

Testimonial from Dr. Stasia Kahn, MD

As an Internal Medicine physician working in a small digital office, I am frequently called upon to share data with other healthcare providers and patients. In 2005, a colleague introduced me to the Continuity of Care Record (CCR) standard, and I was impressed with the interoperability of the CCR standard that would allow me to exchange healthcare data electronically with my peers, some of whom are working with an electronic medical record and others whose records remain paper-based.

Since the fall of 2006, I have been exchanging healthcare data primarily for referrals of complex patients. Data exchange based on the CCR is richer than the traditional paper medical record that most primary care physicians fax to their consulting providers. For example, one of the beauties of the CCR is that complex medical terms are presented in a codified manner, such as ICD-9 codes for problems, NDC codes for medications, and LOINC codes for laboratory tests. In addition, the CCR generator I use to pull the data from my database allows me to be selective and choose the relevant information that is needed to solve a particular medical problem thereby improving the efficiency of the receiving providers.

The PDF Healthcare Best Practices Guide and Implementation Guide, which were released in 2007, supplied me with the tools to attach diagnostic images and text documents to the summary document. Most tests and procedures are in either image or text format and by including these in the information exchange, I am able to help reduce healthcare costs. In addition, the positive feedback I received from my peers who received PDF Healthcare files in place of traditional medical records gave me the confidence to recently begin exporting PDF Healthcare files to my patients for the purpose of populating an unteathered personal health record (PHR). I believe that a patient-directed PHR that has been pre-populated with authoritative data from a primary care physicians' electronic medical record is the quintessential, longitudinal health record that our national leaders believe to be the Holy Grail that can solve the ills of a broken healthcare delivery system.

In closing, my implementation of the CCR in the PDF Healthcare format has helped me to improve the quality of care I deliver to my patients and at the same time reduce the cost of caring for them. The CCR standard used with the PDF Healthcare Best Practices and Implementation Guides allow for the interoperable, electronic sharing of relevant, codified healthcare information at the point of care for specialty referral and into a robust longitudinal health record of interested patients.

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