# Are you getting the most out of your EHR?

## At a glance

**Community**
- Post-Acute

**Organization**
- Hospice of the West

**Location**
- Phoenix, Arizona

**Challenges**
- Lack of understanding of the EHR system
- Inconsistent technology adoption
- Frustration with time spent in front of screens
- Lack of time with patients
- Paper processes

**Solutions**
- Netsmart Consulting Services

**Results**
- Increased adoption of the EHR
- Reduced admission documentation time by 50% allows more direct care with patients
- More streamlined workflows

## Netsmart

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# Hospice of the West: EHR health check was the best thing we did to make us more efficient

### About Hospice of the West

Hospice of the West is the second largest community-based hospice and palliative care organization in Maricopa County, Arizona.

The organization has received Community Health Accreditation Program's accreditation under the CHAP hospice Standards of Excellence. Hospice of the West is one of six hospices that has achieved CHAP recognition in the state of Arizona.

### Challenges

Hospice of the West desired to learn how to better leverage its electronic health record (EHR) system to reach maximum potential. There was a growing gap between the initial implementation of the EHR almost a decade ago compared to how staff were using the system today.

"We really wanted our staff to get more efficiencies out of the system so they could spend less time in front of the EHR and more time providing direct patient care," said Lisa Cheney RN, BSN, Director of Hospice Services.

"We didn't understand the 'whys' behind the way our system was set up, leading to frustration for staff," said Cheney. Over time, staff began to realize there might be a better way to effectively learn and use the EHR. Staff would often say, "this doesn't seem right … it seems like there should be an easier way to use the system," according to Cheney.

"We didn't know what we didn't know – and believed our system was incapable of doing what we needed it to do," said Cheney.

> " Hands down, do an EHR health check! The outcomes are worth it."
>
> Lisa Cheney, RN, BSN
> Director of Hospice Services

## Solution

In order to pinpoint issues and find solutions, Hospice of the West committed to doing an EHR "Health Check."

"We wanted Netsmart to come in and tell us everything we were doing wrong and show us how we could improve the way we use the system," Cheney said.

Using Netsmart experts, they analyzed the agency's settings and workflow processes from top to bottom and explained what they could change to gain more efficiencies from the system.

The EHR health check was a positive experience with optimal results for Hospice of the West. Having a Netsmart expert come in and explain how the agency was using the system compared to how other providers use it was powerful for Hospice of the West users.

"To walk through our current work flows and have someone demonstrate a process that was a more efficient approach was invaluable," said Cheney. "We had tons of what we call 'quick wins' during the health check. Meaning, some of the inefficient things we'd been doing for so long were immediately changed."

> " **Netsmart explained what they could change to gain more efficiencies from the system.**"
>
> Lisa Cheney, RN, BSN
> Director of Hospice Services

## Results

The top three benefits of the system health check were:

- A complete understanding of the system and its best practices,
- More staff confidence and adoption of the EHR, and
- Increased operational efficiencies.

### Why an EHR health check?

- ✔ You have people in your organization using the EHR differently and want to establish consistency.

- ✔ You're unsure if you are using the EHR to its maximum potential.

- ✔ You think you need training but aren't sure where to start.

- ✔ You'd like to better align your processes with Netsmart best practices.

- ✔ You're unsure if you've made all the updates available to your system.

- ✔ You'd like to understand how other clients are using the system to achieve results.

As a result of the system health check, Hospice of the West has experienced some significant business outcomes. Since deploying iPads to their nurses, they've been able to reduce admission documentation time and increase patient/family interaction during the admission process. Because the agency streamlined its workflows and eliminated manual processes, staff and patient satisfaction has increased.

The health check resulted in Hospice of the West's self-implementing a staff development program that specifically focuses on orientation and onboarding of Netsmart technology. The result? Increased technology adoption and staff satisfaction.

Staff can now quickly find answers to their technology questions within the system, as well as use available Netsmart resources like the client portal, NetsmartCares.

"We had three highlights during the health check, where we realized our frustrations stemmed from the way we had configured the system, rather than the system itself," said Cheney. "While we didn't

understand why the EHR wouldn't do what we wanted, we discovered that was how the system had been configured on the back end."

Once the Netsmart expert revealed the issue, Hospice of the West was able to reconfigure its system in line with Netsmart best practices. Doing so allowed the agency to gain huge efficiencies and boost staff satisfaction. "The EHR health check was essential in helping to make us more efficient," said Cheney.

## Advice for others

When asked what advice to give other clients experiencing similar challenges, Cheney says:

- ✔ Hands down, do a health check! We've committed to doing one every three years because of the positives outcomes we gain.

- ✔ Be open to suggestions on how you can better use the system to meet your needs.

- ✔ Understand that a health check solves the "I don't know what I don't know" quandary.

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# A health check solves the 'I don't know what I don't know' quandary."

Lisa Cheney, RN, BSN
Director of Hospice Services

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### About Netsmart Consulting Services

Netsmart Consulting Services helps you identify areas where you can leverage your EHR technology investments. By optimizing your EHR, you improve organizational operations, efficiencies and staff satisfaction. Our Consulting Services perform EHR Health Checks to help ensure your organization is embracing and using your EHR to its fullest potential.