



HELP WANTED:

IT Staffing Challenges During a Major EHR Initiative

Bozeman Health is a 133-bed health system and the largest private employer in Gallatin County, Montana. The cost of living in the remote region was skyrocketing, making it harder to recruit and retain the quality IT talent needed to oversee the planned move to a new instance of Epic and staff the Epic Help Desk.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
ON EHR IMPLEMENTATION &
SUPPORT:

visit www.impact-advisors.com
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An Epic Move

Bozeman Health, a community-owned, non-profit health system serving southwestern Montana, is comprised of several specialty treatment centers, a network of physician and urgent care clinics, outpatient treatment facilities, retirement and assisted living facilities – all staffed by hundreds of doctors, nurses, medical assistants, technologists, specialists, experts of many varieties and dedicated professionals.

Seeking More Flexibility & Control

After six years of using a shared instance of Epic extended through a Community Connect partnership with a large health system, Bozeman Health decided it was time to embark on a new, independent journey that would give them more ownership, control, and freedom over their enterprise EHR.

Rather than implementing a copy of the Epic instance they had been using, Bozeman decided to start fresh, with Epic's Foundation model. The intent behind this strategic move was to deliver an EHR that was specifically configured to best meet the health system's unique, long-term strategic goals. This model would also give them more control over upgrades and ensure ease of maintenance in the future.

Building the Case for Migration

Before moving forward, Bozeman needed help understanding the cost of migrating to its own Epic instance, including the number of resources and overall budget required to implement. In addition, Bozeman leadership was interested in investigating the implications of hosting another organization on their instance of Epic.

Impact Advisors led Bozeman's leadership team through the development of detailed cost models for each approach, including the associated scope of applications, timelines, resource requirements, and other strategic considerations. We also assisted with building a business case including the value to be attained through migration. Ultimately, Bozeman leadership decided to hold off on pursuing affiliate relationships until their own implementation was complete.

Implementing the New While Supporting the Old

Orchestrating the migration off of a shared instance of Epic onto a new Foundation installation required cooperation among Bozeman Health, their current Community Connect host, and Epic. It also required skilled IT personnel—a particularly scarce resource in this health system’s remote location and a challenge exacerbated by a skyrocketing cost of living in the region. The planned, primarily virtual, EHR implementation would help, but the concurrence of other major Bozeman Health IT initiatives added another layer of difficulty.

Experienced Leadership & Skilled Analyst Support

As Bozeman’s implementation partner, Impact Advisors supported the program by leading the overall planning, budgeting, and implementation of the new instance of Epic. We staffed multiple leadership roles (Program Director, Technical Project Manager, Clinical Project Manager, etc.) and many analyst roles throughout the EHR implementation, working together and mentoring “two-in-a-box” with as many Bozeman leaders as possible to ensure stakeholder ownership and to build competency among staff. Impact Advisors also provided numerous custom reporting and visualization tools to drive informed project management decisions.

During the implementation, Bozeman IT analysts were being pulled from implementation activities to answer “how to” questions and provide support for legacy systems. Impact Advisors’ experienced Epic managed services team created the increased capacity and ensured a single point-of-contact for all Epic calls as well as requests for help with in-scope third-party applications. In addition to freeing up Bozeman’s IT team to concentrate on the larger EHR initiative, the managed services team provided:

- Accurate and timely issue resolution resulting in a more positive customer experience;
- A structured, disciplined and flexible approach for process changes to address staffing up and down based on need; and
- Reduction of demand on application analyst escalation resulting in cost benefits and greater job satisfaction.

Our Client Impact

On-time, On-Budget Epic Implementation

A new instance of the Epic EHR was rolled out on time and on budget within a span of 13 months.

Key Value Delivered:

- Created total cost of ownership and budget
- Staffed leadership “two-in-a-box” and analyst roles as needed
- Converted data from legacy Epic system
- Managed Epic-led training
- Managed super user/at the elbow support
- Developed Community Connect model
- Recommended improvements for IT Help Desk ticketing support and training, Command Center, and phone bank and triage team

Legacy Epic Help Desk

Expert resources answered Epic how-to questions for the legacy Epic application across the health system.

Key Value Delivered:

- Increased first-call resolution
- Reduced backlog of over 3,000 data integrity issues, handling 1,000 tickets in the first two weeks
- Identified training needs and developed tip sheets
- Created ambulatory and inpatient step-by-step workflows to stem potential missteps from the patients’ perspective
- Contributed insight for ticket system changes to better support reporting and analysis

“We view Impact Advisors as a trusted partner, not a service provider. This really is a partnership in every sense of the word. We have a close and genuinely collaborative working relationship with the Impact team. They are the first people we usually reach out to with questions.” - Kristin M. Seubold, System Director, Application Services & PMO