

Katie Johnson:

Good morning and welcome to Apple a Day, Lake Region Healthcare's monthly conversation with people on our team who have news and information that you can use to live a healthier life. I am Katie Johnson, your host, and my guest today is Kathy Burville. She is our vice president of ambulatory and professional services and an experienced Epic and MyChart user, which is our topic today. So thanks for joining me this morning, Kathy.

Kathy Burville:

Thank you for having me, Katie. I'm so excited to be here and talk about MyChart and our new Epic rollout.

Katie Johnson:

It is such an exciting time. It's an intense time here. We have been so focused on this. If you have been to Lake Region Healthcare or if you know anyone who works here, you likely know that this has been a project ongoing for several months. But we're now getting close to going live, and I wanted to take today's program as an opportunity to really let our listeners know what is this going to mean to you when you come to Lake Region Healthcare now, and what kind of a difference is it going to make. Before we start down that path though, you haven't been a guest on the show before. So I'd like our listeners just to get to know a little bit about you, your background before joining Lake Region Healthcare and what it is that you do here.

Kathy Burville:

Yes. I'd love to talk about that. So again, I'm Kathy Burville. I came to Lake Region about a year ago, I would say. I came from a nursing background, started out as a RN in a small regional hospital in Shakopee, Minnesota. So I worked there for about 13 years in the labor and delivery unit. That's my background, segued into ambulatory care and then made my way into leadership from being a nursing supervisor to then heading into more clinic management. So I was with Allina Health for about 30 years. That's a long time. In different roles.

Katie Johnson:

I didn't know that.

Kathy Burville:

Then my mother worked for Lake Region. Mary King. She was here for about 16 years, and she chose to move closer to some of her kids and I was one of those kids, but I ended up buying her cabin. And so looked at Lake Region as an opportunity. Met some of the leadership here and started a year ago, like I said, and just absolutely thrilled to be in this area. My family is originally from this area, so my roots are here and I'm happy and proud to be here as well.

Katie Johnson:

Well, we're so glad that you came back home and thank you. Mary was working here when I started here.

Kathy Burville:

Oh, that's awesome.

Katie Johnson:

So I remember her well. And she was such a bright spot in the day when I would see her as well. So it's nice to have you take her spot.

Kathy Burville:

Yeah, thank you.

Katie Johnson:

So I'm excited to talk to someone who has experience using Epic and MyChart, both as a user and from an employee or a clinical user standpoint. So with that as the background, what excites you the most about this change?

Kathy Burville:

There are so many things. And I think probably if I had to call one out, it would be the increased convenience to our patients. But also there's a measure of safety that comes from this Epic rollout that absolutely thrills me. So we are going from three EMRs or electronic medical records to one, one singular record, regardless of where you are in our system and even outside our system, which is amazing, really, if you think about that, because Epic is really widespread. And so not only are we sharing that record between all of our clinics and our facilities, we also have an option, with a patient's permission, to click on a little button that says, "Oh, now I can see what happened at Sanford or Center Care, or Allina in the cities, or Fairview, whatever it might be. We have an opportunity to do that. And again, why is that important? It's important because of the safety that it provides to our patients and to our providers to be able to make really sound, educated decisions based on previous information from a patient's health.

Katie Johnson:

Right. I would imagine for our patients who travel somewhere in the winter, this could be especially helpful as well.

Kathy Burville:

Yes. Absolutely. It's so interesting that, for instance, I had a family member who needed to receive care in Florida. And when she came back to Minnesota and went into Epic, there it was. So their provider could see exactly what happened down there to her ankle. She had an ankle injury. And what she was prescribed and what they advised. And so, yes, the continuity of care that provides right is really wonderful. And really that's why the health systems, in general, decided to go towards electronic medical records, was to offer that.

Katie Johnson:

Right. And like you said, Epic is very widespread. It's considered the gold standard, really, in the industry.

Kathy Burville:

Yes. The Cadillac. Yes.

Katie Johnson:

It is. It is. So we're excited to be shedding all of those different EMRs we have been using, coming onto one, and really the best of the best. So let's talk about November 1st. It's not that far away. What are the things that patients who might have appointments or who end up in the hospital or the emergency room or the walk-in clinic that day or that week, those first few days when we're making this transition, what can they expect?

Kathy Burville:

That's a great question. I think it's important for us to let our patients know that it might take us a little bit longer to do something those first couple of days. They might feel like our space is being renovated, when really it is in a way, not constructionally. But in other ways they might feel that the pace is a little bit slower or that we're being a little bit clunky along the way. I hope that word makes sense. But additionally, they're going to see extra people here, so that's a really important thing as well. So you might be in an exam room talking to your provider, and the provider might need help navigating something within Epic. And there will be people around that can support each team member with the questions they might have.

Kathy Burville:

And so I think that's the best way that I can describe that. "Please be patient with us those first couple of days, we will get better." We are working very hard now to prepare for this. So my hope is that everything runs very, very smoothly, but when it doesn't, in those moments, we will have the help we need to make sure that the patient is as inconvenienced as possible.

Katie Johnson:

Exactly. You've mentioned this a little bit, that Epic improves both the experience the patient has in the clinic or the hospital as well as their safety of their care. Is there more you want to expound on what it really means to improve that coordination and seamlessness of care that patients will receive?

Kathy Burville:

Well, maybe I'll just provide a little bit more detail on two simple things within the EMR or electronic medical record, as I said. There is one central problem list. So again, right now, when you think about all of these different electronic medical records or chart systems that we have, you could have something diagnosed at one of our facilities where another facility can't see it. So this is a simple example. If you were diagnosed with diabetes at one of our Prairie Ridge locations or Elbow Lake locations and you came back to Fergus Falls, that new provider wouldn't know that. And so one central problem list where every diagnosis that you have is listed in one location. Very, very important for us to provide the very best care to you.

Kathy Burville:

Another simpler way of thinking, this is a med list, one central med list. So if you get prescribed a medication at one location, everyone will know that you received that medication. So if you are in Fergus Falls Clinic and you get prescribed something and then you end up in the ER that night, that emergency room will be able to see what you were prescribed. And that is so important for our patient's safety, so that we all know exactly what you're taking so that the next step that we're taking is the safest for you.

Katie Johnson:

Absolutely. Those are great examples. Let's shift gears a little bit and talk about the portal. We've mentioned it. MyChart is the name of the portal. If someone's already a MyChart user, which we know there are a lot of people out there that are, what will they have to do to get their Lake Region Healthcare medical records to show up in their MyChart app or online account?

Kathy Burville:

So I think this is important for our patients to know that those who already have a MyChart account with Sanford will not need to activate a new account. They can continue to log in with their existing username and password, and then on November 1st, they'll start seeing their Lake Region appointments providers and information in their existing account alongside their current information from Sanford. So it's one shared EMR record for Sanford and all Connect partners, which we are one of those. We are a Connect partner, which means one MyChart login to access both their Sanford and all of their Connect partners information as well.

Katie Johnson:

So this makes me want to ask, and I don't know how many people this would impact, but what if I'm a MyChart user with mail today?

Kathy Burville:

So they will need to initiate a Lake Region-specific MyChart account. That will be important. And they will have a lot of instruction and guidance on that when they're being seen. Now, you don't need an appointment, and I think we're going to talk about that a little bit as well, but you don't need an appointment to register for a MyChart account, but it is more convenient to do it at the time of an appointment and any appointment at all, if it's a lab only or a physical therapy appointment, any appointment, that will trigger an email or a message to make sure that you can sign up for MyChart. So that's a really important part of this. Even if you have a MyChart account from another organization, you will still need to do that.

Katie Johnson:

So let's skip ahead to someone who's starting for the first time. Because it sounds like it's kind of similar, even if you already have a MyChart account or you don't, if you're starting out, it's requesting or getting that request to start. Tell us how that's going to work.

Kathy Burville:

So your MyChart activation options are automatic at the time of an appointment. And so an email will be sent at the time of check in and discharge from the hospital to every patient who's 18 or older. So you will get that email, which will trigger a very simple process to be able to click on that link and go in and initiate your MyChart account. It's so, so simple.

Katie Johnson:

But you mentioned that if you don't have an appointment and you make a request, how does that work? And also maybe in both instances, how can we feel confident that it's secure?

Kathy Burville:

If you don't have an appointment and you'd like to initiate a MyChart account, you can go to the Lake Region website and you can click on a link that will take you. Now, that will happen after November 1. So I just want to make sure people are aware. After the Epic rollout, you can go to the Lake Region website and you can click on the link that will take you to MyChart. There are a couple of extra activation steps that offer that security that you're talking about. So it will ask you several more questions after that 24-hour window after your appointment, or if you don't have an appointment and you're going to go in and click on that link, it requires the last four digits of the social security number to confirm your identity. And so based on that, we just want to make sure that patients are aware that it's going to take those extra authentication steps, so that you and only you are getting into your MyChart account, that it is for sure your information that's going in there. There's all these little extra steps just to really make sure.

Kathy Burville:

That's why it's so convenient and easy that when you have an appointment, you click on that link. We know we've connected that patient to that chart.

Katie Johnson:

What about patients who are currently using our portal called FollowMyHealth?

Kathy Burville:

Yes.

Katie Johnson:

What will happen with their FollowMyHealth account and do they need to do something also to get activated on MyChart?

Kathy Burville:

They do. They need to follow the exact same process. That won't change for someone who has FollowMyHealth. FollowMyHealth will still be there for a patient if they want to look at historical information. But I think it's really important to remind our patients that once we go live with Epic, all of the new results, messages, medications, all of those things will be now floating into the MyChart application and will no longer be going into FollowMyHealth. So I don't want that to be confusing for our patients either. I really want to make sure that they know that what's in there is historical. And if they want to retrieve it, they certainly can. But going forward, they'll need to go to MyChart.

Katie Johnson:

Everything in MyChart. There are so many features that are either new or improved with MyChart. Which feature or features are you most excited about or want to highlight to our listeners this morning as we think about what a difference it will mean to them when they start using MyChart?

Kathy Burville:

So I'm a nurse by background, so what appeals to me is the functionality of health maintenance within MyChart. So what does that mean? That means that if it's time for you to have your mammogram, if it's time for you to have your colonoscopy, if you're a diabetic and it's time for you to have your A1C checked, your MyChart is going to push out a reminder to you. And in MyChart, it looks like a little to-do

list. So get your flu shot. These are gentle reminders to our patients to be able to use all of our tools for preventative health. So that's what excites me about this is that it's an easy and slick way to remind our patients of what they can do to best take care of their health.

Katie Johnson:

And so as someone who hasn't been on MyChart before, in my mind, ideally I'm thinking this little reminder pops up and says, "It's time for your mammogram." Does it also then let me click on something to schedule that?

Kathy Burville:

It absolutely does, which is amazing.

Katie Johnson:

Oh, sweet.

Kathy Burville:

I know. That's a close second when you talk about what I'm excited about is the online scheduling functionality. That is another tool that, for our listeners who really like to make reservations online or to refill their medications online or any of those things, if those are tools that are appealing to you, I think it's pretty amazing that we will be able to click on a button, find an appointment, schedule that appointment for a mammogram, colonoscopy, an appointment with their provider. That's very, very exciting to me, because, of course, ease creates compliance with medical advice and direction. And so that's what we want to offer to our patients, is that we want to make it as easy as possible for them.

Katie Johnson:

We should also talk about our patients in Elbow Lake, Morris, Herman, Hoffman, Evansville, part of the Prairie Ridge Healthcare Group that's been part of the Lake Region Healthcare family for many years now. But bringing Epic to all of our enterprise, all across all 10 locations, brings one unified health record to all of these patients as well, which you mentioned. Let's describe a little bit about what that will mean to them.

Kathy Burville:

I think what it does is that it brings us together as an organization. We are already a work family and a unified organization, but to be able to see that safety across the system, again, is just absolutely essential. Bringing us all together in another more functional way is what this offers us. And I'm particularly excited for this because, again, the connection is smooth and easy for our patients and our providers, and I think it's an important next step for us.

Katie Johnson:

It is. And the specialists, the network of specialty care that Lake Region Healthcare has been providing in partnership with Prairie Ridge all these years has always been there, but it's now so much more seamless in how the physicians who are all part of Lake Region Medical Group are just better able to care for a patient across the system wherever they are. And we should mention too, it will mean Lake Region Healthcare is the logo that they see on MyChart and will just be further unified in that sense. And we'll be talking more with those patients about that as time comes.

Katie Johnson:

It's also probably a good time to mention the role that Sanford plays in this partnership. They have been instrumental in our ability to even offer Epic. Do you want to talk a little bit about what that Community Connect partnership involves and why Sanford is involved in our Epic rollout?

Kathy Burville:

Yeah. I'm really glad that we're talking about this, because I think it's really important for our patients and our community to know that we purchased Epic from Sanford. So it is their product that we've purchased and we're bringing here to Lake Region. We could have chosen many different health systems for that partnership, but 80% of our patients, if they need to step outside of our system to receive a higher complexity of care, they are going to Sanford. So it makes sense for us. Our patients have chosen Sanford 80% of the time to step outside of our health system when they need to.

Kathy Burville:

So to have a more coordinated relationship with Sanford makes sense. They've been amazing to work with. I would like to call out that occasionally because we are purchasing Sanford's Epic product, our patients might see a Sanford logo here and there. And I want to prepare them for that, that it's not very often. It's smattered in there, just tiny little places. But what it is it's a representation of the Epic product. It is not anything more than that. They are in a partnership with us for this Epic product, and we are so grateful for that relationship, but we are not affiliated with them in any other way. And we strive to remain independent, and that's where we want to be, and that's where all of our planning is focused on. And so just want to make sure that we're talking about that with our patients and our community.

Katie Johnson:

Yeah, I think you said that really well. And to be clear, we would not have been able to purchase Epic directly.

Kathy Burville:

Exactly.

Katie Johnson:

We needed a partner to provide it to us through this Community Connect arrangement, and you said it well, that Sanford was the obvious choice when we already share so many patients for so many reasons. What else am I forgetting? What do you really want patients to know about this Epic transition, about MyChart, about what's coming November 1st? Anything we've forgotten or that you really want to highlight, again?

Kathy Burville:

I don't feel like we've forgotten anything, but I just really want to take this last opportunity to encourage our patients to try MyChart. I am, myself, a MyChart user. The convenience is amazing. The ability for me to quickly pull up information, see where I'm at, what am I do for, if I need a refill on a prescription, I can quickly do that. The convenience is amazing. And another convenient factor with MyChart is the messaging offering that they have within MyChart is so convenient to a patient. So late in the day, say at seven o'clock and they are just home from work, just had dinner sitting down and they remember, "Oh

goodness, I was going to message my provider and I was going to ask them a question." That can still happen through MyChart. So they can quickly send a message off. That message will obviously be read the next morning during business hours. But we don't currently have that type of functionality.

Kathy Burville:

And say somebody doesn't want to make a phone call, so instead they'd rather just send the message or schedule online. I just really want to stress how convenient it is and that my goal is to just encourage participation in this so that we can provide you even better timely service. That's what we're looking forward to.

Katie Johnson:

I am excited to become a MyChart user myself. You have sold me.

Kathy Burville:

That's good to hear. Wonderful.

Katie Johnson:

Yes. So you have definitely sold me. And I'm just really excited that you have shared your enthusiasm for what Epic's implementation and the bringing on of MyChart will mean to our patients and to our community and to our healthcare organization. Really just bringing healthcare to the next level, doing what we do every day, partnering to enrich life through health, but at a whole new level with this tool that is called Epic Electronic Medical Records. So Kathy Burville, vice president of ambulatory and professional services at Lake Region Healthcare, my guest today. Really looking forward to November 1st for so many reasons.

Kathy Burville:

Me too.

Katie Johnson:

Yes. But thanks for all that you have done to help us get there and for helping to shed light on this for our patients today.

Kathy Burville:

Thank you, Katie. Thank you so much. And thank you for letting me be here to talk all about MyChart and our Epic rollout.

Katie Johnson:

Kathy Burville and Katie Johnson on Apple a Day today, reminding you that at Lake Region Healthcare, we are here for you always. Have a great day.