



Utah home health provider says app saves time, money

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A small healthcare provider in Utah has saved \$500,000 over the past year and reduced employee travel time 70 percent using a mobile EMR app, according to a [report in ZDNet](#). First Choice Home Health & Hospice of Utah, used the Allscripts EMR for Windows 7 smartphones and saved half a million dollars and hours of travel time for remote clinicians.

First Choice serves 400 patients in four counties, and has around 160 employees, the majority of which are remote clinicians. The provider realized that their workflow needed improvement; revenues were down 30 percent, and some remote caregivers totaled 2,500 miles per years in mileage solely in trips to update medical records at its main office.

When exploring ways to improve the efficiency of its EMR system, the healthcare provider originally considered laptops and tablets for the solution, but eventually chose smartphones. The organization said it tested laptops equipped with 3G wireless, but the speed of input was slow compared to when the providers were using smartphones.



“Computers felt like a barrier to the patient,” Beau Sorenson, CFO of First Choice Home Health & Hospice of Utah, told [ZDNet](#). “It didn’t feel like a good patient/clinician connection. So we ended up working with Allscripts to find a device that supported the application.”

[When it first launched its Mobile Homecare app](#) at the National Association for Home Care’s (NAHC) in October 2010, Allscripts stated that “traditional laptop point-of-care platforms are not well suited to the mobility, flexibility and ease of use requirements demanded in the variety of post-acute care environments,” while existing PDA apps focus largely on admin or scheduling. Allscripts stated that its app was distinct because it focused on remote access to clinical information for home care workers.

Since First Choice began using the mobile app, Medicare reimbursement time has been reduced to 45 days from 90. There was also a 17 percent increase in clinician productivity. Less time on admin tasks meant more time to see patients. According to a [case study writeup on Microsoft’s corporate site](#), First Choice also slashed hospitalization rates by 4 percent, upped cash flow by 100 percent, and said reduced employee turnover.

Allscripts seems to be one of the more mobile health friendly EMR companies. In 2010 [it integrated](#) with WellDoc’s mobile-enabled diabetes coaching platform. Allscripts was chosen because WellDoc’s partner, George Washington University Medical Center, used that records system. The US Air Force funded the integration project.