



Initiatives Enhance Patient-Centered Care

Software Takes Customer Service to New Level

by Janice Walters
executive director, revenue systems and decision support



Charles Cole Memorial Hospital, in collaboration with other rural Pennsylvania hospitals, has purchased a new software system that works with hospital registration and billing systems to improve customer service with enhanced information on insurance coverage and cost at the point of service.

DaVincian's Revenue Orchestrator automates the processes of insurance eligibility verification and claim status. This provides our patient registration staff with the tools they need to provide better service to our customers. Eventually, this tool, along with cost estimating tools that are being developed, will give Charles Cole the ability to communicate to its patients estimated out-of-pocket cost of care prior to receiving it. We want to get to the point that we can give patients information upfront to help them understand the financial aspects of their care instead of making them wait for the bill to arrive in the mail. The DaVincian software is the first step in this process.

As a result of the DaVincian product, and to be more patient-focused, CCMH is expanding its financial counseling services. In the near future, financial counselors, along with the cashier, will be located next to the main lobby area of the hospital so patients have better access to these services. We want to work with patients to provide them with the information they need to make informed decisions about their care.

If you are in need of medical care and don't think you can afford it, please call one of our financial counselors today. CCMH does have a charity care policy which is located on the hospital's website, www.charlescoleshospital.com. We also offer payment plan options for both the uninsured and patients that have self-pay balances after insurance. The financial counselors at CCMH can be reached by calling 814/274-9301, ext. 1281 and 1286.

Bedside Medication Verification Enhances Patient Safety

Charles Cole took patient safety to an even higher level this fall with the implementation of Bedside Medication Verification.

BMV is a safety enhancement designed to eliminate error by using electronic medication administration records (eMAR). Instead of checking a patient's medication on a handwritten medication administration record, nurses scan a bar code on the medication(s) and the patient's wristband to confirm the "Five Rights:" right patient, right medication, right dose, right route, and right time. If one of those "rights" is incorrect, the computer would let the caregiver know.

BMV software also eliminates legibility issues and allows any clinician to review a patient's medication administration record as it is instantly updated. A medical provider can even view the record from his/her office. Although BMV is growing in popularity, not all hospitals are using it.

"BMV was not designed to save time for clinicians; it's for patient safety," said Emily Myers, RN. This does not take the place of nurses talking to patients and verifying their name and date of birth, she said.

"I think this will really cut back on med errors and increase patient safety. It is the best system I have worked with in the 10 years I've been at CCMH," said Tina Ayers, LPN.

Planning and installation of BMV has taken over a year and included new hardware, including mobile units for intensive care and inpatient behavioral health units, she said. Bedside units are located in each room in OB/labor and delivery, inpatient rehabilitation, and medical/surgical. In addition, the pharmacy had to build a prescription dictionary that would be compatible, and clinicians had to undergo extensive training, which is ongoing.



Nurse Trisha Caden scans Tadd Ostroski's wrist band before administering his medication.

Coming this Spring:

The Pennsylvania Department of Health, Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition, and the Potter County Exhibit Committee at CCMH will present "67 Women, 67 Counties: Facing Breast Cancer in Pennsylvania" March 12-23 at CCMH's Irwin Medical Arts Center.

The traveling photo exhibit celebrates the life, courage, hope and dignity of women and families who have battled breast cancer and features women from each of the counties in the state including those from CCMH's service area: Twila Alden, Cameron County; Audrey Beckes, McKean County; Mary Shon, Potter County; and Barb Bailey, Laurie Seip, and Dee Hoffman, Tioga County.

The display also encourages women to learn about early detection through yearly mammograms, monthly breast self exams, and annual clinical exams. The components to the exhibit are education, empowerment, and motivation.

Over 90 communities throughout Pennsylvania have hosted the exhibit since 1994. The exhibit is open to the community free of charge. For more information, call 800/377-8828, ext. 101 or visit www.pabreastcancer.org.



TODAY'S HEALTH WATCH COLORECTAL CANCER

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is a common and serious disease that takes the lives of approximately 50,000 in the U.S. annually. However, death rates have declined over the past 15 years, particularly due to cancer screenings and improved treatments.

Are you at risk? Risk factors include: age (those over 50 have a higher risk of developing CRC), a personal or family history of CRC or polyps, inflammatory intestinal conditions, diet (high fat and low fiber), sedentary lifestyle, obesity, smoking and alcohol. To reduce your risk, stay physically active, maintain a healthy weight, limit red meat and processed meats, don't smoke, limit alcohol consumption, eat a healthy diet, and watch for changes in bowel habits.

It is recommended that a colonoscopy be performed beginning at age 50 for average risk patients and at 40 for those at high risk. CCMH offers screening colonoscopy. Patients should check with their primary care providers as to when they should be referred for a colonoscopy, said Dr. Saket Prasad, gastroenterologist at Charles Cole. For more information, call 814/274-9024.



WHAT A YEAR!

CCMH welcomed the following new providers in 2008.

Dr. Serge Dauphin
oncology/internal medicine, Patterson Cancer Care Center, 260-5208

Judy Flynn, CRNP
family practice/women's health, Eldred Health Center, 225-4241

Dr. Terry Foust
orthopedics/spinal surgery, Champion Orthopedics & Sports Medicine, 274-0900

Dr. Steven Herrmann
cardiology, 274-9300

Dr. Frank Horn
general surgery, 274-7474

Tammy Huey, CRNP
oncology, Patterson Cancer Care Center, 274-5555

Melissa Juliano, PA-C
internal medicine/family practice/Charles Cole Express Care, 274-9300

Dr. Ekta Khanna
Coudersport Pediatrics, 274-9198

Dr. William Muuse
oncology/internal medicine, Patterson Cancer Care Center, 260-5208

Dr. Nirav Patel
internal medicine/hospitalist medicine, 274-9300

Dr. Saket Prasad
gastroenterology, 274-9024

Todd Rudy, PA-C
orthopedics/sports medicine, Champion Orthopedics & Sports Medicine, 274-0900

Becky Seefeldt, CRNP
family practice/pediatrics, Port Allegany Community Health Center, 642-2505, Port Allegany Pediatrics, 642-7205

Dr. Michael Tarbox
podiatry, Eldred Health Center, 225-4241

Patti Thum, CRNP
family practice/pediatrics, Northern Potter Health Center, 848-7555, Coudersport Pediatrics, 274-9198

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Charles Cole TODAY Calendar

Cancer Support Group, Patterson Cancer Care Center, third Monday of each month, 7 p.m.

Bereavement Support Group, Women's Health, fourth Tuesday of each month, 7 p.m.

Alzheimer's Clinic and Support Group, Patterson Cancer Care Center, second Wednesday of each month, 10 a.m., for more information, call 260-5208

Hospice Clinic and Support Group, Patterson Cancer Care Center, fourth Thursday of each month, 1 - 3 p.m., for more information, call 274-0384

February

AMD/Low Vision Awareness Month
National Cancer Prevention Month
National Wise Health Consumer Month
American Heart Month
National Children's Dental Health Month

Prime Time Health: Improving your Sleep Habits with Dr. Amit Khanna (talks will be held in conjunction with the Potter County Area Agency on Aging at 11:30 a.m.)

- 4 - Coudersport Senior Center
- 11 - Galeton Senior Center
- 25 - Ulysses Senior Center

Vision Independence and Adaptive Devices with Dr. Daniel Schott

- 5 - Emporium Senior Center
- 23 - Port Allegany Senior Center

6 - Holistic nursing information session, all nurses are welcome to learn more about certification, 12:45 p.m., Patterson Cancer Care Center, RSVP at 274-5246

11 - CPR training and recertification, 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. or 12:30 - 4:30 p.m., \$15 (purchase of textbook is optional), for more information or to register, call 274-5246

12 - Community Blood Bank blood drive, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., CCMH's hospital conference room, walk ins welcome, appointments, call 260-5550

13 - Valentine's Bake Sale to benefit CCMH's Relay for Life team, Charlie's Pride, Irwin Medical Arts Center

21 - Free skin and colon cancer screenings with Dr. Moylan, 7:30 - 9:30 a.m., Patterson Cancer Care Center, call 877/274-8200 for an appointment (includes a continental breakfast)

March

Brain Injury Awareness Month
Mental Retardation Awareness Month
Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month
MS Education and Awareness Month
Nutrition Month
Save Your Vision Month

Prime Time Health: Signs & Symptoms of Cancer with Tammy Huey, CRNP (talks will be held in conjunction with the Potter County Area Agency on Aging at 11:30 a.m.)

- 4 - Coudersport Senior Center
- 11 - Galeton Senior Center
- 18 - Oswayo Senior Center
- 25 - Ulysses Senior Center

11 - Uniform Sale to benefit the Charles Cole Auxiliary, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Irwin Medical Arts Center, next to the Looking Glass Gift Shop, for more information, call 274-5492

11 - CPR training and recertification, 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. or 12:30 - 4:30 p.m., \$15 (purchase of textbook is optional), for more information or to register, call 274-5246

12-23 - a photo exhibit celebrating life, courage, hope and dignity, "67 Women, 67 Counties: Facing Breast Cancer in Pennsylvania," Irwin Medical Arts Center

Patients Seek Vision Independence at Charles Cole

Although they don't know each other, Olivia Hartman and Wilda Dixon have a couple of things in common. Both women have macular degeneration, which threatened their quality of life and both decided to do something about it by seeking help from the Charles Cole Vision Independence program.

In the Vision Independence program, patients like Hartman and Dixon learn to use alternative methods and equipment to maximize their usable vision and accomplish daily living activities. In this region, macular degeneration is a common condition but Dr. Schott deals with many other visually devastating conditions as well.

Dr. Schott, an optometrist, also works closely with the patient's eye doctor to ensure the best possible results.

Although the patient's permanent vision impairments cannot be restored through methods such as surgery or eye glasses, Dr. Schott takes an optimistic approach to vision rehabilitation. "Instead of focusing on what's wrong with a patient or how much vision a patient has lost, we look at what visual assets a patient has left and how we can help patients perform tasks they love or need to do," he said.

After patients identify goals, such as watching wildlife, television or reading, Dr. Schott and the occupational therapists at Charles Cole help them to use the recommended equipment as well as teach techniques for maximizing their vision. Depending on the goals and the condition, patients use bifocal or magnifying glasses, closed circuit televisions with increased magnification as well as non-optical devices including liquid level indicators, large print playing cards, and writing guides.

"I wanted to continue to sing in the choir but I couldn't see the music," Hartman said. Dr. Schott recommended a set of magnifiers which helped her to see the musical notes. "I could have memorized the music but it's easier to sing the harmony when I can see the notes," she said.

As the only program of its kind in the area, Charles Cole's Vision Independence program helps patients throughout the region. In fact, before Hartman heard about the program, she was ready to accept her declining condition and simply quit singing in the choir. Dixon has also done well with her adaptive devices so she can now read her bible.

"I could make due but I wanted to try (the program). I liked it, I'm glad I went," Dixon said.



Dr. Dan Schott, right, talks with a Vision Independence patient.

Vision Independence Support Group to Meet

Vision loss can have a significant impact on the lives of patients as well as the caregivers. Dr. Schott will lead the newly formed Vision Independence Support Group at CCMH's Irwin Rehabilitation Center for patients, caregivers, and anyone interested in the program. For more information, call 274-6180.

Smethport Health Center Accepting New, Returning Patients

Charles Cole Memorial Hospital and the Keystone Rural Health Consortia have announced plans to reopen the Bowman Health Center in Smethport in honor of Douglas Bowman, M.D.

Dr. Bowman, a member of CCMH's medical staff since 1983, served the hospital and Smethport area in numerous capacities until his untimely death November 25. He joined Keystone in 2005 at which time he opened the Misty Valley Health Center.

Under the terms of the joint plan, CCMH affiliated physicians Dr. Amit Khanna, Dr. Seth Shifrin, and Dr. Nirav Patel and nurse practitioner Judy Flynn will see patients at the office's current location, the Misty Valley Health Center, in cooperation with Keystone's current office staff, including physician assistant Crystal Fowler, PA-C.

CCMH intends to operate the Bowman Health Center at the Misty Valley Health Center location until its building, currently under lease to the Guidance Center, becomes available in about a year. Barbara Bowman will continue as office manager. Appointments can be scheduled at the Bowman Health Center by calling 814/887-5395.

CCMH and Keystone said this interim arrangement will help serve patients in the Smethport area until a permanent, full-time physician is hired. CCMH has initiated an aggressive national search for a physician and plans to keep the community informed through periodic mailings, media, and its Community Benefit Advisory Committees.

Hospital to Establish Bowman Scholarship

CCMH will establish the Douglas F. Bowman, M.D. Memorial Scholarship Fund. Dr. Bowman served the hospital and the community in numerous roles including CCMH medical director and board member. In addition to seeing patients at his Smethport office, he cared for residents at Sena-Kean Manor and Lakeview Senior Care and Living Center and students at Smethport schools, and held positions within the McKean County Medical Society, Pennsylvania Medical Society, and McKean County Emergency Service Council.

The scholarship will be awarded to a Smethport area student pursuing a health care related career with preference given to those seeking a nursing or medical degree. Recipients will also be chosen based on their service to the community. To contribute to the fund, complete the form below or donate securely online at CCMH's website, www.charlescolememorial.com.



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