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4 Keys To Successfully Build Your Sleep Center Tech Stack

An introductory guide to successfully
implement software solutions in
hospitals and independent sleep labs

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Introduction

Over the past few years, many sleep centers have invested time into researching new technologies that streamline processes in their clinics.

From evaluating tools to help facilitate telemedicine, to looking at software to simplify patient intake and patient engagement, to optimizing existing home sleep testing, to launching new sleep navigation programs, innovation is present across the board in sleep medicine.

Many of the technologies sleep centers implemented during the pandemic were done so out of necessity to adjust to this new environment for providing healthcare. However, some labs were also using the down time to research and implement tools and solutions that would help grow their business post-pandemic, when sleep testing volumes would be back on the rise.

Through insights shared by our customers and partners, we identified four keys to consider when adding new technology to your business.

Four Keys to Success:

- 1. Identify Timing**
- 2. Earn Staff and Management Buy-In**
- 3. Manage the Implementation**
- 4. Measure and Celebrate Success**

1

Identify Timing

When is the right time to add new technology to your sleep lab?

It could be argued that the best time to invest in new technology is the day you find a technology that can improve the care and services you offer your patients. Why wait to take your sleep center productivity to the next level with solutions that can enhance patient experiences and optimize your workflow?

However, it's important to make sure an implementation doesn't overlap with other new initiatives. Tandem workflows with other software updates or new equipment, or even during other sweeping changes that are happening in your sleep lab, can lead to a rocky implementation. In addition to considering how new technology will improve your lab's efficiency and workflows, it's critical to take into account how a new tool will affect staff. You don't want to overwhelm or stress out your team by asking them to take on too much at once.

Additionally, consider the stability of your current staff. Will upcoming vacations or life events require staff to be out of the office for a significant amount of time? Are you in the process of hiring new employees? Does your team have the capacity to take on the additional work and time involved with bringing a new tool into their daily workflow? Understand that these things may affect the implementation process and awareness of these potential challenges can help set proper expectations when adding new technology to your sleep lab.

Whether staff is ready or not, the next key to success is regarding the importance of adequately communicating the benefits of the change, and getting your team excited to embrace the new technology and upgrade to your daily operations.

Earn Staff & Management Buy-In

2

How do you get staff and management on board with new technology?

Once you've decided to add technology to your clinic, the next step is convincing management and staff that a solution is necessary. Start by making a list of pros and cons. Including potential obstacles will not only help solidify your resolve, but can prepare you to more effectively communicate the short and long term benefits new technology will provide your sleep center.

Gaining buy-in will be even easier if you've done your due diligence and have data to support making the change. Do you know how much time your staff spends on specific activities and how each task translates to ROI? How else can staff grow revenue? Identify how the new technology will create more time for improving patient outcomes, then share that information with staff. Employees might initially fear technology will replace them, so how can you show that it will support them in their daily activities. Reinforce trust in your team by demonstrating their importance, while explaining how roles will evolve up front. Some work will remain constant, but in many cases, you will need to outline the new opportunities for your staff.

Instead of being replaced by the new tool, technology will allow staff to focus more on patient facing activities, like managing CPAP fittings and education sessions, building a sleep navigation program, or growing testing volume. Time might be spent building a referral base with drop-in visits, marketing your sleep center services in local social media and in-person groups, or working on center accreditation, individual credentialing, and continued staff education. This all translates into direct benefits for your clinic. Proper communication on what the direct implications are for your staff, as well as detailing future responsibilities will help achieve buy-in and create enthusiasm about the new technology.

3

Manage the Implementation

How do you manage the implementation of new technology in your lab?

It is imperative to set expectations and identify measurable goals for both staff and management in order to properly manage the implementation process. Lay out the timelines from the start of this project to when staff will use the new solution or tool in your live environment.

Set up check-ins with your team and the solution provider throughout the implementation timeline, including tasks to be completed at each step of the implementation, and who will be responsible for each task.

Gathering honest feedback from staff throughout the implementation process is critical. Ensure concerns or obstacles are addressed internally with your team, and externally with your solution provider as soon as they arise. It's also helpful to provide specific issues and corresponding examples to address with your solution provider and staff at the check ins.

Do not be afraid to ask questions of your solution provider during the implementation. They want to make your adoption of the new technology an enjoyable and successful experience as well. No question is silly, and it's likely another lab has asked something similar in a past implementation.

Remember to be patient and recognize that making changes to processes and learning new technology is not always easy. Stay optimistic, encourage your team, and remind everyone of the benefits you'll realize in your clinic when you achieve your goals.

4

Measure and Celebrate Success

How do you measure the impact of new technology on your lab?

Start with the end goal in mind. Make sure you lay out specific goals before bringing on new technology and then measure and report on your success.

Is your goal to standardize scoring across your night techs? Make sure you monitor scoring variability before and after implementing the technology. Do you want to free up time for day techs so they can reduce no-shows, provide patient education, or help with CPAP fittings? Do you want your sleep lab manager to focus on increasing physician referrals?

Measure how much time is dedicated to these activities before bringing on the new solution as well as the eventual results post-implementation. Did you add more physicians to your referral network? Is your no-show rate declining? Is your HSAT program growing? Are patients more compliant?

Finally, celebrate with your team! Learning and implementing new technology is not always easy and it may stretch your team to step outside their comfort zone. Reward your team for their dedication to the project with a team lunch or team-building outing and give recognition for their efforts with executive management.

Evaluating how technology adoption can improve your business is critical to providing the best services for your patients and growing your business. Don't let the challenge of implementing new technology deter you from improving your sleep lab, instead consider it an opportunity to bring your team closer together as you work towards achieving the goals of your sleep center.

Optimize Your Workflow

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operations with one platform for PSG
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