

Right Sizing EHRs for Community Hospitals

One-Sized EHRs Don't Fit All

Fueled by the ARRA HITECH incentives and the critical need for advanced clinical technologies, health care delivery systems of all sizes including community, rural and critical access hospitals are wondering if the timing is finally right to deploy EHRs. But a plethora of obstacles remain and are exasperated by a challenging economic environment. This is often further complicated in small-to mid-sized facilities by the significant resource limitations in IT, clinical informatics, and other departments. But perhaps the biggest obstacles of all are budget constraints that are limiting the scope and pace of virtually all implementations.

While vendors and large consulting firms try to scale down their traditional big EHR methodologies for smaller institutions, all too often the packaging, pricing and resource requirements remain beyond the reach of community hospitals. The traditional behemoth EHR implementation model is clearly out of step with the needs of today's small-to mid-sized health care delivery systems.

It Takes A New Consultative Platform

Quammen Health Care Consultants uses a different approach that takes a solutions orientation to EHR implementations. "We focus on modeling the current and future state of electronic records from the beginning of the implementation to insure a holistic and comprehensive design is conceived before system files are populated with data," says Becky Quammen, CEO Quammen Health Care Consultants. "This enables small-to mid-sized institutions, such as community hospitals, to move forward with their EHR projects in a pragmatic, cost-effective manner without the costly delays and inevitable rework caused in traditional software implementation methodologies where frequently the primary focus is on configuring the system without a full understanding of the final outcome."

Quammen's consultative platform for EHRs highly customizes electronic records solutions for each hospital's environment so caregivers can use all available, necessary data and functionality at the point of care. Our clients, from large health systems to community and rural hospitals, are well positioned for maximum clinical and financial benefit from their electronic records projects because they carry out every step of their implementations with clear, concise project plans, committed to redesigning workflows and processes, under a governance structure that is accountable for each project task. This enables them to achieve their EHR goals quickly and comprehensively without the traditional missteps, broken operational processes and elongated timelines associated with these projects.

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Achieving A Fully Functioning Community Hospital EHR

For community hospitals to create an affordable EHR, they must think outside the box and carefully work through their key clinical and workflow issues. A comprehensive current and future state design provides the roadmap for the software implementation by asking and answering questions such as:

- *Do our physicians, nurses and clinicians have ALL the information needed to make clinical decisions and provide care with uninterrupted workflow?*
- *Have we identified all of the information points in our operational clinical workflow and the various systems that support those information points?*
- *What is the minimum electronic data set needed to support and promote physician adoption of computerized physician order entry?*
- *Will our technology solutions help us achieve our clinical goals by bridging all the gaps in creating a comprehensive EHR?*

Quammen Health Care Consultants is experienced in devising strategies that address immediate IT needs and creating blueprints on how to implement successful electronic records in a timely cost-effective manner. We advocate for our clients and help them avoid the pitfalls that often sidetrack EHR implementations such as financial and change management “pain points.”

A Community Hospital EMR Case Study

A 140 bed community hospital in the Midwest had no centralized nursing station—and as a result had no way to support the traditional manual processes required to manage paper charts. A fully deployed computerized physician order entry solution seemed the only way to mitigate the workflow issues and provide the clinical team with easy access to electronic charts.

Quammen Health Care Consultants:

- *Defined the functionality required to support and drive physician adoption of CPOE in a fully electronic record environment*
- *Structured data for vitals, I&O, allergies, height and weight*
- *Ensured interoperability with patient context and single sign-on*
- *Addressed a range of workflow considerations, including eliminating the use of traditional paper charts, ensuring timeliness of document imaging and support for bedside caregivers with access to a comprehensive EHR*

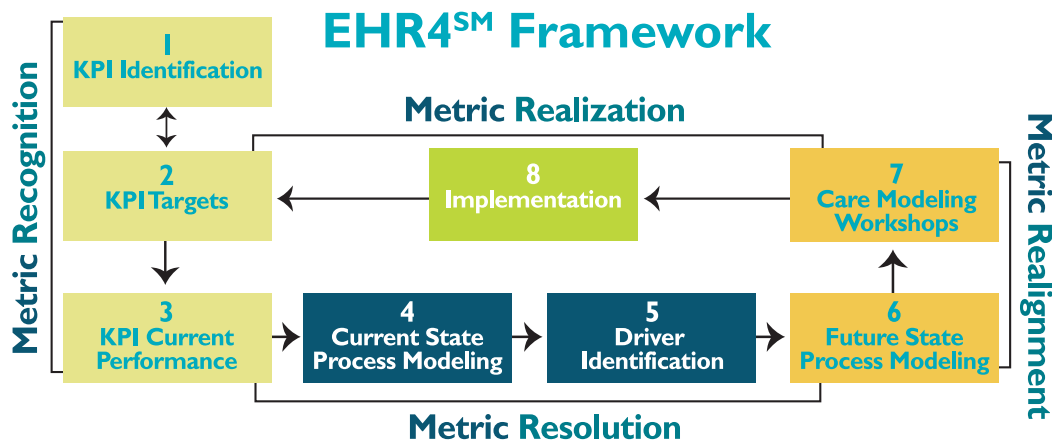
Employing Quammen models and methodologies, this project was completed within its fixed live date of seven months and on budget. While immensely challenging at all levels and for all involved, Quammen assisted this community hospital in realizing its clinical automation and workflow goals in time to move into its new facility. This project provides many proof statements and insights into what is possible when implementing an EHR.

How Quammen Works

Capitalizing on what we have learned from our years of industry engagements, Quammen has developed our EHR4SM Framework methodology that guides our work and drives progress in our engagements.



The EHR4SM Framework provides the guidance and methodology to insure an organization's electronic health record design represents a comprehensive future state solution as opposed to the traditional software product implementation.



The EHR4SM Framework methodology was developed by Quammen as a blueprint for resource deployment during EHR implementations. The framework is used to identify goods, measure progress, align processes enterprise-wide and plan for future care improvements. The framework was designed on a basic premise: You accomplish what you measure.

Want to learn more about how Quammen Health Care Consultants works with community hospitals to right-size their EHR implementations and expedite their time to value? **Contact us today at info@quammengroup.com and we'll send you our free white papers:** "Critical Success Factors in Implementing Your Community Hospital EHR" and "Realizing Clinical Automation and Workflow Goals In A Community Hospital."

About Quammen

A full-service health care information system and business consultancy, Quammen Health Care Consultants offers planning, assessment and implementation services that support a wide range of hospital initiatives. Health care providers of all sizes rely on QHCC for high-level analysis, vendor selection, deployment and support of any health care system available today. From strategic advisory services to hands-on implementation, our experienced team helps health systems make the right choices, improve operations and works with you to achieve your clinical and business objectives.