



## People + IT = Success at Toledo Clinic

Talk with Fred Makowski, Administrator at the Toledo Clinic, and you'll come away excited about the Clinic's achievements and what lies ahead for them. Physician-owned and physician-directed—unique in that regard in Toledo, Ohio—the Toledo Clinic, at present has more than 100 physicians, with inquiries coming in every day from doctors interested in joining this multi-specialty group. Makowski attributes Toledo Clinic's success to several factors, but the unifying theme is their forward-looking approach to healthcare delivery and their commitment to healthcare technology to improve patient lives and increase physician efficiency.

Established in 1926, today the Clinic draws patients from as far south in Ohio as Lima; as far west as Defiance; as far north as Monroe, MI; and as far east as Fremont, OH. Makowski estimates 750,000 episodes of care, and, impressively, one in five people in the Toledo area served by the Clinic for healthcare.

How did Toledo Clinic achieve such success? First, Makowski credits excellent people: the hard-working, long-tenured physicians and staff who provide convenient access to high-quality comprehensive health care services. By bundling specialties and patient-centered services under one big metaphoric roof, the Clinic benefits from the economy of scale which comes from a large group practice.

This one-stop shop approach to medical care has patients' best interest in mind. Patients have access to specialists, an in-house pharmacy, outpatient surgery center, imaging center, and many other services, at the main campus on Secor Road in Toledo and the more than 20 convenient satellite offices located throughout Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan. Makowski credits the group's work ethic, calling the Clinic the "hardest working group" he knows, a big plus in providing seamless patient care.

Superior people and facilities, though, are only part of the story. According to Makowski, the visionary board chair, Dr. Ian S. Elliot, encouraged the Clinic to embrace healthcare information technology many years ago, long before the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and its incentives. By embedding technology into the Clinic, Elliot and his colleague board members jumped ahead of other healthcare providers and clinics.

Four years ago, Toledo Clinic adopted InteGreat EHR, MED3000's electronic health record. InteGreat EHR ties together the main campus with all satellite offices and makes available a patient's record from any location. InteGreat EHR allows for real-time medical information to follow the patient, so patients can take advantage of same-day, same building bundled service. InteGreat EHR contains e-prescribing, clinical decision support tools, advanced reporting, and customizable templates, just some of the ways it helps physicians fully manage patients' healthcare.

As an entirely web-based and Microsoft compliant program, InteGreat EHR is immediately recognizable to anyone who knows other Microsoft products. Designed by physicians for physicians, InteGreat EHR is called "intuitive" by doctors as it follows usual physician workflows. Training time is minimal, often learned in one to two hours and requiring only Internet Explorer version 6 or greater on the user's PC.

At present, two-thirds of the Clinic's physicians are, according to Makowski, "sophisticated full-time users of InteGreat EHR or moving toward that sophistication" by learning and using the EHR more all the time. The last third—the shrinking group—is made up of physicians new to the clinic who are learning the system, as well as physicians nearing retirement. For this last

group, their written notes can be scanned into InteGreat EHR so the benefits of the EHR (to patients and to the clinic in general) still apply.

The Clinic's goal is to see 100% adoption of InteGreat EHR, especially as physicians climb the learner/user curve toward full-time, comfortable use.

When physicians use Dragon Medical, with its speech recognition capabilities going directly into InteGreat EHR, Toledo Clinic saves over \$2,000 a month just in transcription fees alone. More important, though, to Makowski even than monetary savings is the direct link to faster, more integrated patient care which comes from having physicians dictate directly into the EHR.

For Toledo Clinic, their commitment to 100% adoption of InteGreat EHR is just one example of how IT supports and improves their practice. Toledo Clinic's internal IT Department designed and developed a practice management system which integrates with InteGreat EHR. The client's investment in IT supports web access charge entry for physicians and staff, online patient registration, and an electronic patient paging system.

The end result for the Clinic and the patients they serve: timely, more comprehensive, and better patient care. The Clinic's goal for using InteGreat EHR is for the majority of patient test results to be available within a four hour window. At present 50% of all results fall in that four hour window and Makowski is confident that percentage will grow.

As standards for Meaningful Use of electronic health records are set, (with possible carrots and sticks for healthcare providers who seek government funds), Toledo Clinic is already ahead of all those who are just starting on the IT path. By early investing in IT to improve patient care, the Clinic is well underway to full, meaningful use of an EHR, and to seeing the real benefit that brings for their patients.

The future Toledo Clinic imagined when they invested in IT is catching up to physicians and clinics across the county. Today, the Toledo Clinic stands as a model for how people and technology can work together to provide healthcare which improves patient care, and makes physicians proud.

For additional information about Toledo Clinic, please contact Fred Makowski at [FMAKOWSKI@toledoclinic.com](mailto:FMAKOWSKI@toledoclinic.com).

For additional information about InteGreat EHR, please visit <http://www.InteGreatEHR.com>.