



# Case Study

## MediNotes in Practice



**New York Heart Center**  
Ric Smith, Director of Operations

Like most new MediNotes e clients, when the New York Heart Center purchased the program in March 2004, they wanted it all, and they wanted it right away! However, with 16 physicians, 9 nurse practitioners and over 60 additional support staff, implementing the program and changing the way things had been done for over 21 years seemed like a daunting task! "We had to figure out a way to apply the program quickly and effectively. We wanted everyone trained on the program with no one left behind," stated Ric Smith, Director of Operations at New York Heart Center in Syracuse, New York.

The logical solution was to devise a strong implementation strategy and Ric Smith took on the role of MediNotes e "champion" in the clinic and he was the driving force behind the initial implementation. The next step was training. "We ordered as many of the MediNotes trainers as the company could spare when we began using the program in May 2004," stated Mr. Smith. "Most of the time that was at least two trainers."

When the physicians began to use the program, they started off slowly, focusing on only a few procedure exams such as echo and stress echo, and the physicians would use those templates only 2-3 times each day. "We really concentrated on easing our physicians and staff into using the templates. With a heavy schedule, we didn't want to burden them with the constant use of the program."

Immediately following the 4th of July holiday, however, administrators felt that adequate time had past and a line was drawn in the sand. "Upon returning from the holiday, we applied some tough love," explained Ric. "There were no more recorders and the staff would no longer be typing dictated notes. Period!" With the MediNotes trainers staying an additional 2-3 weeks, New York Heart was fully up to speed on the program and no users were left behind.

Once the MediNotes trainers left New York Heart it quickly became apparent that coupled with Ric's other responsibilities as Director of Operations, he didn't have the amount of time necessary to devote to being the on-site "champion" for MediNotes e. "We realized that a practice the size of New York Heart needed full-time a "champion" to take control of the program and coordinate customization of the templates and continue with the on-going staff training."

New York Heart hired Allyson Hall as their Certified MediNotes e Coordinator in November 2004 and after spending a week learning the program with MediNotes trainers, Allyson became the clinic's new "champion" of MediNotes e! "My daily activities include checking for incomplete or duplicated notes in the system, as well as being available for whatever changes the physicians feel are necessary," explains Ms. Hall. "My other responsibilities include all the template customization and on-going staff training as well as training new physicians and other staff."

*"By staying focused on the task at hand and keeping our staff motivated, we were able to eliminate all of our transcription costs in 60 days. That has resulted in a savings of nearly \$300,000, and those savings will continue forever!"*

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Since implementing MediNotes e, New York Heart has grown by 7 physicians and 3 nurse practitioners. Ric and Allyson both agree that having a MediNotes e "champion" in the clinic is essential to providing continuity and continuous knowledge necessary to keep the process going. "By staying focused on the task at hand and keeping our staff motivated, we were able to eliminate all of our transcription costs in 60 days," Mr. Smith explained. "That has resulted in a savings of nearly \$300,000, and those savings will continue forever!"

Ric is quick to point out that although every clinic is different in both size and function, it is imperative to have a "champion" that is responsible for keeping the staff motivated. "Although I believe the combination of MediNotes trainers and Allyson's position made a significant impact on the successful implementation of MediNotes e, a great deal of credit and praise must also be given to our physicians and medical staff, their input on content and willingness to adapt to the change has made all the difference."

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