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Ten Steps to a Successful EMR Transition

Best practices for a smooth evolution to electronic medical records

What's the best way to transition your medical records from paper-based to hybrid or electronic medical record (EMR) systems? It's a question many U.S. health care facilities are asking in the wake of the latest U.S. government mandate on the subject.

At AMES, we have considerable experience helping hospitals, clinics, and medical groups make the move to EMR systems. We wanted to share some of that experience with you, so we put together 10 steps that can make your transition easier, more efficient, and more cost-effective.

1 Choose your partner

Pick a supplier with demonstrated expertise that can handle the scope of your project. Make sure they not only have the right software, but also best-practice solutions for meaningful use of technology. They should also be able to provide hands-on services from back scanning to facility relocation.

2 Plan your strategy

Start by assessing your current, near-term, and future HIM environment. Whether you tackle this in house or partner with an outside provider, you'll need to create detailed plans for smoothing your transition, while ensuring that physical, electronic, and hybrid records remain secure, yet accessible.

3 Train your personnel

An informed, committed staff is key to a successful transition, and training and education is the way to create this. AMES specialists are happy to share their experience of what's worked in successful EMR transitions and can also pass along their knowledge of critical products, procedures, and processes.

The AMES Advantage

- ▶ Over 90 years of medical records management expertise
- ▶ Planning experts on-and-off site
- ▶ Comprehensive cost proposals for efficient budget management
- ▶ Processes for state-of-the-art auditing
- ▶ TAB FusionRMS records management software
- ▶ SMART program for maximum compliance and savings

Your Partner for **Healthy Records**

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4 Protect and comply

At every step, you must protect patient privacy while complying with ever-expanding rules. You'll need to meet regulations ranging from HIPAA, Joint Commission, and ARRA mandates to insurance requirements and legal discovery demands.

5 Systematize records management and auditing

As you scan legacy data or enter new records into electronic form, organize crosschecking to ensure that digital records end up error-free. You may want to research current state-of-the-art auditing techniques and processes.

6 Select software

From admission to discharge to archival storage, retention to final mandated destruction, you need software that handles everything from entry-level tracking to advanced imaging, with enhanced security and optimized workflows. We use TAB FusionRMS which is a powerful, proprietary, tailored software solution that is ideal for the hybrid health care records space, managing every record throughout its' entire life cycle.

7 Optimize filing

Most EMR systems will still need space for some physical media. Make sure you get the right medical file folders, labels, accessories, and color-coding process. For many organizations, customization is the most efficient solution. Ask about our unmatched customization capabilities.

8 Maximize storage

It's critical to have a strategy for saving space for remaining physical files, as well as medical supplies. Remember, you can improve your storage capacity by up to 339% with solutions such as high-density mobile systems, ideal for health care environments requiring high capacity and security.

9 Find ways to save

In a transition project like this, you need to be looking for efficiencies at every step. If you partner with a provider, make sure that they don't hit you with expensive add-ons. Get them to quote you one inclusive price.

10 Plan for growth – and surprises

Once your EMR system is in place, then what? You'll need to consider how you will accommodate record growth and ongoing hybrid files. You will also need a plan for efficient and compliant record retention policies as well as disaster recovery.

AMES Can Help

At AMES, we have deep experience in helping health care providers and facilities make the move to electronic medical record systems. If you'd like to talk to us about any one of the above practices, or about your own transition, please contact us at 1-877-590-8895.

Founded in 1919, AMES is the largest U.S. provider of medical records systems, medical file folders, and medical records storage solutions for health care facilities. AMES, A TAB Company, is the premier global supplier of products and services for records management.

*A successful EMR transition
starts with the right questions –
let AMES help build your future.*