HEALTH

## POINTS TO CONSIDER

# Eyes Wide Open:

## *Does Your EHR Implementation Program Address the Critical Risks to the Enterprise?*

For most health systems, the decision to implement an electronic health record (EHR) represents one of their largest capital expenditures, likely second only to investments in acute care facilities. It also commonly signifies one of the most prominent single annual expense line items for a typical provider.

Implementing an EHR can bring significant benefits but involves high risk. Delays are costly, and the initial investment is at risk if adoption does not occur. Further, potential disruptions include physician dissatisfaction, revenue cycle leakage and revenue degradation, and long-term capacity and throughput challenges. These disruptions can have long-ranging implications on organizational performance.

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Despite the enormous scale of this investment, once the decision has been made to proceed with implementation, many organizations fail to develop the necessary oversight and review processes that:

- Ensure the implementation is appropriately resourced from a build, testing and operational readiness perspective;

- Maximize the positive impact of the implementation by assuring executive-sponsored change leadership programs;

- Provide transparent and frequent communication on progress to relevant clinical, operational and executive leadership; and

- Spotlight any gaps and risks that require swift mitigation.

## *Key Considerations*

To ensure the success of a fast-paced, complex and costly EHR implementation, there is substantial value in leveraging a team experienced in EHR implementations to objectively review its progress. Doing so will deepen leadership's understanding of the issues, risks and mitigating strategies. Consider the following:

- Is your program governance inclusive and effective in leading decision making? Are decisions and issue resolution conclusive? Do leaders have all the information they need to understand risks and issues related to this investment?

- Are expected benefit metrics and key performance indicators assigned to accountable executives for development, monitoring and remediation?

- Does the change leadership framework and communications plan drive engagement and adoption at all levels of the organization?

- Are design, build and test issues being identified and managed proactively, and what is the approach for identifying risks and developing mitigation plans?

- Are informatics resources being leveraged to develop and guide operational risk mitigation plans?

- Has the approach for revenue cycle parallel testing and close monitoring of charge build and test been defined (100% charge review at go-live)?

- Have plans for key changes to revenue cycle processes (e.g., single billing office) been harmonized and coordinated with the overall design/build of the new EHR?

- Is the program budget being reviewed and validated? How are variances being communicated and addressed? Are there adequate contingency funds and how are they being managed?

- What is the current state of technology infrastructure and IT operational processes and readiness for go-live?

- Are dedicated resources in place to manage the activation period? Were all dependencies identified and tested before confirming the ideal time for the go-live event and dry runs planned for both technical and operational cutover steps?

## *Outcomes-Driven Approach*

The Chartis Group (Chartis) partners with leading health systems and physician groups to conduct efficient and rapid periodic reviews over the course of the enterprise-wide implementation to provide an independent, unbiased assessment on the project's progress and related risks. Our program review methodology helps clients understand their progress measured against work plans, industry best practices, our experience and vendor implementation standards. This provides vital feedback at key intervals, allowing our clients time to course-correct, remediate issues and adjust approaches. Chartis' program review focuses on the following areas:

- **Governance.** Examine the governance structure, and overall effectiveness of decision-making and communication of the decisions made.

- **Change Leadership.** Assess the change leadership framework and plans for communication, engagement and adoption, operational readiness, learning and education, and benefits realization.

- **Project Management.** Review work plans, project management processes, risk and issues reporting, and budget across all components of the implementation.

- **Design, Build and Test.** Review build and test plans to confirm the solution aligns with the intended design and workflows.

- **Technology.** Evaluate the technical infrastructure, architecture and integrated technical areas, such as interfaces and conversions.

- **Activation and Transition.** Confirm that appropriate plans and approaches are in place to migrate to the EHR.

Figure 1 provides an illustrative example of focus area review elements.



*Figure 1*

Chartis provides an objective, simple and fact-based assessment resulting in specific recommendations and corrective action plans. These assessments are conducted in close collaboration and partnership with executive leadership.

THE CHARTIS GROUP

## *For More Information*

Please contact us to discuss your organization's EHR implementation journey.

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## *About The Chartis Group*

The Chartis Group is a national advisory services firm dedicated to the healthcare industry. We help our clients solve their most pressing issues, empowering first movers in their markets. Our tailored, custom solutions are built on an integrated thought leadership platform delivering the core disciplines needed to drive meaningful results and materially improve the delivery of care. www.chartis.com