



Creating a Paperless Clinic

In many Vanderbilt Health clinics, patients are asked to complete paper-based forms, collecting important care-related information such as medications or patient history. Completing the forms on paper was often onerous for the patient, and clinicians and staff still needed to manually enter or scan the information into eStar, and in some clinics, the forms were not always reviewed during the patient visit. Feedback from surveys and other data inputs confirmed that these forms were a dissatisfier and negatively impacting the patient experience.

CHALLENGE

Various paper-based forms in use by front desks of Vanderbilt Health clinics, creating poor patient experience and duplicated entry of patient-provided information into medical record by clinicians, intake staff and patients

SOLUTION

Allow patients to complete electronic forms at home via My Health at Vanderbilt or in the clinic on a sanitized tablet, facilitating collection of data into eStar before the clinic visit

OUTCOMES

Better patient experience, less paperwork to scan into medical record, reduced process inefficiencies, and enhancement to Vanderbilt brand

Vanderbilt's reputation as a technology leader further strengthened the need to ensure a more modern method for collecting patient-provided information before a clinic visit. Developing the optimal solution required a strong partnership between clinic operations, which understood the clinical rationale for each form and how best to approach implementation, and IT, which could enable the electronic form design and tablet display.

The team worked directly with each clinic to review its paper forms, looking for opportunities for standardization across specialties and thus create a more consistent experience for the patient. Additionally, the team was able to shorten certain forms, reducing burdens on patients by not requesting as much information.

While the form content was being reviewed and updated, technology experts worked on the best way to electronically program the content and ensure patient-provided information was available in eStar, Vanderbilt's EHR and readily available to clinicians and staff. They used My Health at Vanderbilt, which

is already integrated with eStar, to build the electronic forms and enable an in-system prompt to notify a member of the care team to review the patient-provided data. Hardware experts then enabled the appropriate forms to display on clinic-provided tablets, which is sanitized between patients.

The work of the operations and IT teams resulted in a number of positive outcomes, including:

- Enhanced patient experience
- Increased standardization of form usage across clinics
- More environmentally friendly practices through use of less paper
- Reduced complexity of workflows (e.g., less scanning into EHR)
- More consistent brand experience across clinics
- Stronger alignment with perception of Vanderbilt as technology leader
- Better protection of protected health information (PHI) as electronic forms cannot be misplaced or lost

“Our patients come to Vanderbilt with high expectations of a cutting-edge experience. Asking them to fill out a stack of paperwork was at odds with those expectations. With our shift to a paperless model, we can reduce burdens on patients, better protect their information, and safeguard our brand reputation as a technology leader.”

—Janice Smith, RN, MEd