinic Management Questions INSTANTLY!

Access Critical Data About Your Clinic With the Click of a Mouse:

- How many clients did each clinician treat this month?
- What is the no-show rate for our clinic?
- Which clinicians have caseload openings?
- What is the average length of stay?
- Would we survive a surprise site visit?
- How can we free our clinicians from burdensome paperwork?
- How can I improve staff collaboration?
- Where can I cut expenses?

Clinic Directors Rely on *ClinicTracker* to Manage Their Operation, Improve Staff Efficiency, and Ensure Regulatory Compliance.

Learn how ClinicTracker can make your agency
paperless and accountable.

Call us for a personal demonstration!



Comprehensive Clinic Management plus EMR for
Mental Health and Chemical Dependence Agencies

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