SAN LUIS VALLEY HEALTH REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Joins CommonWell Health Alliance® to Improve Coordinated Care

San Luis Valley Health Regional Medical Center moved a lot closer to its goal of coordinating care across providers, colleagues, and partners when it implemented MEDITECH Expanse. The medical center benefited from one integrated record across the hospital, emergency department, and clinics, but it had gaps in information when patients were transferred from affiliated hospitals and clinics that used other vendors' EHRs. Most noticeable was the medical center's inability to communicate with Valley-Wide Health Systems, Inc., where many of its patients receive primary care.

To fill these gaps, SLVH RMC turned to MEDITECH to enable CommonWell Health Alliance services through its CommonWell Connected™ product for Expanse, going LIVE across the acute care, ambulatory, and ED settings in September 2021.

Sharing data is streamlined when CommonWell Connected™

Before CommonWell, when Valley-Wide referred patients to SLVH RMC for specialty care, the medical center received no data from the clinic. When these patients were admitted, SLVH RMC nurses would either call Valley-Wide during office hours or call the pharmacy to get allergy and medication information. If neither were available, nurses had to rely on patients to provide the correct information.

SLVH RMC joined the CommonWell network and selected MEDITECH's CommonWell Connected program to integrate with Valley-Wide, which was already a member of the CommonWell network. Now the medical center's providers have easy access to their patients' information from the clinic during admission.

To ensure the program benefited the largest number of patients as quickly as possible, the medical center enrolled all patients in CommonWell and gave them the option to opt out. An educational campaign helped patients understand that MEDITECH's CommonWell Connected product allows SLVH RMC to provide safer, more targeted care. Consequently, most patients do not opt out.

AT A GLANCE

San Luis Valley Health Regional Medical Center (Alamosa, CO) is a 49-bed hospital and Level III Trauma Center. It is one of two hospitals and five clinics that make up San Luis Valley Health, the largest health system in Southern Colorado and Northern New Mexico.

CommonWell services help SLVH RMC connect with affiliated clinics so providers can:

- See the full patient story, regardless of care location.
- Pull in allergies, medications, and other discrete data to support interaction checking.
- Save clinicians time by limiting calls to other facilities.
- Eliminate duplicate testing.

Exchanging data across care settings and with outside clinics

MEDITECH's CommonWell Connected function is most frequently used in SLVH RMC's ambulatory setting, but it also benefits its ED. Before the program, nurses spent considerable time tracking down patient information. In many cases, ED staff had to retroactively go through the health information exchange to fill in missing data. Now staff in the ED and inpatient locations can link to a CCD for any patient connected to the CommonWell Health network:

- A notification indicating the patient's CCD is available on the nursing status board.
- The nurse imports the CCD for the provider to review with the patient and decide what to include in the chart.
- The provider easily reconciles medications, confirms allergies, and views problems upon intake.

During peak vacation season, staff can access data for any in-network vacationers who arrive at their facilities. Additionally, the medical center is LIVE with the CommonWell Bridge to Carequality, which provides access to patients housed in Carequality's network.

Sharing information results in more coordinated care when patients transition from SLVH RMC to connected facilities such as Valley-Wide. In addition to allergy and medication data, outside clinics can import immunization histories, transcribed diagnostic and treatment records, procedure records, problems, diagnoses, and care team notes. Patients appreciate that they can confirm information instead of repeating it each time they visit the hospital. In addition, duplicate lab tests for outpatients are reduced when information is shared.

> **"Expanse provides us with an integrated EHR across our hospital, ED, and clinics, but we also share patients with a nearby clinic that uses another vendor EHR,"** said Crystal Kechter, EHR project support manager at SLVH RMC. **"Enabling CommonWell through Expanse allowed us to fill in gaps to better coordinate care across all settings, especially during periods when the other clinic is closed."**

Connecting for better care

Kechter recalled when an incoherent patient arrived in the medical center's ED. Although the patient couldn't communicate clearly, staff identified allergies and medication information immediately via MEDITECH's CommonWell Connected function. Without participating in the program, staff wouldn't have had access to the data. Situations like this help staff understand the value of using CommonWell, ensuring more widespread adoption among nurses.

SLVH RMC encourages hospitals with whom they share patients to implement CommonWell for improved patient care throughout Southern Colorado and Northern New Mexico.