



# Idaho Urologic Institute

Idaho Urologic Realizes Efficiency Gains, Reduces Costs  
and Earns Meaningful Use Incentives with Integrated  
Suite of Pulse Software

# The Idaho Urologic Institute

Established in 2005, Idaho Urologic Institute, PA was formed by local Urologists in Treasure Valley who are dedicated to comprehensive Urologic care for men, women, and children. Idaho Urologic has 10 physicians and two physician assistants who practice in three offices in Boise, Nampa and Meridian, Idaho. The practice's facilities include an outpatient surgery center, outpatient imaging services, clinical research, a full-service reference lab that includes a comprehensive infertility lab, and a technologically advanced radiation oncology care center.

Upon the merger of the practices in 2005 to form Idaho Urologic, the physicians and staff recognized that inconsistencies in clinical documentation and billing processes would create additional challenges in the future. "We knew from the start that we wanted to go paperless with billing processes and that we wanted to transition to an EHR," said Jessica Taddicken, Information Systems Specialist at Idaho Urologic.

In addition, Idaho Urologic wanted a more efficient method to handle the referrals that are the lifeblood of the practice, including ways to reduce the inefficiency and the inevitable lost paper associated with faxes and other paper-based processes.



The Pulse Urology EHR provides graphic patient care time lines while managing results and images for quick decision making.

# The Challenge

A merger of several urologic practices formed Idaho Urologic Institute in 2005. At the time, patient charting and billing involved inconsistent paper-based processes. To effectively combine the practices and create consistency, Idaho Urologic needed to transition to electronic health record (EHR) and practice management solutions.

## The Solution:

### Flexibility and Configurability Drove System Selection

A thorough evaluation of vendors and solutions led them to Pulse. "We saw their point-of-care module and really liked how diverse it was and how we could create our own templates based on what doctors want," Taddicken said. "Also, we liked how we could configure the templates in house, instead of always having to rely on a vendor to do the work for us."

After deciding that Pulse was the right fit for the practice, Idaho Urologic implemented the PulsePro Practice Management solution in 2005. "PulsePro made it so simple for us to do our own billing, so we decided to implement that solution first."

### Configuring EHR for Urologic Practice Needs

After using PulsePro for a little more than a year, the practice began its implementation of the Pulse Complete EHR in all three of its locations in 2007. "We liked the way that Pulse worked really well with the Medcin database engine to support the clinical thought process," Taddicken said. "The Pulse Complete EHR allowed us to supplement the information in Medcin by adding user-defined findings. In the early days of using the EHR, we added about 15 user-defined findings in the system to support what our Urologists needed. The Pulse Complete EHR really supports our Urologic practice well."

### Hands-On and Online Training

EHR training employed multiple approaches. "We set up a beta server with sample data to use the Pulse Complete EHR during training. We held classes during lunchtime so our physicians and other users could get hands-on experience with the EHR," Taddicken said. "We also created a super user at each location that was trained by Pulse's team to support the other users."

Pulse trainers were onsite during the training, implementation and go-live phases. In addition, Idaho Urologic relied heavily on the Pulse Academy of Client Education (PACE) Portal, a free e-learning tool for Pulse clients. PACE is accessible 24/7 from any computer with internet access, and makes the Pulse solutions easier to learn with its wealth of information, including e-demonstrations and interactive training programs, as well as a robust knowledge bank of reference materials on Pulse products.

## Staged Implementation to Encourage Adoption

The first implementation stage involved having physicians use the orders capabilities within the Pulse Complete EHR to gain familiarity with the solution. This was followed by using the EHR to view results, and to eventually implement the Pulse point-of-care charting module. Several physicians and two physician assistants now use the Pulse Complete EHR to document patient encounters while in the examination room with patients. A smaller number of physicians prefer to document encounters from their offices following patient visits. "Our nurses bring tablet computers into the examination room to complete patient histories and fill out other information," Taddicken said.

## The Results:

### Faster Turnaround, Reduced Transcription Costs

Patient charts are available almost immediately following a patient visit since the majority of clinicians enter their charting directly into the Pulse Complete EHR. "Since many of our patients come to us by way of referral, we typically need to forward the charts to referring physicians. Now, the charts are available almost immediately because we don't have to wait for transcription. Some of our nurses routinely forward the charts electronically to referring physicians while the patient is still in the room with them," Taddicken said. "And since we have an in-house lab, those charts that we electronically forward have the lab results in them, on most occasions, because our lab is interfaced with the Pulse Complete EHR." The reduction in transcription usage is saving Idaho Urologic \$42,000 per year.

"Our relationship with Pulse has been nothing short of awesome."

## Efficiency Increases

Both the Pulse Complete EHR and PulsePro are driving efficiency increases. The more thorough documentation within the Pulse Complete EHR helps the billing staff prepare claims more quickly, and there has been a reduction in the number of times that physician queries are needed to prepare a claim. In addition, payer requests for patient records are fulfilled much faster

since the staff does not have to locate paper records or misplaced information.

These efficiencies have allowed Idaho Urologic to better utilize its existing staff resources. "When we first went live on PulsePro we had several temporary workers to help with our billing needs. After implementing PulsePro, we haven't had the need for temporary workers. Plus, our clinical staff has grown since that time, but we haven't had to add any support staff," Taddicken said.

## Meaningful Use Attestation

Using the Pulse Complete EHR has enabled Idaho Urologic to earn stimulus funding through the Meaningful Use program. The practice started its 90-day attestation in 2012, met the required measures and received its incentive payment in early 2013. "We spent the money on several new desktop computers, bought new laptop computers for each doctor, and added some new servers to increase system performance," Taddicken said.

## Looking Ahead

Next for Idaho Urologic is to increase usage of the Pulse Patient Portal. "Our relationship with Pulse has been nothing short of awesome. When we have a concern or when we need something enhanced, Pulse really listens. That kind of partnership is really helpful to our business," Taddicken said.



To learn how Pulse's Complete EHR, PulsePro Practice Management, Pulse Revenue Cycle Management or ePrescribing solutions can benefit your practice, call 1.800.444.0882 x3 or email us at [Info@pulseinc.com](mailto:Info@pulseinc.com).

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