

Six Critical Reasons for Using a Strategic Patient Registry Solution.

Beginning with the creation of the Tumor Registry 40 years ago, patient registries have been a traditional method of tracking patients and providing information to support your contact efforts with those patients, as well as helping to identify treatment trends and improving patient outcomes. In the last couple of years, however, organizations have discovered tremendous potential for registries... as they help to support business decisions as well. Although there are many benefits and justifications for leveraging a patient registry program in your organization, 6 reasons stand out when it comes to providing greater effectiveness, quality and streamlined efficiency in clinical and pharmaceutical organizations.

Basic and Traditional Uses

Registries are primarily used to collect, store and report on patients identified with specific conditions... to help support clinical care efficiencies. Several types of organizations use patient registries for various other purposes. These include primary care physicians, specialty clinics, mobile clinics, health plans, pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors and healthcare authorities.

There are three critical clinical patient management processes that benefit when a registry is in place:

- Population patterns, trends analysis and outcomes management
- Patient consultation support
- Patient reminder support

Population patterns, trends analysis and outcomes management

Help to identify what's going on in a specific area. For example, an HIV clinician can use information and diagnosis and treatments across the entire population to see if, for instance, certain medications are having a positive effect on patients. A Diabetes clinician can determine if diets are having an equally positive effect, etc., Using demographic factors, they can see the impact on certain population sectors, etc.,

Patient consultation support

By using a registry, physicians can set up automatic timelines and schedules to help with consultation and direction to a patient. When the patient follows the medical regimen and shows improvement, this will show up in timelines produced from the registry information and statistics, making disease management much more productive.

Patient reminder support

Frequency of focused visits has a positive effect and correlation on a patient's health status. Automatic reminder support and frequency of visits help to impede or head off more serious (and potentially more costly) problems for the patient. Studies show that health plans are particularly interested in this type of use of patient registries for their cost-controlling value.

Through the clinical setting you are able to support business decisions, develop business plans and evaluate business performance. Here are some examples:

- Ability to anticipate patient activity, what care will they need and the effect on your revenue
- Ability to anticipate the resources needed to provide that care
- Ability to improve the efficiency of your operation
- Ability to promote your strengths in providing care for marketing purposes
- Ability to help support overall decision making that have a long-term, strategic impact on your organization's goals

Again, these are some of the more important "clinical" reasons for why a registry is an effective tool for disease management. For the Biotechnology or Pharmaceutical organization, there are, however, important business implications for having a registry and they are all geared towards empowering an organization with powerful and insightful business intelligence.

The difference that Business Intelligence makes, first and foremost is the ability to obtain consolidated data from various sources - rapidly and efficiently and the use of that data in making business decisions. A strategic registry program empowers you to collect demographic, observational and treatment data from across many different clinical sites and institutions in real-time, into a centralized, secure, HIPAA compliant repository. This in turn allows your organization to make stronger, more effective, more efficient and more realistic decisions that also empower your participating physicians to provide care with ever-increasing quality.

To that point... here are the 6 reasons why a strategic registry program would have enormous impact on your organizational and business objectives:

1. Predicting future revenues

Healthcare is a business. We can't avoid that "truth". As such, organizations need access to immediate and actionable information to help run its operations effectively. With a registry - delivering solid historical information on patients... allows you to predict with greater accuracy what the revenue will be

in the future. Again, it all comes down to being able to rapidly collect data that in turn can provide you with immediate, actionable insight. Also, with a strategic registry in place, you can begin to collect data that could potentially foster third-party reimbursement, which in turn helps all parties involved (the patient, the clinician and your organization).

2. Predicting future costs

The antithesis of revenue... same logic applies - it's all in the data.

3. Efficiency

Since quality, effectiveness and efficiency in healthcare has come into the spotlight over the past decade, it seems as if every participant in the industry (physicians, pharmaceutical & bio-tech companies, employers, payers, patients, government officials, etc.) is demanding evidence of improvement. Information, or business evidence on the patients you serve, the care activities you provide (and those you don't), is necessary to find and correct inefficiencies, and to support reporting of your efficiency to these other participants in the field. Your patient registry is a rich source of this information, and allows you to attack and remedy situations... proactively.

4. Marketing Support

Sophisticated patient registries are often used for marketing purposes by a number of organizations in the clinical healthcare industry. As market research is a key component and "driver" for many business related activities, having a streamlined way to obtain that research is critical to your success. The faster you can analyze your data, the more streamlined your understanding becomes of your market. The reasons are very clear for having a system to support your marketing efforts:

- Understanding how your drug therapies or solutions are impacting the marketplace
- Understanding how your competition is impacting the marketplace
- Building trust and loyalty amongst prescribing physicians
- Creating a community around your product
- Help to drive demand

5. Strategic Priorities Guidance

Again, it's in the data - your patient population trends and patterns can have a strategic impact on your organizational planning. Emphasis on certain product lines, facilities, new markets, etc., can all change based on the rapid collection, analysis and dissemination of your data. You need to make use of all of the important key data points and intelligence to determine your priorities for today and beyond.

6. Save Money

I saved this one for last, but I think from a business perspective it can have the most impact. Through the many facets and reasons as to why you can benefit from a strategic patient registry - it is clear that productivity and effectiveness are huge drivers to your success. To that point, having a secure, web-based, HIPAA compliant system in place to coordinate your data collection and automate your analysis saves you money. Sure you can create a patient registry using an excel spreadsheet (not recommended for complex data capture and analysis), and you can simply choose to do it manually or hire an expensive market research company to help. However, nothing can replace the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of a custom system designed specifically for your exact initiatives and needs.

George Ritacco is the Executive Director of Client Services for Global Vision Technologies, Inc (GVT), <http://www.globalvisiontech.com> a premiere software developer specializing in powerful, easy-to-use web-based information & data management solutions for secure, HIPAA compliant patient registries and clinical data capture systems <http://www.strategicpatientregistry.com> . GVT's primary goal is to provide our customers with tools for improving productivity and client outcomes.

