

# Meeting the challenge of... Chronic Disease Management and Preventive Care

## An **xwaveEMR** case study

### The challenge

With chronic disease affecting almost two thirds of Ontarians over the age of 45 (of those, 55 percent have two or more diseases)<sup>1</sup>, physicians are under mounting pressure to look after growing numbers of treatment-intensive patients. They also face the challenge of stepped-up version 3.0 reporting requirements for chronic disease management set by OntarioMD.

At the site of the Brighton/Quinte West Family Health Team (FHT) in Brighton, Ontario, a team of two doctors, one nurse practitioner, two registered nurses, part-time social worker, part-time dietician and administrative staff look after more than 5,000 patients. Approximately 400 are diabetic; almost 800 have hypertension; and an additional 100 are on Coumadin anticoagulation therapy.

### The **xwaveEMR** solution

**xwaveEMR** contains templated encounter forms for diabetes, hypertension, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and congestive heart failure. The forms not only automate and standardize the routine, time-consuming documentation required to care for patients with chronic disease, but they also help ensure adherence to provincial reporting guidelines.

“Prior to **xwaveEMR**, I didn't have a specific program for managing chronic disease,” says the Brighton FHT's Dr. Richard Wiginton, who adopted the solution in 2005. “Now, for example, we have a template that addresses all the core care issues associated with diabetes -- it's all in one electronic form.”

Brighton uses the hypertension template to provide clinical research to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario (HSFO). “We are taking part in a three-year study by Heart & Stroke that's looking at primary care for hypertension,” explains Wiginton. “**xwave** created a special template for hypertension that captures all the necessary details required by HSFO.” This information is transmitted directly from the EMR to the HSFO program database.

And for patients on Coumadin: “**xwaveEMR** facilitates the settings, the lab results, the tracking and follow-up and, based on factors such as INR, subsequent dose changes.”

### The outcome:

#### **A central patient record that supports more collaborative, preventive care**

Wiginton says the number-one benefit of using the solution is collaboration. “One of its key advantages is that it facilitates collaboration among members of the team—for instance, the registered nurses who play a vital role in managing chronic-disease programs and following up with patients. Unless there's a central health record everyone can access, you're not going to have quality care.”

The solution also enables Brighton to leverage provincial preventive care bonuses. “We run a program for women's health that includes a weekly PAP clinic,” Wiginton says, explaining that the EMR's preventive care module allows staff to locate and contact eligible patients quickly and easily.

“**xwaveEMR** maximizes the ability to provide preventive care to patients, and it maximizes the fiscal benefits for physicians.” He adds, “It would be very difficult to manage that kind of searching, contact and follow-up using paper. With the EMR, you're essentially able to do it with the touch of a button.”

## HOW IT WORKS

### Diabetes Management

- A list of eligible patients is generated
- Automatic prompts are set, ensuring patients are contacted and come in every three months for check-ups
- All patient contact, prescription activity and third-party care is tracked
- Medical staff can single out patients with high blood pressure and graph / track them
- Staff can use lab results to conduct related studies
- Patients can view flow sheets that track their eye and foot exams; lab reports; blood reports; urine checks; and lifestyle and nutrition counseling

### Preventive Care

- A touch of a button enables system users to search the roster for eligible patients
- Patients due for screening are identified
- A standard Ministry of Health letter is generated for each selected patient
- The system tracks their response and subsequent follow-up

*"The templates in xwaveEMR help the nurses track patient information and keep it up to date. And the people at xwave, to their credit, have actively solicited feedback in an effort to keep the forms updated and relevant to current needs and reporting requirements."*

Dr. Richard Wiginton  
Brighton Family Health Team

### About xwave Healthcare

xwave Healthcare is the winner of two ITAC-Health awards Company of the Year (2006), and Project Implementation Team of the Year (2008) for its work with Cancer Care Ontario on the Wait Time Information System (WTIS). Drawing from 30 years of experience, the practice comprises nearly 300 medical, technical and business consultants all guided by a Medical Advisory Board of physicians who provide direction and counsel on a voluntary basis. Together they develop solutions and services that connect providers with patients and promote efficiency across the entire continuum of care.

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