



St. Anthony's Medical Center Defines EMR Strategy and Selects Vendor

St. Anthony's Medical Center is the third largest medical center in St. Louis comprised of St. Anthony's Medical Center (767 beds), four urgent care centers, and 880 affiliated physicians including 70 employed in 20 practices. It serves more than 800,000 residents in St. Louis County, southern communities, and several counties in southwest Illinois; is staffed by more than 4,000 employees; and is served by more than 800 physicians and other medical professionals in private practice.

Did You Know?

Directing the day-to-day project is best done by a small team, but broad participation by constituencies in critical activities generates high user ownership, consensus, and momentum around the eventual vendor decision.

Large volumes of detailed requirements issued in the form of an RFP consume considerable time and energy but do not lead to a realistic view of a vendor's capabilities and are not generally useful as a contract attachment.

| The Challenge

Although St. Anthony's was using McKesson's Star application as its core hospital information system, many "best-of-breed" niche clinical systems were used to support the care delivery process. These applications included: OR (SIS), Pharmacy (GE/BDM), Laboratory (Misys), ED (self-developed), Radiology (McKesson Star), and PACS in Radiology and Cardiology.

The board and executive team believe that sound clinical information systems play a critical role in supporting the clinical goals of the organization. Those goals include increasing clinical and operational integration, improving quality and providing the ability to measure quality, increasing efficiency and reducing the cost of care, improving patient satisfaction, improving physician satisfaction and retention, and supporting St. Anthony's service lines. As such, they decided to implement enhanced clinical care delivery processes supported by the appropriate clinical systems infrastructure. They sought consulting assistance to establish a knowledge baseline for the electronic medical record (EMR) and facilitate a vendor procurement process.

Aspen Advisors worked collaboratively with our executive and medical staff leadership team to provide information and facilitate an informed decision. For us, it was an efficient way to give us the confidence to select and cement the relationship with the most appropriate vendor partner for our business goals and move rapidly forward with contract negotiation and implementation activities.

– Gordon Lashmett
Chief Information Officer
St. Anthony's Medical Center

| The Solution

Aspen Advisors was engaged to facilitate the vendor procurement process because of the firm's experience in EMR planning and implementation, clinical informatics, clinician adoption, organizational change management approaches, and knowledge of the healthcare IT vendor environment and clinical applications portfolios. Aspen worked with St. Anthony's executive team, medical staff leadership, nursing, and allied health professionals to facilitate consensus on a common EMR direction and decisions related to vendor and implementation options. Specific outcomes included:

- Confirming and crafting St. Anthony's EMR direction through:
 - Education on the topics and factors that influence the decision making process;
 - Development of a clinical vision, direction, and supporting requirements (governance, technology, and process);
 - Identification of the scope of the integrated applications suite that should be pursued and an initial high-level multi-year budget estimate; and
 - Provision of an unbiased view of the vendor marketplace to be considered based on St. Anthony's clinical vision anticipated future requirements.
- Facilitating a structured clinical systems vendor selection process that included St. Anthony's executive, physician, nursing, and allied health constituent participation culminating with the finalization of the prime vendor of choice to support the clinical systems direction;
- Leading the contract negotiation process;
- Developing a detailed implementation plan for the EMR implementation in collaboration with the vendor of choice (timeline, phasing, resource model, budget, cashflow model);
- Developing a multi-year benefits model; and
- Preparing board presentation materials.

| The Results

As a result of the engagement, St. Anthony's effectively achieved high levels of participation, momentum, and ownership of the EMR direction and vendor decision across broad constituencies. Executives, nursing, physicians, and other clinicians had a clear understanding of the organizational issues and accompanying process changes the new technologies would address.

Scripted scenarios provided a realistic view of alternative vendor capabilities and ensured that the selected core clinical information system met St. Anthony's long-term needs, was aligned to the requirements and care delivery guiding principles, and that it was both flexible and scalable to support the requirements. St. Anthony's had reliable cost estimates to enable them to make a sound decision, balancing expected value with total cost of ownership. Additionally, the cost model served as the basis for the multi-year program budget. High levels of due diligence and structured decision making at each step in the selection process formed the foundation for expectation management and identified the optimum vendor for a long-term partnership.

St. Anthony's also had a pre-implementation plan that accounted for its readiness to adopt the EMR (people, process, technology, and organization) and identified mitigation tactics for reducing risk. And most importantly, St. Anthony's had a foundation from which to rapidly move forward with a successful implementation and transfer knowledge to St. Anthony's constituents.

About Aspen Advisors



Aspen Advisors is a professional services firm with a rich mix of respected industry veterans and rising stars who are united by a commitment to excellence and ongoing dedication to healthcare. We work with healthcare organizations to optimize the value of their information technology investments. Our experienced team is highly skilled in all aspects of healthcare technology. We understand the complexities of healthcare operational processes, the vendor landscape, the political realities, and the importance of projects that are executed successfully – the first time. Every client is important to us, and every project is critical to our reputation. Established in 2006, the firm has grown significantly year over year and was named a 2010 "Up and Comer" by *Healthcare Informatics*. Our hallmarks are top quality service and satisfied clients; we're proud that each past and current client is 100% referenceable.

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