Ellenville Regional Hospital
Ellenville, New York

A Partnership to Face Industry Change and Remain Competitive

The model for operating a hospital in the U.S. is changing. There's been a shift to outpatient procedures that pay less than inpatient services. This creates challenges for many hospitals who have heavily relied on revenue from inpatient services. Steven Kelley, CEO of Ellenville Regional Hospital, says, "Competition is the fiercest it's ever been; 75 percent of our business is outpatient, so we're competing with other outpatient purveyors on the same service, while they don't have the overhead of running a 24/7 emergency department." Hospitals need to adapt, in both strategy and technology, to remain competitive among this business model shift.

Ellenville Regional Hospital used the same dated software for 30 years. It offered a cumbersome user experience that required different departments to reenter the same data—a process that was prone to errors. The vendor charged a slew of hidden fees for ongoing services, upgrades, interfaces, and new applications. Ultimately, the software created more challenges than it solved for the hospital.

A Network-Enabled Solution

The team at Ellenville recognized the changing hospital landscape and tried to implement initiatives to improve their performance and remain competitive. However, the team ultimately felt held back by their software which was more of a "necessary evil," rather than an opportunity to impact real change. Mr. Kelley and his team decided enough was enough and sought a partner who could help Ellenville navigate the changing hospital landscape today and in the future.

With athenahealth, Ellenville has discovered a true partnership. The hospital has been brought on as a development partner, a client who participates in testing new services and innovations for athenahealth to ensure the solutions satisfy clinicians' needs. By providing this feedback Ellenville's team has been able to affect true change not just for their hospital, but for others as well. Mr. Kelley says, "We see the relationship as being very beneficial to us also, because we feel that we really have put our fingerprints on it [athenaOne for Hospitals and Health Systems] and have helped with the development. And we feel good about being able to do that."

One of the biggest issues with the hospital's legacy software was that it was made up of standalone modules that required interfaces between the hospital's departments. Clinicians had to log out when transferring departments, and the information entered in one department was not always reflected in another. This led to redundancy and reentry of clinical information. By contrast, athenaOne for Hospitals & Health Systems is a cloud-based solution that delivers a single, integrated platform across all departments. This allows clinicians access to all their patient records, updated in real-time, anywhere in the hospital. athenahealth's solution has made clinicians more efficient, and given them more time and energy to focus on patients. This is the kind of innovative technology Mr. Kelley sought in a partnership, he says, "It [athenaOne] takes advantage of all the latest technology in every way, both the mainframe

At a Glance

- 25 bed Critical Access Hospital
- 225+ employees
- 30,000+ services delivered annually

Issues

- Disparate systems across departments
- Legacy software with outdated technology
- Inability to adapt to industry change

Results*

- One system for the entire hospital, and the same patient record across departments
- Continuously updated network-based solution
- Maintain competitive edge amidst changing hospital model
- 105 average minutes door-to-door in emergency department
- 90%+ patient satisfaction rate

Solution

- athenaOne® for Hospitals and Health Systems
    - athenaCommunicator®
    - athenaCollector®
    - athenaCoordinator®
    - athenaClinicals®

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athenahealth

Our mission is to be healthcare providers' most trusted service, helping them do well by doing the right thing

> "We thought we were doing a great job. And I think we were, but I think with athenahealth, we're better."

> — Steven Kelley, CEO, Ellenville Regional Hospital

technology, the application distribution technology, the communications technology; in every way, it's a state of the art system. And it's a system that's growing rapidly—not just in its connectivity, but in its function."

Support at Every Stage

Throughout its partnership with Ellenville, athenahealth has offered robust support, starting with implementation. Mr. Kelley reports the entire hospital went live on athenahealth in one day, due in part to training resources from athenahealth. Mr. Kelley says, "The implementation was very successful. We were able to take the whole hospital live, every single department concurrently in one day. And that was the result of preparation on the part of our staff and our leadership and very good support from athenahealth. If we didn't have that support, we wouldn't have been able to pull that off."

Before implementation, clinicians trained with athenahealth experts, creating a seamless transition. In the days following go-live, athenahealth maintained a support team onsite to help the hospital adapt. Long-term support continues with the Client Support Center, open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to answer claim and system questions. Additionally, a team of dedicated post-live support from hospital-specific subject matter experts provides proactive coaching. An account manager provides continuous performance monitoring and strategic planning to help ensure the business runs smoothly.

Improved Results and Satisfied Patients

With continuous coaching from athenahealth teams and easy reporting capabilities right in athenaNet, Ellenville Regional Hospital has discovered ways to be more productive and efficient. In fact, the hospital has become the fastest emergency department in New York state, and has greatly reduced medication errors. Mr. Kelley reports, "Our total average time, door-to-door, is 105 minutes...and we do that

24/7, 365 days a year."

With more time for Ellenville's clinicians to focus on patients, they have experienced an improvement in patient satisfaction as recorded by the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Ashima Butler, Chief Quality Officer at Ellenville Regional Hospital, says, "Our patient satisfaction results have consistently been above 90 percent, and have spiked in the last six months, which is something we struggled with for the past two years... athenahealth has given us flexibility in being more available for our patients." With more time to focus on the moment of care, everyone is satisfied.

When it comes to government programs like Meaningful Use, athenahealth reduces the work involved in participating in government programs, helps Ellenville maximize their reimbursements, and enables clinicians to focus on patients instead of paperwork. athenaOne for Hospitals & Health Systems provides real-time insight through the Meaningful Use dashboard, which allows Ellenville to track its progress toward satisfying the measures it's reporting on. Within clinical workflows, "they have measures in place that automatically give us credit, which is a huge relief for our staff," says Ms. Butler. In addition, athenahealth's in-house teams take on the process of attestation and other tasks that greatly reduce the organizational burden.

A Partnership Today, and Tomorrow

Ellenville Regional Hospital is working to become the best small hospital in America. With athenahealth, they have taken steps towards this mission. By becoming more efficient and productive, the hospital has been able to better care for more patients, while being poised for the future. Mr. Kelley says, "We thought we were doing a great job. And I think we were, but I think with athenahealth, we're better."

Find out more. Call **866.817.5738** or visit us online at **athenahealth.com**