



Leveraging the Integrated Power of Epic with Transfer Center

VUMC's growth and reputation as a premier destination for specialized care in the Southeast meant increased demand for transferring patients to its facilities. To help streamline the transition process and make it as seamless as possible, Vanderbilt saw value in a solution that was fully integrated with its existing Epic-based EHR. Though another transfer center solution had served the Medical Center well for several years, Epic's investment in and refinement of its Transfer Center module meant the time was ripe to launch it at VUMC.

CHALLENGE

VUMC's growing reputation as a destination for specialized care demanded a software solution for patient transfers that was fully integrated with its existing electronic health record (EHR)

SOLUTION

Implement Epic's Transfer Center module, customizing it for Vanderbilt and providing team members with robust training and support

OUTCOMES

Reinforced VUMC's reputation as premier destination for specialized care, right-sized care across the Medical Center, improved clinical workflow, positively impacted patient experience, and enhanced relations with referring facilities

“*The Epic Transfer Center module provided transfer nurses with access to critical information, which clinicians utilized seamlessly at the bedside when patients arrived. These changes came in time to help us weather the influx of transfer requests that came during the COVID-19 pandemic.*”

—Stephan Russ, MD, MPH

The transfer center experts at VUMC relied on HealthIT's Grand Central team to manage the implementation of the new Epic module. The Grand Central team's first step was to discuss workflows with transfer center leadership to ensure the Transfer Center module met specific requirements. Making this implementation more complex was the existence of four distinct transfer centers within VUMC, each of which needed customization. As a result, the Grand Central team developed multiple transfer center regions and forms to meet these varying requirements, to areas around the facility.

The new module could essentially “plug and play” into eStar, VUMC's Epic-based EHR, allowing it to harness the power of a robust integration. For example, pending admission encounters could now be generated automatically, eliminating the need for staff to duplicate documentation.

The teams also focused on how the module would interact with referring facilities, as this was a huge reputational issue for the Medical Center. This careful attention ultimately resulted in connections that meant users could accurately record information and make reporting easier for VUMC staff.

To help familiarize transfer center staff with the new technology, classroom training was required.

Additionally, support team members were on-site during the module's launch, providing around-the-clock help. The end result was a smooth go-live event without any significant concerns.

The Transfer Center module was immediately put to the test with the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of its distinctive capabilities, VUMC could provide care for many of the sickest patients in the region. As a result, the Medical Center saw an enormous influx of patients transferred into its facilities during the pandemic. The new module served VUMC well in this high-pressure environment.

- The transition to Epic's transfer center module resulted in several outcomes:
- Reinforced VUMC's reputation as a premier destination for specialized care
- Right-sized care across the Medical Center by placing patients with lower acuity in more appropriate facilities
- Improved clinical workflow by eliminating double documentation
- Positively impacted patient experience by streamlining their transfer and admission process
- Enhanced relations with outside referring facilities and clinicians