



Client Success Story

How a Pediatric-Specialty EHR Can Be a Game-Changer for Independent Pediatric Practices

Located in Rainbow City, Alabama, Etowah Pediatrics is a thriving pediatric practice dedicated to providing exceptional care for its young patients. Understanding the unique challenges facing independent pediatric practices, Etowah Pediatrics made a strategic decision to invest in Office Practicum (OP), a pediatric-specialty EHR solution that helps them manage the clinical, operational, and financial aspects of their practice. This switch has ignited a transformation, allowing them to streamline workflows, elevate patient care, and retain their autonomy.

Unlocking the Potential of a Pediatric-Specific EHR

In 2011, Dr. Ben Hester, owner of Etowah Pediatrics, and his practice administrator, Shelly Hester, prioritized finding a pediatric-specific EHR to help with their practice workflows. Unhappy with the adult-focused features of many “one-size-fits-all” EHRs, they sought a solution tailored to the unique needs of children. Their search led them to OP, an EHR designed exclusively for pediatric practices.

“After hearing about the frustrations pediatricians faced with general-purpose EMRs, it became obvious we needed a solution specifically designed for our field,” explained Dr. Hester.

The practice looked at several options but ultimately selected OP because of its focus on pediatric functionality like specialty growth charts, vaccine management, recall reports, and pediatric templates. “It was pediatric-friendly, and it had features that others didn’t have,” said Shelly. “Having an EHR centered around pediatric workflows and our operational needs has been instrumental to Etowah Pediatrics’ success over the past decade.”



Challenge

Etowah Pediatrics needed an EHR that could manage their pediatric workflows efficiently without compromising their commitment to exceptional patient care.



Solution

To address the unique challenges of pediatrics, Etowah Pediatrics partnered with OP, a pediatric-specialty EHR that supports pediatric workflows and pediatric-specific everyday clinical, financial and operational needs



Results

With OP, the practice has gained clinical and operational efficiencies, fueling sustainable growth while maintaining a patient-centered focus

The Limitations of a “One-Size-Fits-All” EHR

Don't risk losing your independence. OP offers the tools you need to manage and grow your pediatric practice, making it easy to maintain the autonomy you value. Relax. We've got this.

- 200+ pre-loaded and fully customizable pediatric-specific sick visit templates
- Integrated AAP Bright Futures™ templates and surveys
- Pediatric growth charts, including special charts for preemies and Down Syndrome
- Abnormal vitals are flagged based on the Harriet Lane guidelines
- Automated vaccine management and inventory
- ACIP immunization forecasting and recalls
- Alerts for overdue vaccines
- Customizable Care Plans and diagnosis recalls
- Teen privacy settings
- Automated school, camp, and athletic participation forms
- Financial, social, and genetic families are defined individually to support unique family structures
- Family-friendly billing statements for individual patients or the entire family

Efficiency and Improved Care

OPs templates allow providers to document visits thoroughly while spending minimal time writing notes from scratch. The pediatric-focused well visit templates are especially transformative because they streamline visits and act as a comprehensive checklist, ensuring crucial care is never missed. Etowah Pediatrics has experienced significant gains in efficiency since adopting OP, allowing them to see more patients while maintaining a high level of care. “The templates that we've got in OP make the visits go really quickly,” says Dr. Hester. “I've used them as ways to remind me of all the things I need to cover at the well visits, and I do that with the sick visits too.”

Features like integrated vaccine management have reduced vaccine errors and ensure patients are up-to-date with their vaccines. Care coordination tools that support their Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) allow them to close referral loops and stay on top of labs. And, because the system is so intuitive and easy to use, the staff is able to stay on schedule, reducing wait times for their patients. Triple-booking efficiency is another feature the practice finds extremely helpful. It lets the front desk staff add extra patients to schedules during busy times of the year, ensuring their patients get the care they need while keeping them out of the urgent care.

“Partnering with OP has been a transformative experience.”

- Shelly Hester, Practice Administrator

Supporting Pediatric Practice Independence

Etowah Pediatrics firmly believes that staying independent is crucial to providing the personalized, family-centered care they're known for. “We have more control staying independent,” says Shelly. We can make decisions that benefit our patients and our practice without external pressures, and that allows us to maintain the quality of care we're committed to.” She appreciates that OP keeps a watch on pediatric trends and regulatory changes and then communicates the information through Support channels, the Help Center, Listservs, and OP's annual user conference. “With OP, I feel like I've got somebody in my corner who's going to get me the information I need when I need it.”

In addition to the pediatric-friendly clinical features in OP, Etowah Pediatrics values the operational and financial impacts on their business. Features like comprehensive reporting for quality metrics, demographic analysis and recall reports that can find patients by age, diagnosis, or vaccine status, and customized documentation tools, all maximize reimbursements. The system enhances workflow efficiencies so the practice can operate at optimal capacity while optimizing revenue. According to Dr. Hester, OP “makes my job easier” and supports the practice's profitability so they can remain independent.

Shelly agrees. "OP has been a transformative experience. It's streamlined our workflows with customizable templates and tools designed from the ground up for pediatrics. Our providers can document visits with remarkable efficiency and accuracy, allowing them to focus on what matters most – the health of our patients."

While change takes effort, the long-term benefits for staff and patients make it worthwhile. More than 13 years after they first bought OP, Etowah Pediatrics has experienced the clear benefits of a system designed specifically for pediatric practices. From optimized clinical workflows to community initiatives, pediatric-focused platforms empower practices to achieve their goals. This has enabled them to continue delivering high-quality care to the children in their community. "It is a calling to serve the children of our community," says Shelly, "and OP is a big part of that."

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OP Makes It Easy: Organizing a Summer Clinic for Back-to-School Success

Forget doctor-phobia! Etowah Pediatrics transforms its annual 4-year-old "kindergarten readiness clinic" into a bubbly "Under the Sea" extravaganza with the help of OP. Think shimmering decorations, tattoos, cotton candy, and some popcorn to ease those vaccine jitters. Dr. Hester's brilliant idea turned a potentially scary visit into a positive experience that kids actually look forward to.

Comprehensive checkups, immunizations, and developmental screenings to prepare children for school are all done over the course of two days using OP. To flawlessly manage more than 200+ kids who come in, they start by using the Demographic Analysis and Recall (DAR) reporting tool that's integrated in OP to pull a list of all four-year-old patients. Then, they contact families and schedule appointments specifically for the clinic. All that's left to do is decorate and make sure they have a big enough supply of cotton candy.

The streamlined process is a blast for patients and the staff! As kids "leapfrog" between stations, they collect treats at each one, like bubbles for a vision screening and tattoos for hearing tests. The clinic is so popular they schedule it months in advance. It's a lifesaver for parents, ensuring most kids are up-to-date on vaccinations well before the back-to-school rush.

