# Mile Bluff Medical Center Reduces Provider Burnout Using MEDITECH's AI Solution With Google Health

## Introduction

Organizational surveys repeatedly noted frustration among Mile Bluff Medical Center's clinicians and staff. They indicated they were spending too much time navigating between two separate EHRs. In response, clinical leaders at Mile Bluff sought to improve clinician, staff, and patient satisfaction by providing the organization with a single source of truth.

Clinician and staff frustration was the impetus for Mile Bluff's transition to MEDITECH's cloud-based Expanse EHR platform in 2021. The new platform enabled the hospital to streamline processes and evolve its care delivery to one patient record across all care settings. However, when staff tried to access external data, such as scanned documents, faxes, and legacy data, they faced time-consuming searches that made chart review difficult.

Moving to Expanse provided Mile Bluff with the unique opportunity to pilot MEDITECH's Expanse search and summarization, powered by Google Health — an innovative solution designed to reduce clinician burden and improve patient care. As the pilot site, Mile Bluff would be collaborating with MEDITECH and Google Health, helping to shape functionality that could enable clinicians to access a wide range of relevant clinical information in their native workflows by searching across multiple sources – from legacy data, faxes, and scanned documents to handwritten notes, shorthand, and acronyms.

## SNAPSHOT

### Opportunity

Moving to MEDITECH Expanse enabled Mile Bluff Medical Center to pilot an innovative AI solution in collaboration with MEDITECH and Google Health.

### Solution

MEDITECH Expanse search and summarization, powered by Google Health.

### Benefits

- Reduces clinician burden
- Increases provider satisfaction
- Improves patient care and increases patient satisfaction
- Saves time with more efficient workflows

### Profile

Mile Bluff Medical Center (Mauston, WI) is a 40-bed acute care hospital in rural South Central Wisconsin. It serves a population of more than 55,000 residents in an eight-county region throughout its care network, including two nursing and rehab centers, two dialysis centers, and five outreach medical clinics.

Mile Bluff's most important criteria for the new technology were that it had a meaningful impact on clinicians and patients while avoiding any extra burden on them.

In the fall of 2022, Mile Bluff joined the MEDITECH and Google partnership as an early adopter of the solution. Pilot objectives were to:

- Enhance the clinician experience by enabling them to find the right information faster.
- Increase efficiency and throughput by facilitating better use of information.
- Improve the patient experience by enabling providers to spend more time with their patients.
- Boost quality and improve outcomes by closing gaps and providing holistic, preventive care.

As clinician champion for the Expanse implementation, Randall Brandt, a physician assistant in primary care, was selected as the medical center's project manager and lead for the pilot.

"We saw the partnership between MEDITECH, Google Health, and Mile Bluff putting us at the next level regarding healthcare and patient satisfaction," said Brandt. "I truly couldn't have been more excited about the project."

## Putting the AI-powered technology to the test

Brandt oversaw the coordination and communication among technical and clinical teams that included MEDITECH and Google Health staff, as well as the assignment of clinical champions and pilot user groups.

To ensure the project's success, Brandt knew he needed to select the right clinicians from each department to help champion the cause. He selected clinical champions based on their:
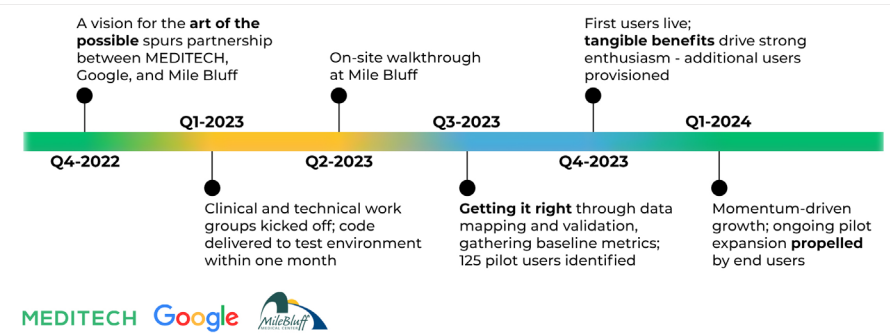
- Extensive use of the EHR and strong clinical background.
- Patience and willingness to learn and test products.
- Commitment to offering reliable or relevant feedback.

Over a third of the clinical champions provided service in more than one area of the medical center, assessing the solution's flexibility to meet different workflows. Brandt scheduled one-on-one training for each clinician champion, demonstrating how Expanse search and summarization would support their unique use cases. By identifying a use case to train each participating department, they generated clinician excitement and optimized the system's workflow to support each use case.

The core group of departments included ambulatory clinics, the emergency department, acute care, obstetrics, and surgery. Pilot user groups comprised doctors, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, and patient care specialists. Soon, word spread about the new functionality: By the fall of 2023, the pilot group had expanded from 125 users to more than 150 users and 14 clinical champions covering 19 departments.
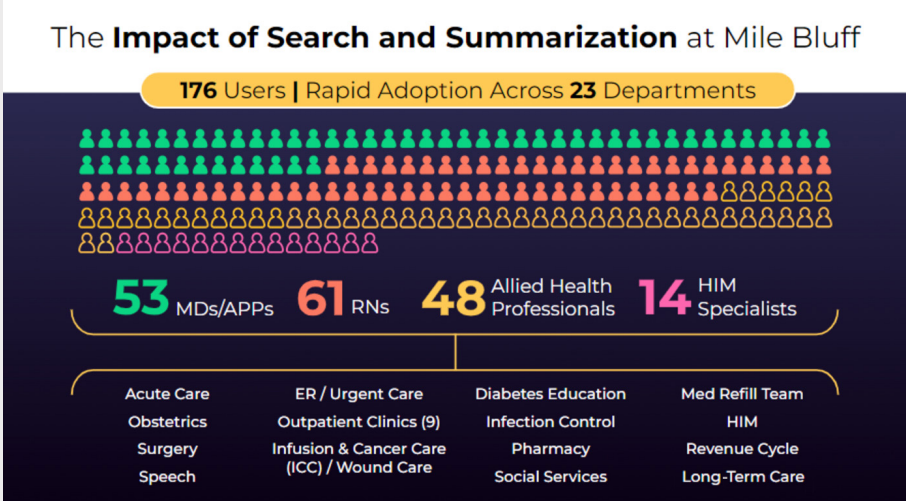
*"It was evident during my initial testing, before pilot kickoff, that Expanse search and summarization was a versatile product," said Brandt. "I really saw this product as having opportunities outside of its initial test user groups, but we needed to be patient."*



A vision for the **art of the possible** spurs partnership between MEDITECH, Google, and Mile Bluff

On-site walkthrough at Mile Bluff

First users live; **tangible benefits** drive strong enthusiasm - additional users provisioned

Q1-2023    Q3-2023    Q1-2024

Q4-2022    Q2-2023    Q4-2023

Clinical and technical work groups kicked off; code delivered to test environment within one month

**Getting it right** through data mapping and validation, gathering baseline metrics; 125 pilot users identified

Momentum-driven growth; ongoing pilot expansion **propelled** by end users

MEDITECH   Google   MileBluff

# Immediate impact at go-live

Mile Bluff completed its full pilot-phase rollout in January 2024. With MEDITECH and Google Health staff on hand for at-the-elbow support, the team's strong foundation of front-line clinician leaders was eager to showcase the solution for their colleagues and clinical teams. During January's three-day go-live period, 86% of users were trained in person and had zero login or outstanding technical issues.

*"The response was over-whelmingly positive," said Brandt. "Onboarding went smoothly with the provisioning of users and training. After witnessing search and summarization's impact on their colleagues' workflow, we received multiple requests for access, ending up with 176 users and expanding to 23 departments."*



The **Impact of Search and Summarization** at Mile Bluff

**176** Users | Rapid Adoption Across **23** Departments

**53** MDs/APPs   **61** RNs   **48** Allied Health Professionals   **14** HIM Specialists

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Acute Care | ER / Urgent Care | Diabetes Education | Med Refill Team |
| Obstetrics | Outpatient Clinics (9) | Infection Control | HIM |
| Surgery | Infusion & Cancer Care (ICC) / Wound Care | Pharmacy | Revenue Cycle |
| Speech | | Social Services | Long-Term Care |

Departments that would not usually identify as typical testers, from HIM and revenue cycle to infection control, were eager to join the pilot groups. New use cases ranged from quickly and accurately completing chart abstraction to reconciling problem lists and streamlining infection control chart reviews.

"As a clinician, I rely heavily on my peers' experiences, which helped me sell this solution," said Brandt. "It's amazing how creative we got just by taking suggestions from our staff and identifying how the search and summarization functionality could be applied to their needs. With each victory, we celebrated and engaged more departments."

# Bringing healthcare and patient satisfaction to the next level

Staff saw immediate benefits upon going live with the search and summarization functionality. Providers appreciated how they could launch the functionality directly from their Expanse chart viewer to get a complete longitudinal view of their patients. Brandt observed that providers intuitively used the section breakdown to review their notes within hours of going live. "The solution was already helping to improve their workflow and efficiency," he said.

Expanse search and summarization adds no additional work for providers or their patients. The solution works within the clinician's native workflow, so there's no need to navigate outside the chart. By offering increased and reliable access to data, clinicians and staff save time and feel more confident in their decision-making.

## Increase confidence

- Better understand patient's baseline
- Identify individual risk factors for more tailored education
- Confirm medication history
- Submit accurate quality measures

## Save time

- Quickly and accurately complete chart abstraction
- Reconcile problem lists
- Locate DNR orders
- Streamline infection control chart reviews

# Expanse search and summarization post-launch survey results

Feedback from the pilot survey focused on how the search and summarization solution impacted users' workflow. Participants indicated overwhelming user satisfaction and significant increases in efficiencies by improving access to information within any workflow.

**Ease of use:** 86% of users reported being somewhat or very satisfied with the solution.

*"If I didn't have search and summarization, I wouldn't even know where to start looking to find this info. I'd be searching all over." - Joseph Lachica, MD, an ED physician, upon locating an ECG.*

**Helpfulness:** 76% of users reported that the solution was very or extremely helpful in accomplishing specific tasks.

*"I am tasked with reviewing hundreds of pages of discharge summaries and scanned documents from other sites each day. This functionality is going to transform my entire workflow." - Kayla Bilek, an EMR abstractor in Health Information Management.*

**Solution engagement:** 91% of users reported that the solution feels somewhat or much faster than before.

*"I used to spend about 15 minutes per patient cleaning up problem lists, especially for new patients or patients transferred to me from other providers. The search and summarization functionality will help me cut this time down significantly." - Angela Gatzke-Plamann, MD, the CMO of Family Medicine.*

On average, Mile Bluff clinicians **save 7.5 minutes in prep time per patient**. Staff throughout the organization are experiencing significant time savings and efficiencies, including:

## Sleep medicine providers:

- Use Expanse search and summarization for patient prep and pre-visit planning.*
- See **40 patients per week.**
- Save **5 minutes per patient** and **10–15 minutes for more complex patients**.
- Save **3 – 6.5 hours per week**.
- Look for important details in scanned documents, such as undiagnosed sleep apnea.

*\*Because visit prep is less than it used to be, staff are able to see more add-on or last-minute patients.*

## HIM staff:

- Use the solution for chart review and problem list abstraction.
- **Save approximately 25%–40% of time** spent on patient abstracts, depending on the robustness of the record.
- Review approximately **50 patient records per week**.
- **Save 10–30 minutes** on average or **16.7 hours per week**.

## Infection control staff:

- Search for indications of **surgical site infections monthly**.
- Use the solution to **complete searches in 15 minutes, saving 40 hours per month** (5* x 8 hours).
- Gather information for the sepsis committee.

*\*Based on an average of five surgical site infections per month.*

## Pediatrician:

- Uses the solution for pre-visit planning and looks primarily for unstructured data and scanned documents.
- Sees **80–90 patients per week**.
- Saves approximately **5 minutes per patient, or 7 hours per week (5 minutes x 85 patients).**

## Acute care department leads:

- Use the solution for sepsis review and reporting of quality items.
- Review approximately **30 charts per quarter for sepsis**.
- Save **5–7 minutes per chart, or 3 hours per quarter**.

# Impact on patients

Since clinicians spend less time searching the EHR, they can spend more time engaging with patients, contributing to more attentive care, improved patient satisfaction, and better outcomes.

According to Brandt, one of the most impactful features for the patient is the clinician's ability to graph findings such as lab values and vital signs during the patient's visit. He stated the graphs provide a great visual regarding disease state or control because they improve patients' awareness of trends, which can impact decisions like medication management.

"The goal of any healthcare solution is improved patient outcomes," said Brandt. "These graphs help to close care gaps and provide a full set of disease-pertinent data for the provider to make more informed decisions, and for the patient to understand the impact adherence decisions have on their health."

## Keys to search and summarization success

- Establish a supportive organizational culture from the start.
- Promote the values of teamwork and mutual respect, where individuals are inspired to fulfill their professional duties.
- Actively listen to staff concerns and experiences so that individuals feel empowered.
- Choose partners who understand your needs and are willing to learn from you and adapt.
- Invest in solutions that alleviate burdens and enhance efficiency to mitigate burnout and achieve quick wins.

Mile Bluff is an example of what an organization can accomplish if it embraces strategic opportunities — no matter its size. The organization continues to explore use cases for search and summarization in other areas, including cardiology, nephrology/dialysis, cardiac rehab, eICU, radiology, and long-term care.

*"There's been a lot of hype about AI in the industry, but it's not until you put that functionality into action that you see the immense impact this technology can have on the staff," said President and CEO Dara Bartels. "When you can make your staff's lives easier by more efficiently surfacing the right data at the right point in the workflow to provide more precise patient care, it's a win for everyone."*