

# Fort Collins Spine

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Fort Collins, Colorado

**Provider:** Solo practitioner  
**Specialty served:** Orthopedics  
**AdvancedMD client since:** 2015

### TECHNOLOGY PROFILE

After practicing at a large orthopedic group, John Ray, MD, zeroed in on reducing overhead in his new private practice. Of primary importance was a customizable, integrated practice management and electronic health record (EHR) system that enabled flexibility, control, and efficiency of operations. With platform modules including AdvancedTelemedicine, AdvancedPatient online intake forms, AdvancedFax, and AdvancedBilling with AdvancedMD Report Center, the specialty surgery office leverages the company's patient-facing technologies, HIPAA-compliant reporting tools, and intraoffice communication system for streamlined care provision.

### PRACTICE HIGHLIGHTS

The private practice is run by orthopedic spine surgeon John Ray, MD, an expert in cervical and lumbar total disc replacement, minimally invasive surgery of the neck and back, and complex reconstruction of prior surgeries. The practice engages in complete review of patient history, condition and medical images to determine ideal treatment options including surgery, injections, and stem cells. Using the AdvancedMD cloud-based software platform, the surgeon leverages robust practice management and EHR solutions, including various modules for enhanced patient and staff communication, remote access, and template customization.

## ADVANCEDMD BRINGS FREEDOM & FLEXIBILITY TO PRACTICE & PATIENT MANAGEMENT

John Ray, MD, started his career as an engineer after graduating from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford University. After eight years, he decided to follow his passion for orthopedics; he quit his job and went back to school to become a spine surgeon. While practicing at a large, 30-provider orthopedic group, he grew tired of countless meetings, overbooked patient schedules, and lack of autonomy in practice. "We had to run pretty quickly just to pay the overhead," Dr. Ray explained. That prompted him to pursue a solo private practice an hour north of Denver.

"If you're passionate about your work, it's important to have the freedom to deliver care how you would like to," he said, adding that

a unified, integrated package for the EHR and practice management functions was the vital component for his new private endeavor.

As Dr. Ray researched medical practice software, he first explored no-cost options, then discovered glowing reviews for AdvancedMD, a company that had decades-long experience in the industry. "With my previous group, I had used a number of products that claimed to have easily modifiable templates. These just never materialized.

I went with AdvancedMD because the software is highly integrated, highly functional, and highly customizable."

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## ADVANCEDMD FACILITATES BETTER COMMUNICATION WITH PATIENTS FOR ENHANCED ENGAGEMENT

Dr. Ray predominantly treats adults with degenerative diseases of the neck and back, which can be limiting or even debilitating cases. These mostly middle-aged and older adults are otherwise healthy individuals who want to maintain an active lifestyle and be engaged in their care. With these shared goals in mind, Dr. Ray seeks to educate patients about their conditions and treatment options.

Through AdvancedTelemedicine and in-office consultations, Dr. Ray reviews imaging exams including MRIs, X-rays, or CT scans via screen sharing to demonstrate the specifics of patient diagnoses and discuss treatment paths. "Patients can look at their record and the notes I'm taking while I go through all the relevant points of the case. They can correct me if they see anything inaccurate about their file, ask questions, and overall get a better understanding of what's happening," Dr. Ray said. "It yields a

positive patient experience and they feel better about the process."

Telemedicine specifically enables better connection with patients in rural areas, patients who struggle with mobility to visit the office, those who have busy schedules or might be out of town. The technology offers a level of sophistication and convenience for patient-centered care

**"AdvancedMD has helped with referrals, authorizations & communications with primary care providers."**

of complex conditions including two-way video, secure electronic communications, remote monitoring of vital signs, and smartphone accessibility. With this functionality, mobile medicine becomes a reality, bringing flexibility and efficiency to the modern private practice.

Fort Collins Spine also uses online patient portal technology to generate intake and consent forms for streamlined care. New patients can log on to the portal, taking their time to consider previous medical history, complete demographic information, log current medications, and review prior surgeries and hospitalizations.

"By the time patients arrive here, we have gotten a good idea of their history," Dr. Ray said. "And they don't feel frustrated by all the forms in the waiting room and answering the same questions over and over again."

While templates exist in the AdvancedMD system, Dr. Ray custom designs his patient forms through the AdvancedPatient portfolio. He's able to achieve enterprise-level patient communication and population management through kiosk check-ins and forms processing to maintain an efficient workflow for his staff and patients.

## ADVANCEDMD ENABLES SOLID RESULTS-FOCUSED REPORTING, HIPAA-COMPLIANT CORRESPONDENCE & MORE EFFICIENT BILLING PROCESSES

Information captured in the patient intake forms from the portal automatically populates into the EHR where Dr. Ray or his practice manager, Tess Riherd, can easily review the information with the patients to ensure accuracy and timeliness. "This makes the patient experience better, safer, faster, more comfortable, more private, just all around better," Dr. Ray said.

If any forms are incomplete upon arrival, patients can finish the intake process on an iPad right in the waiting room. All data is automatically loaded into the patient chart electronically—no scanning required. As part of the AdvancedMD Rhythm unified cloud platform of smart applications, these forms are not siloed from the rest of the workflow: patient engagement solutions seamlessly tie into scheduling, billing, charting and reporting.

Riherd notes that the AdvancedMD management process of electronic forms integration is a huge improvement over the practice's previous, archaic system. "I was always printing and scanning items in, and even faxing; nothing was connected electronically," she recalled. "Now the

electronic forms keep my processes very streamlined because I don't worry about losing paper or scanning things into charts. Once patients sign off on forms and releases, I push a couple of buttons and I'm done and on to the next job. My life is a lot easier."

Riherd notes that the platform not only improves the front office experience, expediting patient workflow in the waiting room, but also processes with other providers. "AdvancedMD has helped with referrals, authorizations, and communications with primary care providers. Dr. Ray has customized a great product so various providers, departments, and insurance companies understand exactly what they're looking at in the note."

Riherd also uses AdvancedMD messaging and communications tools to notify Dr. Ray about patient needs when he is offsite performing surgeries. "I feel like I have my office on my phone or my laptop," Dr. Ray said, explaining his need for mobility due to various partnerships with University of Colorado Health System and two hospitals in Nebraska. "If a patient has a question,

needs a new prescription, or there's an image waiting to be read, I can easily respond and document that response in a HIPAA-compliant way. I look up the patient, so I can review the case and recent notes and don't solely rely on my memory. This is a safe way to practice and allows me to provide better service no matter where I am."

Successful service remains Dr. Ray's primary goal, with an operation built on clinical acumen, dedicated staff, and technology performance. Finding the right cloud-based software provider was a key piece of the puzzle for practicing with freedom and flexibility. The Rhythm platform transforms private practice with tightly integrated patient engagement tools, practice management solutions and EHR functionality on an anytime, anywhere basis.

"I'm very happy with the AdvancedMD suite of products," Dr. Ray reported. "It has made my patients' lives better, my staff's lives better, and my life better. It's incredibly efficient so I am able to maintain better control of the services I offer."

# THE LEAN, MEAN OFFICE MACHINE

To become as lean as possible, Fort Collins Spine decided to integrate with a third-party provider to outsource billing. Dr. Ray's experience in the previous group orthopedic practice involved working with ten full-time equivalents. "Now, I really just have a skeleton crew, which allows me to absolutely crush my overhead and spend much more time with my patients and my family," he said. "I don't have to run as fast to keep the lights on. I take as much time as I need with my patients, and I enjoy what I'm doing much, much more."



Dr. Ray also uses the AdvancedMD Report Center to further reduce overhead. "Because the EHR and practice management software are so tightly integrated, when I log on, I can automatically look at my financial dashboard and see how my accounts receivables look like over the last 30, 60, 90 or 120 days," he said. "I know how my practice is doing financially—without having to hold a monthly or quarterly meeting with my accountant. It's all included in the price of the package, which allows me to run the office much leaner. I'm not retaining large staff and I can also take some time off when I need to."

The AdvancedMD Report Center comes standard with AdvancedBilling, a set of

more than 150 standard financial reports and nearly 500 custom reports that help users measure and optimize practice income. With unique insights about key performance indicators, better business is just a few clicks away.

Dr. Ray runs reports on demographic components, such as conditions treated, referring physician cases, and patient locations. With that easy and clear data generation, he is able to evaluate marketing and outreach techniques and consider how the practice is satisfying specific patient subgroups. "AdvancedMD has enabled me to work smarter. It's made me more successful in so many ways."

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