

Province of Alberta builds momentum for information sharing using Orion Health Clinical Portal



Orion Health Case Study



PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

Province of Alberta
Alberta

With their modular approach,
and the strong support
of participants within the
healthcare community,
**this implementation has set
a significant benchmark
for healthcare delivery
in Canada.**

GARY FOLKER,

Senior Vice President, Orion Health Canada



The Customer

The advancement of Electronic Health Records (EHR) has been a priority for healthcare organisations in Canada. It is well documented that an electively managed EHR implementation is a key enabler in improving quality of care while optimising available resources. A critical component to success is the ability to connect separate silos of information in a cost effective and scalable way to deliver cross-functional benefits, from the physician’s office to the acute care community.

In 2006, a Canadian integrated health services provider was among the first to explore the concept of expanding EHR access to multiple stakeholders. Through the strategic use of data transformation and portal technologies,

and the participation of key stakeholders, the organisation has made exemplary progress in expanding data sharing capabilities across various healthcare communities. With the technology and process foundations in hand, and a proven methodology in place, it is continuing to explore opportunities to expand the reach of clinical data information sharing with multiple stakeholders.



A Portal Approach

The health services organisation was undergoing a major EHR initiative in order to provide a secure means for physicians and authorised healthcare providers to quickly access key patient information and reduce treatment delays. The portal technology that was developed integrates a number of the region's information systems to provide secure, region-wide access to information sources previously restricted to a single institution or clinic. Through this network, users can access a "read only" summary of patient data aggregated from systems across the region, including patient lists, demographics and event history, reports (diagnostic imaging, or notes, etc.) and lab results.

A portal model offers a number of efficiency and infrastructure benefits:

- it provides a record of care that follows patients electronically, allowing for better care and better use of resources.
- The technology is able to leverage the provider's underlying information systems, achieving regional, patient-centric health information without requiring the costly replacement of existing patient care systems.
- It can easily be configured to leverage external systems such as pharmaceutical.
- It improves accuracy by displaying health information in a consistent clinician-friendly manner across facilities and programs.
- The application can be easily upgraded overtime with new information sources.
- It is easy to implement within a wide range of health-related facilities.
- Clinicians can access results as early as possible, reducing delays and duplication of effort.



The Process

Once the initial pilots with selected physicians and clinical providers were completed, data sharing was “opened up” to any authorised professional who was interested in using it. “One amazing thing was the huge interest on the part of physicians from the start,” says Michael Craig, Vice President for Orion Health. “They appreciated that realtime information delivery and easy-to-use interface. In fact, they were comfortable using it after 10 minutes worth of training.”

Initial data sharing was focused on drug, laboratory and diagnostic imaging results. “Those were the easiest to start with,” says Craig. With each successful integration new components have been added, including:

- A client registry
- Pharmaceutical information
- Lab results, radiology and clinical documents
- PACS image viewing
- Encounter history
- Patient lists
- eSignature

Referral management, shared health record, and system-to-system ePrescribe are also in development, with more to come. “Whatever the addition, Orion Health technology provides the ability to leverage existing resources, while maintaining data integrity and privacy,” explains Dr. Chris Hobson, Chief Medical Officer for Orion Health. An added benefit is the fact that data can be aggregated for performing in-depth analytics. “That’s hugely valuable when examining issues such as contribution to wait times or other data at the point of care,” says Dr. Hobson. The size and scope of this initiative have provided a foundation for others to follow, notes Michael Craig.



The Solution

Through an open procurement process, the Orion Health Clinical Portal was selected for the project.

The Orion Health Clinical Portal is an open platform that provides a universal solution for accessing and viewing accurate patient information and results. Clinical Portal can be layered on top of existing data structures to deliver single-view access to multiple data resources. According to a practicing physician who was involved in the selection process, critical product features the committee was seeking included broad capability, 'exibility, scalability, configurability, and ease of use through web-based delivery'. Modularity was also a significant factor. The ability to leverage a modularised product has been a large part of the success of this initiative. "It allowed us to start small and build on that to add users when needed. That combined with our ability to bring all key stake-holders in a unified fashion to the table allowed us to become leaders in this initiative."

Orion Health

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