

# Case Study

## *Phelps County Regional Medical Center Installs **EQUICARE** CS to launch Navigation & Survivorship programs*

### BACKGROUND

Phelps County Regional Medical Center (PCRMC) offers excellence in integrated cancer services, with a cancer care team comprised of highly skilled physicians and medical professionals who specialize in an array of cancer treatment fields, and treat a wide variety of cancers. The center, a hospital owned outpatient radiation and medical oncology services provider, is accredited by the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Commission on Cancer (CoC) and is currently in a growth phase, adding a new cancer center to its care network. As part of their commitment to improving care for patients, PCRMC wanted to implement cancer survivorship and navigation programs, which have been shown to ease patient distress and smooth the transition from active treatment to life after cancer. The center began assessing the tools required to provide these services effectively in late 2012, and hired their first full time Nurse Navigator in January 2013.

Already working with Varian Medical Systems' ARIA (MO and RO), PCRMC was seeking a solution that could integrate with this existing Oncology Information System (OIS). They also wanted to ensure that their solution would be easy to implement and use, and could be shared by all members of the patients' care team, including those external to the organization. As Meaningful Use attestation deadlines were approaching, PCRMC wanted to meet the new MU stage 2 requirements, and also wanted to ensure they could maintain their CoC accreditation, which includes requirements for Continuum of Care services (navigation, psychosocial distress screening, and survivorship) for the next phase of accreditation. Finally, PCRMC is an advanced EHR center, already on stage 6 of 7, and wanted to maintain their status as a paperless organization with their navigation and survivorship programs.

### Summary:

**Site:**

**Phelps County Regional Medical Center**

1000 West Tenth Street  
Rolla, MO 65401

**Product:**

EQUICARE CS

**Go live date:**

March 2013

**Customer Response:**

***"Equicare brings us the Navigation and Survivorship functionality we were looking for, and enables us to keep in closer, more regular contact with our patients to improve quality of care. The entire system is so configurable that it feels customized just for us, and Equicare is always open to incorporating our feature requests into future releases. Equicare's customer service team has been responsive and helpful throughout installation and training, and it has been a pleasure working together."***

**Carol Walter, MSN, RN**

Nurse Navigator, Oncology Services  
PCRMC

## SOLUTION

PCRMC selected EQUICARE CS (ECS) for their survivorship and navigation program needs late in 2012. The PCRMC team began meeting with Equicare's installation and workflow specialists on a weekly basis to discuss system configuration, IT requirements, and customization requests. The center went live with the system in March 2013. ECS is managed by the PCRMC's Nurse Navigator, and available for use by RO and MO nurses, dietitians and social workers.

Equicare worked with PCRMC to configure ECS to specifically meet their needs, particularly with regard to their Navigation program. New fields were added to the system's distress assessment screen to provide clarity in identifying patients with no reported problems, and a distress

thermometer was customized to coordinate with the center's existing assessment scheme. Additionally, Equicare added a new category of problems to identify that a lack of educational materials may be a barrier to care.

PCRMC currently uses the full ECS suite, including navigation, survivorship, and patient portal. The Nurse navigator adds new patients, makes chart notes, tracks referrals, and assesses patient distress and barriers to care through ECS. The Navigator also provides patients with login credentials to access the patient portal at the time of activation in ECS, which usually coincides with the beginning of treatment. Survivorship care plans are generated through ECS, and printed treatment summaries and follow-up plans are given to patients during their last treatment appointment. PCRMC uses the reporting features in ECS to track the barriers to care, the number of patients with access to the portal, their frequency of portal usage, as well as the time Navigators spend on various tasks.

## RESULTS

EQUICARE CS has worked to meet the technical, clinical and administrative needs of PCRMC. Through ECS, PCRMC has successfully launched a paperless navigation and survivorship programs that now include 100% of new cancer patients admitted to the center. There are currently approximately 90 patients included in the program, and the center's Navigator and Social Worker continue to add patients upon admission. PCRMC also now is on track to meet requirements for both Meaningful Use, and CoC accreditation.

Following the training from Equicare's installation team, ECS users at PCRMC report that the system is easy to use and maintain. The automatic population of information from the center's ARIA oncology information system ensures there is no duplicate or manual data entry. Additionally, PCRMC reports that Equicare's customer support has been quick and helpful, enabling the organization to rapidly configure ECS to suit their operations. Equicare continues to work with PCRMC to incorporate new feature requests into their system, and to make many of these customizations available as standard options to new customers.



### Program Highlights:

- A nearly paperless survivorship and navigation program
- Automated population of data from ARIA into ECS eliminates manual data entry
- Customized distress assessments provide valuable feedback to ensure patients and their families have the resources they need
- An online appointment calendar lets patients view and re-schedule upcoming consultations, as well as set up email and text message reminders to minimize missed appointments
- An online patient portal empowers patients to access their healthcare information wherever and whenever they need it.
- PCRMC is on track to meet CoC Accreditation requirements for Continuum of Care Services, and Meaningful Use Stage 2 attestation

Most importantly, ECS is enabling PCRMC to improve the quality of care provided to patients. PCRMC now completes distress assessments with all new cancer patients, and uses this information to determine the needs of patients and their families. By providing patients with online access to patient portal at the time of their initial treatment, the center gives patients a treatment road map to ease confusion or distress, and provides a centralized way for patients to view appointments with all members of their care team. Patients are also empowered to request their own future appointments through patient portal, and to set up email or text message reminders on a schedule that provides appropriate advance notice of upcoming consultations. Through the provision of follow-up plans, PCRMC feels confident that patients are getting the educational and treatment information they need to ease the transition into life after cancer. Additionally, because ECS enables these plans to be generated rapidly, PCRMC's program can be scaled to incorporate more patients without significant administrative overhead.



## ABOUT PHELPS COUNTY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER



Phelps County Regional Medical Center is south central Missouri's leading regional referral hospital, serving more than 250,000 residents. PCRMC employs approximately 1,500 employees and has more than 100 physicians on staff. PCRMC offers a range of diagnostic and medical services, patient-centered service and quality outcomes. PCRMC prides itself on community service and has been caring for the people in Phelps County and surrounding counties for almost 60 years. The PCRMC family has grown to include medical clinics in Waynesville, Cuba and Vienna offering family medicine, pediatrics and women's health services. PCRMC is a teaching affiliate of the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine and the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine. For more information, please visit [www.pcrmc.com](http://www.pcrmc.com)