



Benefis Health System

Designed specifically for rehab needs, MediLinks provides all the necessary tools for inpatient and outpatient rehab.

Because their hospital's electronic health record (EHR) system doesn't have a platform for rehab, members of the rehab team at Benefis Health System in Great Falls, MT, had to manage rehab documentation, charges, and other compliance requirements on paper. This sometimes led to inaccurate billing and compliance errors. After an eye-opening audit, the team realized the department needed a system that had tools specifically designed for both inpatient and outpatient rehab requirements.

Eventually, the Benefis rehab group chose MediLinks, which can integrate with the hospital's overall EHR to make patient data available throughout the system. With MediLinks, the rehab providers at Benefis Health System can now:

- Accurately document notes and charges and uncover errors before they become problems
- Efficiently track and manage required therapy hours
- Easily complete the new IRF patient assessment instrument (IRF-PAI) using customized templates
- Confidently report the rehab department's performance to hospital management

“MediLinks helps us reliably track quality and compliance targets.”

Jessica Cook, DPT
Rehab Therapy Manager

MediLinks helps rehab facilities manage requirements and document performance.

Paperless documentation and charges

With 16 full-time therapists providing both inpatient and outpatient physical, occupational, and speech therapy, keeping up with notes, charges, and other documentation was never easy. "We would document notes but sometimes not do a charge, so we often missed charges," recalls Jessica Cook, DPT, CSRS, rehab therapy manager. "Now," she adds, "with MediLinks, I can look at any report and see right away if someone missed something."

Charges are sent from rehab's MediLinks application to the hospital's EHR for billing, so Cook says she monitors billing regularly to be sure the two systems' integration functions continue to operate seamlessly. This also gives her an opportunity to double check that all billing details are complete and to make any needed corrections.

Major turn-around in meeting therapy hours requirements

When trying to show compliance in therapy hours for an audit, Cook says she realized that the paper-based system was not working. Not only did it take hours to prepare the documentation, but, as it turned out, the team wasn't always hitting the mark.

"With our hospital's EHR, there was no way to track therapy hours, so we had to do it on paper. We thought we were doing fine, but we figured out that we weren't keeping up with it," shares Cook.

With MediLinks, however, tracking therapy hours and adhering to requirements is simple. "I check the report on a daily basis to see where we need

to add or take away therapy," Cook explains. "It's great to have the numbers right at our fingertips."

The results have been tremendous. "Year-to-date," says Cook, "we are 100% with our 15 x 7 hours. So what we are currently reporting to CMS is that, within a 7-day period, at least for this last quarter, 100% of our patients received 15 hours of therapy."

Seamless transition to the new IRF-PAI

When CMS implemented the latest edition of the IRF-PAI, it was a significant transition from the previous version, and many providers struggled to complete the document accurately and report the data as required. But Cook says MediLinks made the process so much easier.

"We loved having the templates readily available. We know our workflow, so we appreciated the flexibility to embed them within our notes where we need them," she says. "It was a lot of work initially, but that made the actual transition fairly seamless," Cook adds.

Reporting rehab performance

Although the outpatient rehab unit is one of the hospital's smaller departments, Cook says the outpatient treatment volume has doubled each year for the last several years, and MediLinks has been a key part of that success. "We are staying on top of our game and within the regulations, and that has been valuable," she explains.

MediLinks makes it easy for Cook to share the department's success with the medical director and other leadership as well. "I print reports for the medical director every day, so we can show that we are a viable unit within our organization," says Cook.

Benefis Health System, located in Great Falls, MT, is a not-for-profit community health system serving nearly 230,000 residents across 15 counties. The rehab department, which includes a 14-bed acute care unit, is CARF accredited and supports the fulfillment of the Benefis mission of providing care for all and healing body, mind, and spirit.

Get started today!

Contact your Mediware representative to learn more or schedule a demonstration.

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