



How the Right Tools Increased Physician Efficiency and Enhanced Patient Satisfaction

A Patient Story

Robert, 57, spent his life doing a pretty good job at avoiding the doctor's office, yet here he was being dragged by his wife to the Desert Ridge Family Physicians practice in Phoenix, Arizona. He came in experiencing bilateral neuropathy, which had left him with a strange tingling sensation in both his hands and feet for the past several months. Recently, Robert had been diagnosed with oral cancer and had undergone chemotherapy, radiation, and surgery to remove all of his lesions, so when he arrived in Dr. Lisa Piccione's exam room, she knew that he wasn't thrilled to be there.

"I don't know if I like you and I don't know if I'm going to let you be my doctor," he said.

Dr. Piccione quickly realized that this patient wasn't going to be easily won over. She began asking him questions about the basics of his medical history, keeping in mind that she would likely get an incomplete picture. Providers know that most patients generally provide an abridged version of their medical history, not necessarily knowing which pieces of information are most important to share. This was particularly true with cancer patients, who often underwent so many variations of cancer treatments that it was hard for them to provide a complete narrative.

After learning about Robert's symptoms, Dr. Piccione quickly identified a variety of possible causes. Was it a nutritional issue caused by a B12 deficiency? If he had oral cancer, he was likely not eating

well. Was it a thyroid disorder? His thyroid could have easily been damaged by the radiation. Or was it post-chemotherapy neuropathy, a common side effect of chemotherapy?

Once Robert answered Dr. Piccione's questions, the picture became a little clearer, but it was only after she accessed the Orion Health platform that the full picture came to life. With the click of a button, Dr. Piccione reviewed Robert's entire encounter history. She could see that he had seen a nutritionist and that, during treatment, Robert required a feeding tube to deliver the nutrients he couldn't consume orally due to the pain in his mouth and throat. She also saw that he had not been compliant with his oncologist's request for a follow up and had not had a blood test in almost six months.

With this complete picture, Dr. Piccione could speak intelligently with her patient about his history and new symptoms. She was able to outline the steps to determine the cause for his symptoms and describe possible treatment options. Instead of potentially repeating a laundry list of tests, she was able to use the data provided by the Orion Health platform to select only the tests she needed in order to complete his workup.

Had Dr. Piccione not had access to Robert's medical history at the point of care, she would have had to ask him to sign five separate medical record release forms so she could get his





records from his oncologist, nutritionist, gastroenterologist, ENT, and the hospital where he had been treated. She would have then had to fax the release forms to each of them and wait days—perhaps weeks—to get the records faxed back to her. Instead of being able to go straight to the information she needed, she would have had to sift through a small mountain of paperwork, further delaying treatment.

Most importantly, Dr. Piccione would have had to send Robert home without a concrete treatment plan, hoping that his wife would be able to get him to return to Dr. Piccione's office for a follow up once she had received all of his records. Her ability to access all the information she needed—when she needed it—allowed Dr. Piccione to immediately provide her patient with the best treatment.

Seeing how knowledgeable she was from the start, Robert decided he liked Dr. Piccione enough to let her be his primary care physician.

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