



Colorado Dermatology Institute

Colorado Springs, Colorado

Provider: Eight provider practice
Specialty served: Dermatology
AdvancedMD client since: 2015

TECHNOLOGY PROFILE

After using piecemeal software and an EHR that failed to provide insight about clinical performance, Reagan Anderson, DO, sought an integrated, intuitive software application for his growing dermatology practice. He wanted a customizable, scalable technology that would improve documentation, reduce administrative overhead, and enable enhanced patient engagement. The AdvancedMD Rhythm platform has delivered on these “wish-list” items and more via AdvancedEHR, AdvancedPatient, AdvancedRCM, AdvancedReputation, AdvancedRx, AdvancedMobileDoc and OpenEdge.

PRACTICE HIGHLIGHTS

The dermatology practice, which opened in 2010, currently serves up to 150 diverse patients daily, with a provider staff of two physicians, five physician assistants, and one esthetician. They provide expert comprehensive care for general dermatologic issues, skin cancer (including Mohs surgery), and cosmetic concerns with a focus on patient-centered, personal service. Using the AdvancedMD Rhythm platform, the practice has grown more efficient and profitable while its providers deliver exceptional care to patients.

ADVANCEDMD RHYTHM PLATFORM ENABLES INTEGRATION OF CLINICAL, PATIENT-FACING APPLICATIONS FOR SEAMLESS CARE DELIVERY

Many practices today struggle with inefficiencies due to utilizing segmented software solutions for various practice functions. Colorado Dermatology Institute (CDI) was one of these practices, negotiating an EHR and numerous billing approaches that just wouldn't fit. The cause: Rigidities in the system.

“I didn't want to be forced to practice medicine in the way that works for somebody else. That's just too hard to do,” Reagan Anderson, DO, says. “AdvancedMD offered all the customizable options that we needed to run an efficient and successful medical practice.”

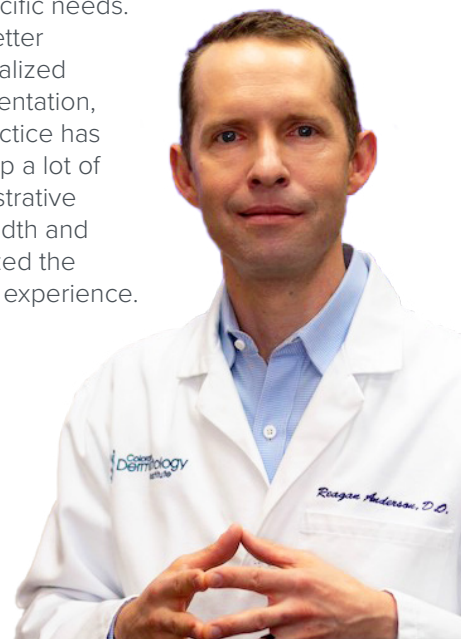
The most challenging part of running a practice, Dr. Anderson notes, isn't practicing medicine. “The hardest part of our jobs is

trying to make everything work from an HR perspective, from a compliance perspective, from the billing perspective. There are so many moving parts of running a practice that you need to be able to rely on an efficient, accountable vendor so you can focus your energy on taking care of the patient. No physician I've ever met loves paperwork.”

Leveraging the flexible features of AdvancedEHR, the provider has been able to apply his own individual style to the practice, designing notes to fit his specific needs.

With better personalized documentation, the practice has freed up a lot of administrative bandwidth and prioritized the patient experience.

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Jeffrey Anderson, practice manager and Reagan's father, notes that the holistic and intuitive approach AdvancedMD takes to integrate various critical functions has enabled many efficiencies for their practice. "AdvancedMD is so well integrated in one coherent package. From the perspectives of medical, practice management, and billing, we have much more insight and transparency into how our clinic functions," Anderson says.

Using the patient portal, the practice communicates electronically with patients—on patients' terms—and offers access to online scheduling, bill pay options, medical records, clinical summaries, and even details on what to expect upon arrival at the appointment for a streamlined check-in. "Our patients are able to get information more quickly and we've become more efficient at scheduling and making sure

the patient is roomed in a short amount of time. We don't want any patient sitting in our waiting room for more than 15 minutes, and we meet that goal about 90 percent of the time," Anderson says.

"The difference between a software that's cumbersome and a software that works well equates to about 10 percent increased collections."

Using the appointment reminders feature, the practice reduced the patient no-show rate significantly. "On a really bad day, we might have had eight no-shows out of 140 patients. Now, we're down to zero no-shows," Anderson reports. AdvancedMD also makes it easy to keep track of the reasons why a patient did not come to an appointment: the system shows if a reminder call, text, or email was sent, so

Anderson can take actions to reduce the occurrence of missed appointments. The technology also enables anywhere, anytime access to patient data so providers can deliver the right information at the right time for informed treatment decisions. "It doesn't matter if I'm at the clinic or at home, everything is at my fingertips," Dr. Anderson says. "From drug interactions to pathology reports, it's all in one spot, and I have everything I need available so I can make the best possible decision for my patient."

"Having an integrated software application where everything is under one roof is just brilliant," Dr. Anderson continues. "You know it works, you know it communicates, and you know it delivers what you need. If you don't have that, it breaks the rhythm of your entire practice. You can never hit your stride if you're spinning your wheels. Integration is pivotal."

ADVANCEDMD RCM INTEGRATES WITH THE EHR FOR BETTER BILLING AND BUSINESS

Having a feature-rich, scalable, reliable EHR enables more accurate documentation, coding, charge capture and collections. Under its previous EHR vendor, CDI struggled with its billing practices, transitioning from an in-house operation to a billing service to yet another billing company. What the Andersons needed was a customizable EHR that seamlessly integrated with the practice's back-end billing processes for real accountability.

CDI had very little visibility into the appropriateness of its charges and whether their staff or outside vendors were proactively engaging insurance companies to collect once goal numbers were met. "Now, with AdvancedMD, there is a report for everything and they're easy to find and easy to track. So, you actually know if your billing company is doing what they're supposed to do, or just grasping the 'low-hanging fruit' and letting the other thousands of dollars go in the wastebasket uncollected," Dr. Anderson says.

"We have found that the difference between a software that's cumbersome and a software that works well equates to about 10 percent increased collections. We were able to achieve this improvement through the AdvancedRCM solution," he notes.

The AdvancedRCM solution manages billing functions and patient communication at both the statement and customer service level,

which has been enormously beneficial for the practice. The Andersons' previous outside billing agency had a very poor response rate to customer inquiries, which led to a drop-in patient satisfaction. Now, Dr. Anderson says, he never receives negative feedback from patients about the responsiveness of AdvancedMD.

"This is one of the greatest things about AdvancedMD: I can't think of a single patient complaint about billing questions because the representatives answer the phone and treat them well. It's really a Ritz Carlton-type experience in terms of customer service, which helps us retain patients," Dr. Anderson says.

The RCM solution also enables the practice to more effectively track its accounts receivable (AR), says Jeffrey Anderson. "This is a very big deal for us because, unlike a lot of physicians, Dr. Anderson is intimately involved in every minute aspect of his clinic and wants to know what the 30-, 60-, 90-, 120-day AR is. Because of the work that AdvancedRCM is doing, our own staff has progressively gotten better and we've measured a significant improvement going from double digits to single digits, which has exceeded our expectations," Anderson explains.

The Institute also recently implemented OpenEdge through the AdvancedMD partnership to offer integrated, secure

technology for processing payments and reducing fraud. OpenEdge is a robust system that accepts payments in a seamless way with the "card on file" technology to streamline billing processes. "It's going to make our patients a lot happier and make their lives a lot easier with a direct and simple line to the biller," Anderson says.

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DELIVERING A WARM PATIENT EXPERIENCE

The practice manager and physician duo of father and son is rare for a medical practice, but so is their philosophy on patient treatment and the demographic itself. Both former military personnel themselves, they serve a large, tightknit retired and active military community, plus other patients that range from infants to elderly. Regardless of profile or dermatologic need, the philosophy is the same: “We treat every patient as if they are a loved one. In this increasingly rushed environment of healthcare, we want to make care personal,” explains Jeffrey Anderson.

Integrated technologies help the staff and clinicians deliver this personal treatment. A range of communication solutions is available through the portal so patients feel more connected to the providers. Patients can retrieve results, book appointments, pay bills, and receive automated reminders. (Less tech-savvy patients simply engage with staff members via phone.)

“The best thing about being able to interact electronically with our patients is that it allows them to communicate on their terms through the patient portal. This makes medicine enormously easier, safer, and better for all involved,” says Dr. Anderson, who adds that the AdvancedMD interactive outlets make him feel more like an educator for his patients.

The clinic also uses the AdvancedReputation, which enables providers to address patient feedback in a timely manner for optimal resolution. With online reviews posted on Yelp or Facebook, once the physicians—and scores of other potential customers—have seen the feedback, it’s really too late, Dr. Anderson explains. “Unfortunately, there’s little you can do at that point. But a reputation management system will actually give you the information you need when you have the time to do something proactive about it, which helps us maintain positive relationships with patients and lets us know if we’re ‘getting it,’ or not.”

The practice has also refined its greeting practices so patients feel appreciated and comfortable, including hiring of a patient care coordinator. They use AdvancedEHR to store simple photos they’ve

taken not only for identification from a patient safety perspective but so they can be greeted personally in the waiting room.

“The patient doesn’t have to tell us her name and we don’t have to shout it from the door. Our medical assistants walk up to the patient individually in the reception area to introduce themselves, welcome them, and escort them in the back. We make them feel at home,” says Anderson, who notes his son wants every patient treated with warmth, respect and humility.

“Dr. Anderson encourages us to think about the ‘one percent things’ we can do. What one percent improvement can we make today that will improve the lives of our patients, that will improve the lives of our staff and that will make us more efficient? If we do one percent consistently, then pretty quickly that adds up to make the patient experience better,” Anderson says.

Improvements are always front of mind for both of the Andersons, especially Reagan, who after serving in Iraq, sought a career that would be sustainable and fulfilling.

“When I first started out in medicine, how much money I collected was the furthest thing from my mind. As time has gone on and more economic pressures have risen, it became more and more important that we actually run an efficient practice,” Dr. Anderson says. “It’s important to take care of your staff well, like you’d want for your own family. It’s a circle: AdvancedMD makes our jobs easier so we can treat patients better.”

