

Small Practice Independence

At first glance, Sky Valley Family Medicine resembles an old-fashioned country clinic where the two full-time doctors know each patient—patients who bring gifts of salmon, venison and zucchini when they come for appointments. Supporting this Norman Rockwell facade, the independent clinic relies on cutting-edge technology provided by Noteworthy Medical Systems.

“We love **NetPracticeEHRweb™**—it helps us stay open because it dramatically reduces our overhead. We saw transcription costs drop from \$6,000 a month to \$600 a month and eventually expect it to be zero,” said Mark Raney, D.O., who runs the clinic with Victoria Baker-Hall, M.D., and Allan Ellsworth, Pharm.D, PA-C, a professor at the University of Washington, who works part-time.

NetPracticeEHRweb gives me the ability to maintain the level of care the community expects. It makes it possible for small private practices to survive.

—Dr. Mark Raney
 Sky Valley Family Medicine

me the ability to maintain the level of care the community expects,” Raney said. He has a unique relationship with the community that rallied to help the clinic become financially independent after it was cut from a large medical group. “With the help of Noteworthy, it’s possible for small private practices to survive.”

According to Raney, the savings from transcription costs and staff time more than pays for the cost of NetPracticeEHRweb. Equally important, he strongly believes it improves patient safety and care. Although the clinic is isolated and patients must use hospitals located far away, when Dr. Raney needed to admit a four-day-old baby to Children’s Hospital in Seattle, he was able to immediately transmit information to the hospital. “The

The only medical clinic along a 77-mile stretch of Route 2 between Sultan and Leavenworth, Sky Valley schedules 12,000 to 16,000 visits a year and began using NetPracticeEHRweb in mid-2005. Raney saw a major impact in less than six months.

“It’s a great tool—I can’t imagine not having it.

NetPracticeEHRweb gives

information exchange that NetPracticeMedicalHub™ enables is invaluable,” he said. While attending an out-of-state conference Raney was able to quickly send a patient’s complete history to an emergency room back in Washington.



Raney also appreciates NetPracticeERX™ capabilities, explaining how the ability to refill prescriptions electronically not only saves time but dramatically improves workflow. “Refills that previously took two to three days are accomplished in minutes, and there’s less chance of error,” he said.

Sky Valley’s patients were initially a bit skeptical about technology getting in the way of their care but immediately experienced the benefits. **“Patients love it because it actually gives me more interface time with them.** I am more efficient and not hopping in and out of the examining room,” he says. Raney even uses his laptop as a teaching tool by loading it with lab tests, images and information, which he easily prints for patients.

NetPracticeEHRweb also improved the clinic’s referral system. Not only do the clinic’s doctors save time by sending messages to their referral coordinator, but the specialists also appreciate receiving a patient’s full history and lab reports. **“Specialists love it—they stop by the clinic on their way to go skiing to check out the NetPracticeEHRweb system. They can’t believe the quality of the notes they receive from us,”** he said.

For Raney, the top benefits of NetPracticeEHRweb include improved efficiency, improved safety and the ability to follow a patient through every step of the process. “This reduces error and we sleep better,” he says. He especially likes the dashboard, which he says is easy to navigate and personalize to include local resources. He also says it’s easy to create templates for visits. **“It’s a great model—it just makes sense to use a platform that offers direct access to hospitals.” ■**