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SNOQUALMIE VALLEY HEALTH INVESTING IN EHR UPGRADE

Major technology upgrade will better serve the district, providers and patients

SNOQUALMIE, Wash. – Snoqualmie Valley Health, which serves East King County through Snoqualmie Pass, is making a major investment to upgrade its current electronic health records system to Epic to improve experiences for patients and clinicians, alike.

In an agreement with Overlake Medical Center, through the Community Connect program, SVH was able to begin the conversion process more quickly and with considerable savings to the district.

“This is an ‘Epic’ undertaking,” said Renee Jensen, SVH’s CEO. “This upgraded medical records system will be a fresh start for our entire community, which includes our a patients, providers and medical partners. We are thankful for the support Overlake has provided and continues to provide through this process.”

Although not many people outside of the healthcare field recognize Epic as an EHR system, what is recognizable is the “MyChart” app, which is easily accessed by patients and providers, creating a seamless link to patient-to-provider communications, appointment scheduling and access to medical records, ultimately empowering patients to take a greater role in their health.

What a secure electronic health record system means to the entire Snoqualmie Valley Health organization is better documentation among medical providers, simple online bill pay, an integrated individual medical record for each patient and overall efficiencies.

When the 2021-23 Strategic Plan was announced in August, embarking on a sizable EHR upgrade seemed within reach, but not within 2022. Through a strategic a partnership with Overlake, discussions quickly turned years-long Epic implementation into an intensive nine-month project.

“This is the strength in having a small, but mighty team,” Jensen said. “We were able to pivot quickly when we realized we could bring the power of Epic to our provider teams and community in such a short window of time. Without a doubt, this is an all-hands-on-deck endeavor. I’m already so proud of our team. The amount of training that goes into implementing a system like this is significant.”

Epic’s Community Connect program allows smaller hospitals to implement Epic through partnerships with larger local hospital systems. It lowers the cost of EHR implementation and increases the ease for providers and patients to connect across the entire Epic network. Epic is already being used in the hospital’s emergency department through an agreement with Overlake, and is used by the larger hospital systems, not just in Washington, but nationally, making patient records portable and easy-to-access.

The Epic implementation is more than halfway complete. SVH staff is wrapping up training in advance of the planned September launch.

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Snoqualmie Valley Health is a publicly-owned hospital district serving East King County, as far east as Snoqualmie Pass. The hospital is a Level V Trauma Center and designated Level III Stroke Care and Level II Cardiac Care. The organization operates a 24/7 emergency room at the hospital, two primary care clinics, a full-time in-house laboratory and diagnostic imaging services, and outpatient Snoqualmie Valley Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation. Urgent Care rounds out the offerings that include pediatrics, endoscopy, behavioral health and cardiology specialties.

For more information, visit snoqualmiehospital.org.