INTRODUCTION

Electronic consultations (eConsults) allow primary care providers (PCPs) to receive timely specialist recommendations on lower-complexity referral problems that do not require an in-person evaluation of the patient by the specialist.
BARRIER TO IMPLEMENTATION

UCSF pioneered an eConsult model using Epic. We developed a custom solution to integrate eConsults into the Allscripts electronic health record (EHR) system.

PATH TO SUCCESS

Plan
• Steering committee formed
• Clinical champions identified

Design
• eConsult workflow defined
• UCSF templates adapted

Build
• eConsult workflow, specialty eConsult inboxes, and specialist notification system created

Test
• Failure points identified
• Feedback from users

Go Live
• eConsults launched within 5 months

Incentive Payments/Compensation: The referring PCP and responding specialist were each credited $50 for every completed eConsult that did not result in a new-patient office visit to the specialty practice.
OUTCOMES
642 eConsults Completed Across 17 Specialties

Rapid Turnaround for eConsult Response

Over 70% of responding specialists reported that completing eConsult response took < 20 minutes
Most Cases Resolved Electronically

- 86% eConsult Resulted in In-Office Specialist Visit
- 14% eConsult Resolved without In-Office Specialist Visit

PCP FEEDBACK

I love the service! It lets me ask a very specific question of a specialist without making both the specialist and the patient wait for an in-person appointment. It addresses the patient's needs faster, and it allows the specialist more room in their schedule to see more complicated patients. I'm thrilled with the e-consult process thus far!

I love it. The biggest benefit is for patients who are not funded so they don't have to wait to see a free clinic. The responses are fast. I take care of many underserved patients at Anaheim with limited resources so the quick turnaround responses and helpful suggestions from the specialists are beneficial for my patients. I also enjoyed the additional references to certain articles and guidelines provided by the specialists.
SPECIALIST FEEDBACK

By allowing me great flexibility as to when I respond to queries and by its direct linkages to the electronic medical record and secure health messaging system, the eConsult system has proven to be a convenient and efficient means by which to provide consultative input into patient care. By making the consultative process relatively easy, I imagine that the eConsult service has great potential to reduce costs while increasing quality of care and convenience for both primary care providers and patients.

eConsults are a highly efficient way to provide quick responses to questions that primary care providers may have. This improves communication and collaboration among physicians, and also access to specialty care for patients. Ultimately, it improves the quality of medical care that patients receive.

TRANSLATION

Leveraging the following, offers opportunities for translating eConsults to a sustainable business model:

1. Improved access to specialty care
2. Improved practice efficiency
3. Cost savings of eConsult
4. Referral Growth
5. Improved Customer Service
6. Improved Provider Satisfaction
## ED/Ortho eConsults

10 requests submitted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Requested By</th>
<th>Response Time</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/11/2017</td>
<td>Nurse Practitioner</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Formal consult placed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/21/2017</td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Formal consult placed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/31/2017</td>
<td>Nurse Practitioner</td>
<td>80 minutes</td>
<td>Formal consult placed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/8/2017</td>
<td>Resident</td>
<td>16 minutes</td>
<td>Formal consult averted; follow-up scheduled with Orthopedic surgery clinic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/29/2017</td>
<td>Nurse Practitioner</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Formal consult placed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/10/2017</td>
<td>Attending</td>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Formal consult placed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/11/2017</td>
<td>Nurse Practitioner</td>
<td>54 minutes</td>
<td>Too complex; Ortho recommended formal consult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/16/2017</td>
<td>Attending</td>
<td>46 minutes</td>
<td>Formal consult averted; Ortho recommended splinting with outpatient follow up in 7-10 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/16/2017</td>
<td>Nurse Practitioner</td>
<td>22 minutes</td>
<td>Formal consult averted; Ortho recommended evaluation and splinting in hand clinic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/17/2017</td>
<td>Attending</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
<td>Formal consult averted; Ortho recommended splinting with follow up in 10-15 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>