

Do You Manage your system, or just maintain it?

If you're just running through the motions of doing maintenance checks and routine 'fixes' in your clinical software systems, you're potentially missing the opportunities to make them work better and do more for you. All of these systems (EMR's, RIS, HIS, Practice Management, PACS, etc.) require regular checks of key elements and, in some cases, a periodic reboot to keep functioning at the level they were initially set up for. Could they do more?

Facilities today are trying to do more with less staff and resources. Consequently, when a new system is implemented, it takes valuable time and resources away from your core business – caring for patients. People want to just learn the basics that will enable them to get back to work and focused on their patients' results. Vendors are happy to oblige and simply cover basic how to's for the system as it is initially set up. Typically, staff using a new system intends to learn more about the capabilities later – 'when things settle down some'.

In reality, few people do take the time to learn the system more in-depth. Over time, staff begin wishing they could do things differently perhaps due to changes in your workflow or requirements; long for a capability that they haven't had, but believe would help with attracting new business or handling current levels faster and better; or are looking for ways to automate more processes to free up staff members for other tasks. Those 'wish lists' often turn into a search of other vendors' products to find one that has the capabilities desired. Sometimes, the answer is already at your fingertips.

Check with your existing vendor to determine

1. If your existing system can do the things you want,
2. If there is a charge to make use of those capabilities, and
3. How easy is it for you to set up and make use of them?

ASPYRA has found that users of systems at facilities often are not aware of all the capabilities they have and simply need some training on them. Check with your vendor whether such training would be covered by your service agreement or an additional charge. Some vendors will have an activation fee to enable different features. With others, as in most cases with ASPYRA, there is no activation fee – the capability has always been on, the staff just needs to use it. Likewise, in some cases, the only way to make changes to the configuration or capabilities in use is to go through the vendor and pay a fee. Others, like ASPYRA's PACS and LIS, have tremendous flexibility for individual users and system administrators to make changes as needed so the system is customized to the way the users and facility work best.

When you Manage your systems, you make them conform to the way you need them to work and can adjust them as your workflow, business model, and preferences change over time. Maintaining a system just performs preventative checklists, like regularly changing the oil and getting a tune-up for your car. You get more bang for the buck when you can manage your system.