

Katie Johnson: Good morning and welcome to Apple a Day, Lake Region Healthcare's health and wellness segment, where we feature news and information you can use to live a healthier life. This is Katie Johnson, your host, and my guest today is Wade Jyrkas. He's the CIO at Lake Region Healthcare and as is my tradition, I usually, as we have Christmas behind us and New Year's ahead of us, take some time to maybe look back on the previous year or look ahead to the New Year.

When I thought about what happened in 2017 and what we're looking forward to in 2018, one big project came to my mind, and that's why I asked Wade to be our guest today. It's the implementation of a new electronic health record. So, thanks for joining me today, Wade.

Wade Jyrkas: Yeah, thanks for having me, Katie.

Katie Johnson: Let's just start at the beginning. What is an electronic health record?

Wade Jyrkas: An electronic health record is a digital version of a patient's paper chart. The electronic record allows our healthcare team to do everything from documentation of your care to generating bills.

Katie Johnson: And it would be accurate to say that patients who come to Lake Region Healthcare today already have an electronic health record, right?

Wade Jyrkas: That is correct. Everyone that comes here and everyone that is treated here has an electronic health record.

Katie Johnson: But Lake Region Healthcare has made the decision to go to a new electronic health record vendor and that's a big undertaking. Why did Lake Region Healthcare decide it was important to invest in a new solution?

Wade Jyrkas: In our current state, we have an electronic health record in our clinic and a separate electronic health record in our hospital. So, as you can imagine, having two separate sets of records for all of our patients creates quite a few inefficiencies for our staff. Pulling all of the information together from two separate systems takes a lot of behind-the-scenes work.

Katie Johnson: I'm just guessing here, as a patient, it might also be the reason we're often asked many of the same questions over and over between different settings?

Wade Jyrkas: Absolutely. One of the primary goals of this is to eliminate all that duplication.

Katie Johnson: As a patient I can relate to that. So, as I mentioned, this is a really big undertaking. Give us a little bit of an idea of what's involved in the process for a healthcare organization to research and select and implement a new electronic health record vendor?

Wade Jyrkas: So we started looking at solutions in late 2015. We pulled together an entire steering committee and a selection committee around what's important to us, what are the reasons we need a new record, and making sure that when we set out on this journey, that we had some very targeted reasons for making this change.

Katie Johnson: So there were a lot of people involved from the very beginning from a wide range of disciplines as I understand it. And then now it just continues to grow in terms of the number of people it takes to set up the system, to test the system, to make all of the possible scenarios and workflows are researched and incorporated into the new system correctly.

Wade Jyrkas: Yeah, absolutely. Our initial selection committee was around 20 people. At one of our most recent implementation events, we had close to 120 people involved. And by going [live 00:03:18], obviously, all of our nearly 1,000 employees will be touched by this.

Katie Johnson: So what are some specific ways that patients will notice the change, when this change happens? And when will the change happen?

Wade Jyrkas: In May of 2018, we'll be going live with the new Cerner Electronic Health Record. The ways that patients will see a change here is that you're going to have a single, seamless record across all of your care. So our caregivers, our back office staff, everybody will have access to your entire set of information without having to flip between different screens and different systems. The prominent way that you're going to see the change from our current state to Cerner is through our patient portal. So a brand new patient portal will roll out with the solution. That will also go live at the same time in May, and you have a single patient portal record that has access to all of your information.

Katie Johnson: If there's a patient today that uses our current patient portal, are they going to have to do anything themselves? Will they need to initiate anything on their own, or will they be notified of how they'll make the change to the new portal?

Wade Jyrkas: Very similar to what we do today. There'll be an invitation process where they'll be able to accept an invitation from Lake Region Healthcare to join our patient portal. So, an account will need to be created, but it's a one-time deal, and once you're in you have access to all of your records.

Katie Johnson: And everything will move over from your history as well?

Wade Jyrkas: The majority of your history will be over there for you, yep.

Katie Johnson: Great. I think another important thing to note is that as many of our listeners know, Lake Region Healthcare and Prairie Ridge Hospital and Health Services integrated a couple of years ago. We share a lot of resources, and this new electronic health record will be another one of those resources we share. That

means more seamless integration not just between the clinic and hospital here but also between Prairie Ridge.

Wade Jyrkas: Yes. So, essentially, what we're creating is a community record for our patients that are seen at both places. So a few primary care down in Elbow Lake, or in Morris, or Hoffman, Ashby. Any of those locations, your records will be accessible to a provider if you're seen in the emergency department of Lake Region Healthcare, for example. So, across an entire family of companies.

Katie Johnson: Like everything we do here, this project definitely is intended to help people improve their health and will certainly be telling our listeners more about what it means and how it will impact them in the New Year as we get closer to our launch in May of 2018. Anything else you'd like our listeners to know about this electronic health record implementation and what it's going to mean to them in the new year?

Wade Jyrkas: Yeah, we're very excited to be able to bring forward a single-patient record system. So our physicians have been asking for this for quite some time and some of our back office staff. So, we're truly excited to be able to bring forward a modern system to healthcare for our patients.

Katie Johnson: Absolutely. And I can't say thank you enough to you and your team in the CIS department for your leadership, making sure this project goes forward smoothly and will launch smoothly in May of 2018. You're putting in a lot of long hours and dedicated effort and that doesn't go unnoticed. So thanks to you and your team.

Wade Jyrkas: Well thank you.

Katie Johnson: Wade Jyrkas the CIO at Lake Region Healthcare, my guest today on Apple a Day, giving us a little preview for 2018 and the new Cerner Electronic Health Record that Lake Region Healthcare will be implementing in the new year. Thanks for joining me, Wade.

Wade Jyrkas: Thank you.

Katie Johnson: Happy New Year from both Wade and Katie at Lake Region Healthcare and we do remind there is so much to do here. Stay healthy for it. Have a great day.