

It's in the Cards:

# **SUPER HERO** **POWERUP**

## **FOR PEDIATRICS EHR**

The right information at the right time at the right point of care.





While other specialists may disagree, pediatricians can make a strong argument that their specialty is

## ONE OF THE MOST FULFILLING, & YET MOST CHALLENGING IN MEDICINE.

On the one hand, they get to work with children all day. What's not to love about that? (Okay, we'll overlook the occasional crying and whining ones, or surly teen). On the other hand, the sheer high-volume demand on the practice as well as frequent scheduling changes and emergencies makes managing clinic efficiency and quality care especially challenging.

Running a productive practice is increasingly dependent on access to better data for decision-making. But not just any data. With the rapid proliferation and easy access to detailed data, the challenge for practitioners is access to pertinent information: data that is processed, structured and presented in context to make it meaningful and useful. In short, pediatricians want the right information at the right time at the right point of care.

### IT'S A BALANCING ACT

Structuring large amounts of data in a way that improves both patient care and provider workflow presents a difficult challenge. EHR developers are working hard to find that sweet spot for practitioners that meets several competing needs:

- ③ Simultaneous high-level/low-level information access – balancing the need for summarized information for decision making and organizational flow while preserving access to the deeper drill-down data, on-demand when needed.
- ③ Easily customizable to practice preference and specialty.
- ③ Seamless response to the immediate needs of a specialized workflow without breaking the system or creating separate unrelated, unintegrated workflows (e.g. nurse and doctor accessing similar data from different workflows and at different levels of detail).

# SUPER HERO POWERUP: EHR CARDS

In each case, a customized set of cards is selected that is most relevant to expediting workflow and improving quality of care for that specific caregiver.

Experience across many practices and providers has shown that this type of personalization is one of the most critical aspects of making EHR more meaningful.

For example, a physician might select a problems card, a plan card, and a visit notes card that would provide a high-level summary of relevant information about the patient in each of those areas and give them a highly customized, quick snapshot of that patient's status. A nurse or MA might select a notes card to manage capturing vitals and history, managing medications history or checking labs status.

Selected cards become part of that caregiver's EHR profile and are displayed in a single screen at the top level of the EHR whenever they access the system from any device. Cards can be selected, rearranged and prioritized at will.

The power of this approach doesn't require creating new streams of data. While all of this information could potentially be "dug out" of the system by the doctor or staff, finding and managing it can severely interrupt workflow and care continuity. Cards put all that relevant information at the caregiver's fingertips, right where and how they like it.

A new addition to EHR technology is showing great promise in addressing the need for clinics to improve workflows and use of information structured for quick access and decision making, while at the same time preserving quick and seamless access to specific, detailed patient information.

## THIS APPROACH IS REFERRED TO AS PATIENT CARDS.

Patient cards provide a summary of all information relevant to patient care displayed on one screen. Think of it as a hand of cards, with each card representing a clinical summary of an aspect of care important to that particular caregiver, be it a physician, nurse or other provider or staff in the workflow. Each person can select and arrange their hand of cards based on their specialty, responsibility and workflow.

Before seeing a patient, a pediatrician might want to quickly answer these questions:

- How many times have I seen this patient?  
When was the last time?
- What does their growth trend look like?
- What immunizations have they had? Are they current? Which are needed?
- What are their key problems?
- Where are they on the pediatric assessment and age-banded guidelines used by our practice?
- What meds are they on, and what are their allergies?
- Are there any special progress note items I should be aware of?

A nurse or MA on the other hand may want to know:

- Have all the intake forms been completed?
- Have pediatric-specific screenings been completed and received?
- Has insurance eligibility been verified?
- Are the vitals and history completed?

**PATIENT CARDS IN YOUR EHR CAN  
IMPROVE YOUR PRODUCTIVITY.**

# SCHEDULES & MORE

Cards can also significantly improve providers' ability to effectively manage the many tasks that must be completed outside the exam room. This is especially important for pediatrics, where busy parents and children's lives can disrupt schedules, creating multiple changes, late arrivals and even no-shows.

Dashboards should supplement patient cards giving both staff and providers a mini schedule that is always accessible at any page of the EHR. This helps them stay apprised of change notifications and requests and respond quickly to rearrange schedules and fill gaps. The best scheduling software systems are tied to patient portal online facilities that allow patients to schedule or reschedule appointments, send confirmations or cancellations, and directly communicate with the practice.

Alerted to potential schedule changes via their schedule, staff can quickly navigate to the scheduling section of the system and utilize powerful tools like find next available appointment and waitlist hold to keep the schedule full and efficient. And physicians will have an up-to-the-minute view of changes in their schedules.

During a busy day, a physician will also need to address and respond to questions such as:

- What is my schedule this afternoon?
- Are there any hot calls/messages that must be returned STAT?
- What follow-ups must be done today?
- Did my colleague reply regarding the Braxton Jones case?

A dashboard at the provider's "hand", and at the top level, can track and display key summary information to manage these types of tasks and many more. Not only is efficiency boosted, but physician and staff can feel more confident that important, pressing details haven't been missed in the press of busy schedules. This includes required reporting and quality measure tracking.

## "Drilldown" Power

Top-level summary cards are a powerful addition to making an EHR work for providers. However, paring this capability with detailed data access through a few clicks takes provider and staff productivity to an entirely new level.

With this "drilldown" capability, a provider starts with the summary card to get the big picture of what is happening in that particular area. However, they may also want additional detail behind the top-level data. Clicking on a section or tab in that card will instantly take them to the section of the EHR that contains the details they are looking for.

For example, if a nurse sees in the notes card that a particular patient hasn't completed the intake forms or pre-visit pediatric screening, a few simple clicks will take her directly to the intake form management section of the EHR where she can take the necessary actions for resolving the issue. Or, a doctor may want to review details of a previous visit to chart a child's

progress against established standards and charting measures employed by the practice. From the patient note card, this information is a couple of clicks away, accessed through a direct and intuitive path from the cards screen. This type of direct access drilldown saves countless hours of hunting and pecking for information housed in various sections of the EHR.

## Cloud-based & Real-time Visibility

Two key foundational technology functions are crucial to the success of a cards type of implementation. The first is that the system must be cloud-based, so that information is available any time, anywhere on any secured device. Secondly, the information must be real time, meaning that changes made in any part of the system by other users are immediately updated and available. This ensures that providers viewing summary cards or performing data drilldowns are accessing completely current information.

## Card Power in Your Future?

If you've been searching for that next power-up opportunity to take your EHR to the next level, pediatric-specific patient cards may be a great way to get there. It won't necessarily help with cranky patients, but they and everyone in your practice will handle the pressure more effectively without impacting already established efficient workflows and charting protocols.