

CASE STUDY

ADVOCATE HEALTH CARE FINDS TRUSTED ADVISOR TO HELP ACHIEVE ONCOLOGY GOALS

Impact Advisors helps Advocate identify and implement new oncology software package to boost oncologists' capabilities and patient safety.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE:

Recognized as one of the nation's top 10 health systems and the largest integrated health system in Illinois, Advocate Health Care (Advocate) provides a full spectrum of care, from preventive to palliative. The system includes more than 250 sites, including 10 acute-care hospitals and two integrated children's hospitals; as well as 1,500 affiliated physician groups, home health services and outpatient centers.

Advocate's primary mission is delivering superior patient care with a holistic approach. To support that mission, the system is continually improving its technology infrastructure, application platforms and capabilities as it grows and serves more patients. Between 2001 and 2007, Advocate implemented a new core Electronic Medical Records (EMR) solution. Since then, Advocate has steadily tailored and refined solutions for specific departments across the system.

As one example, the Advocate system diagnoses and treats more cancer cases than any other hospital or health system in Illinois. High treatment volume is important because health research demonstrates a positive relationship between the number of procedures performed and quality outcomes. To continue in an oncology leadership role, Advocate sought to improve their already excellent clinical quality outcomes and patient safety through the use of IT. Additionally, Advocate desired to continue to attract and retain top oncologists.



Location: Downers Grove, IL
Employees: 30,000+ Associates

Business Challenge:

- Attract and retain oncologists with better oncology system capabilities
- Utilize oncology system to ensure patient safety and quality care delivery
- Support rapid growth
- Accomplish business objectives with lean IT team

Solution:

Impact Advisors' Clinical Optimization and Implementation services

Business Results:

- Identified and deployed new oncology package on schedule and within budget
- Engaged medical oncology physician groups to develop enterprise-wide chemotherapy order set library
- Brought together IT and clinical teams in close collaboration to align solution with overall business objectives
- Minimized impact on IT team
- Enhanced workflows

Before the project, many pharmacies, infusion centers, and Inpatient units were utilizing paper-based processes to support chemotherapy order entry, verification and administration. Paper-driven workflow created numerous challenges in the form of duplicate or incomplete orders, lost faxes and ambiguous handwritten information. Physicians were unhappy with the resulting delay in patient care as well as the increased daily phone call requests for clarifying orders. Ultimately, maintaining high levels of patient safety was at risk due to

the underlying inefficiencies of paper-driven workflow.

Like in most healthcare delivery organizations, Advocate's lean IT team was stretched thin due to multiple organizational system priorities and deadlines. At the same time, IT needed vital input from Advocate's oncology experts in order to identify and implement a better medical oncology solution. There were not enough internal resources available to undertake a comprehensive needs assessment, requirements definition and solution evaluation project.

SOLUTION:

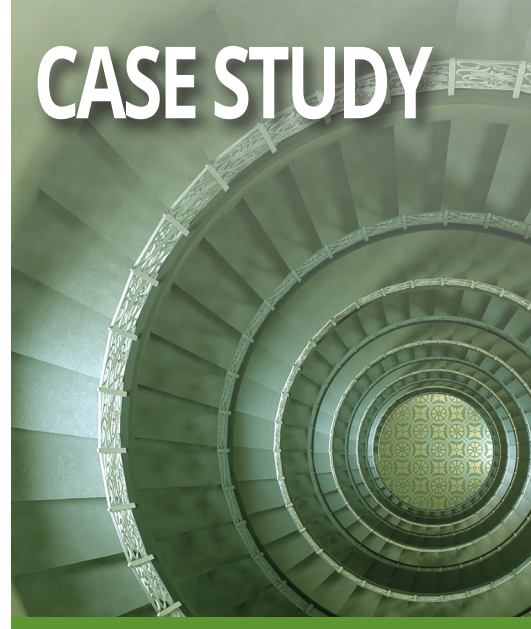
"Impact Advisors has been a trusted advisor to Advocate for many years," says Bruce Smith, Senior Vice President for Information Systems and Chief Information Officer. "They bring high-quality people and products to the table and deliver exceptional value. We invited them into this conversation."

Impact Advisors proposed a combined implementation and clinical optimization engagement that would help Advocate implement the best oncology solution for its needs without placing additional burden on their IT team. The Impact team convened a multidisciplinary team of clinical and IT leaders to facilitate the

process. The engagement launched by conducting several sessions with the healthcare system's oncologists to identify the oncology department's needs, requirements and ideal outcomes.

Impact evaluated current products and trends in the market to narrow down Advocate's best options. Impact developed criteria including requirements definition, reference workflows, staffing models and proposed system configurations for the potential solutions. After considering the final candidates, the combined team chose its preferred package due to its integration capacities with the existing core medical system platform; and it

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Bruce Smith

Senior Vice President
for Information Systems and
Chief Information Officer

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Advocate Health Care

BUSINESS RESULTS:

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A structured, lean approach to implementation, combined with strong project management delivered the desired outcomes on time and within Advocate's resource scope. Impact's strong IT background includes working knowledge of, and certification in, Advocate's core medical platform, which accelerated testing and deployment.

NEXT STEPS:

Advocate and Impact continued to optimize the oncology package and enhance clinical workflows post-implementation. Impact Advisors is dedicated to supporting Advocate's efforts to adapt its application portfolio roadmap as new vendor solutions emerge.

"We're building on a clinical and IT foundation that will support our growth as we move forward with our overall strategic objectives as healthcare providers," says Smith. "With Impact, we're able to identify and deploy the appropriate solutions and processes with the flexibility and scalability we'll need in the future."

For more information about Impact Advisors, visit www.impact-advisors.com.

could be optimized to deliver the critical capabilities required by the oncology group. Advocate selected Cerner's PowerChart Oncology to meet its organizational and patients' needs.

With a collaborative combination of clinical and IT expertise, Impact Advisors led physician work groups through the development of an enterprise-wide chemotherapy order set library. This library became the organization's starter set of chemotherapy protocols for use within the PowerChart Oncology solution. The use of this shared and standardized library supported Advocate's goals of decreasing unnecessary orders and increasing patient quality outcomes.

Independent oncologists can still utilize their own practice-based EMRs to drive the workflow within their offices. However, for patients referred to the hospital campus, physicians are now able to place electronic orders based upon evidence-based chemotherapy templates via a Physician Portal in the Advocate EHR. Hospital-based nurses and pharmacists no longer rely on paper orders to drive their workflow. Physicians, nurses and pharmacists now have a centralized view within the Advocate EHR for viewing all pertinent information related to a patient's chemotherapy treatment plan.

