

CASE STUDY



Happy Valley Family Health Team

Family Practice saves time, improves patient interaction, and uncovers patient concerns with Ocean

Happy Valley Family Health Team in St. Mary's, Ontario is a busy family clinic serving a population over 20,000 patients with a large team of physicians, nurse practitioners, allied health professionals and administrative staff. One of those physicians, Dr. Robert Davis, recently spearheaded a plan to use the Ocean platform to make better use of the time spent with patients and increase accuracy when diagnosing conditions.

Dr. Robert Davis is what is known in the industry as an early adopter – always looking for new and innovative technologies to improve both the quality of care and efficiency of his busy family practice. When he heard about the Ocean platform, with its patient tablet offering and web questionnaires, he was intrigued.

With a tablet in the waiting room, or a web questionnaire at home, Ocean offered Dr. Davis a new way to uncover patient concerns using diagnostic or agenda-setting questionnaires. He saw the Ocean platform as a potentially transformative solution for his practice – one that could simultaneously improve patient care and make patient visits more efficient.

“Both the tablet and web questionnaires offer a unique way for me to gain a full understanding of my patients’ concerns, in their own words, before I even walk into the exam room,” said Davis. “I knew it could make patient visits more efficient, but I also saw the potential for better diagnoses and patient care by supplementing patient visits with guideline-based diagnostic forms.”

Today, over half of Dr. Davis’ patients are given an Ocean tablet by the receptionist when they check in. The receptionist explains the tablet and provides a written sheet of instructions with pictures in case there are any problems. While they’re in the waiting room, the patient then completes an Ocean form with questions about their condition or reason for visit. Some patients are also sent web questionnaires to complete at home before coming into the clinic.

Commonly used questionnaires include the ndds well-baby screen™, a diabetes management questionnaire, pain-related issue and cardiac follow-ups. Dr. Davis also writes his own questionnaires to suit his style of practice.



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Dr. Robert Davis,
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Initially, clinic staff used the Ocean tablet largely for annual checkups and chronic disease management. However, as they saw how well it was working, they started to introduce it for acute visits as well.

“My patients have been overwhelmingly positive about the process and the technology,” said Davis. “They particularly like the idea of having a diagnostic questionnaire sent to them by email before coming in to the clinic. Inevitably patients forget something they want to bring up when they are here. This gives them the opportunity to ensure they communicate all their concerns.”

The patient responses are automatically imported into his EMR, allowing Dr. Davis to review self-reported symptoms and red flags before seeing the patient. This also eliminates the need for him to spend time typing notes in the patient chart during the appointment. He estimates that using diagnostic forms in Ocean saves time in approximately 90 percent of patient cases.

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With the overwhelming early success of the Ocean tablet, the Happy Valley Health Team is already adding more tablets to allow more physicians – and patients – to benefit from the improved clinical experience it provides.

Goal

Dr. Robert Davis was determined to make better use of time and improve accuracy when assessing patients.

Solution

Ocean Tablet & Online Questionnaires

How It's Used

The receptionist presents the tablet to the patient in the waiting room preloaded with the appropriate questionnaire.

Some patients are sent a questionnaire by email to complete before coming into the office.

Patient responses are automatically added to the patient chart in the EMR.

Results

TIME SAVINGS: Using patient forms in Ocean saves time in approximately 90 percent of patient cases, with the greatest efficiencies achieved in chronic disease management.

BETTER HISTORY-TAKING: Enhanced understanding of patient symptoms, higher-quality documentation, and improved adherence to clinical guidelines.

PATIENT SATISFACTION: Positive feedback from patients is overwhelmingly positive; they appreciate the opportunity to take their time to be more accurate in communicating concerns.



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