

Inova Health System Relies on CTG for Epic Clinical Service Desk Solution



Reliability Matters



The Client

Inova Health System (Inova) is a not-for-profit healthcare system based in Northern Virginia that serves more than two million people each year throughout the Washington, D.C. metro area and beyond. Inova's nationally recognized comprehensive network of five hospitals, outpatient services, facilities, and primary and specialty care physician practices includes more than 1,700 licensed beds and 16,000 employees. As the home to nationally and internationally recognized Inova Heart and Vascular Institute, Inova Schar Cancer Institute, Inova Translational Medicine Institute, Inova Neuroscience Institute, and Inova Children's Hospital, the organization works across the network to achieve its mission of improving the health of the diverse community it serves through excellence in patient care, education, and research.

The Challenge

Inova implemented the full Epic application suite—Ambulatory, Inpatient, Clinical, Revenue Cycle, and Patient Access—with multiple go-lives. Shortly after go-live at their largest (1,200-bed) facility, Inova faced numerous competing IT support needs:

- Supporting the live Epic sites while simultaneously maintaining an aggressive rollout schedule to remaining hospitals and ambulatory sites
- Providing IT support for new organizations added to the enterprise through provider service agreements and joint ventures
- Managing enterprise efforts to transition to ICD-10
- Staffing the Command Center during large go-live activities

The lightly-staffed help desk at Inova was further challenged to keep up with an increased call volume (up

25 percent) and issue reporting from multiple channels, including email, web, and walk-ins. Often, calls were passed on directly to the Epic applications team with limited knowledge capture, resulting in missed opportunities for knowledge transfer to the help desk team. With a four-minute average wait time and a high number of abandoned calls, user satisfaction ratings were low.

It was evident to the Inova leadership that collaboration with a trusted partner organization for an end-to-end support solution (both Tier 1 and 2) would help them strategically and cost-effectively manage ongoing support of Inova's live sites, as well as augment the Command Center teams during go-lives.

The CTG Solution

Inova partnered with CTG's Health Solutions practice to address their post-Epic implementation clinical service desk and application management support needs for the hospitals and ambulatory sites live on Epic, and to augment Command Center staffing during go-lives.

CTG implemented its Application Advantage™ solution, a portfolio of services designed to maximize the value, efficiency, and cost effectiveness of application management. These services include Assessment and Roadmap, Help Desk (Tier 1), Application Management (Tier 2 and 3), and Clinical and Patient Service Desk Support.



At the beginning of the engagement, CTG conducted an initial comprehensive assessment—including a review of Inova's current help desk environment—to identify challenges, organizational impacts, and opportunities for improvement. CTG then implemented a tiered Epic solution for Inova, providing resources for both Tier 1 clinical service desk and Tier 2 Epic production application support.



Staffed by CTG resources, Inova’s Tier 1 clinical service desk became the first-call response for all Epic calls and provided ticket tracking and triage resolution of routine/recurring issues related to Epic modules (e.g., “how to,” access, print, navigation, etc.), and escalated other Epic system/build/optimization-related issues in the production environment to the Tier 2 team.



CTG’s experienced Tier 2 Epic application support consultant team provided 24x7 issue resolution and production application support for specified Epic modules in an offsite consulting model, handling change management requests, providing project support, and completing Epic optimization build for selected production modules. The team also supported other value-added projects and tasks beyond production support tickets, such as working on error queues each week, as these needs arose from the client.

In addition to augmenting Inova’s Epic-related on-call coverage, CTG’s Tier 2 support team provided much needed Command Center coverage during additional go-lives. CTG team members worked 8–12 hour shifts over a two-week period. Tier 2 team members not required to be onsite in the Command Center provided ticket and issue resolution coverage.

The Results

As part of CTG’s Application Advantage solution, the Tier 1 clinical service desk team has helped overcome multiple challenges related to call response time/abandonment rate, issue resolution, knowledge capture, and documentation standardization. The scope of support includes Epic Users as well as MyChart Patient Portal. Of notable mention are the following performance metrics for 2018, which are consistent with previous years’ performance:

- The average speed to answer calls remains around 24 seconds.
- The time to resolve calls averages four minutes.
- The in-scope resolution rate has averaged 99 percent. In-scope is defined as calls that have been identified as issues that can be resolved by CTG on the phone.
- MyChart Epic Patient Portal resolution averages were greater than 98 percent through 2018.
- Abandoned call percentage with threshold remains around 4 percent.

CTG’s Tier 2 Epic application support team enabled Inova to provide timely Epic production system issue resolution, application management, and support for identified applications. CTG’s Tier 2 support team’s issue resolution rate, calculated over the life of the engagement, improved to 97 percent in January 2014, with a very small percentage of unresolved tickets escalated to Tier 3 support at that time. The addition of CTG’s Tier 2 application support team seamlessly integrated with Inova’s internal Epic staff. This additional support enabled Inova to meet their implementation and rollout commitments on time, allowed their internal resources to address net new Epic build requirements and day-to-day tasks, and alleviated considerable go-live overtime costs. CTG’s remote support model also saved Inova the costs traditionally associated with outside/traveling consultants.

CTG quickly gained the trust and respect of Inova’s internal Epic teams and end users with reliable, timely critical ticket/issue resolution, ongoing communication, and a seamless knowledge transfer process that enabled Inova resources to focus on the build unique to their organization. CTG’s Application Advantage portfolio of services provided a reliable, metrics-driven, cost-effective answer to Inova’s support needs.



Partial IT Outsourcing



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