



Epic Decision Support

The Challenge

- **The need to better inform physicians and patients** about the potential benefits of participating in clinical trials.
- **Use BestPractice Advisories (BPAs)** to alert clinicians at the point of care that a patient meets criteria that might make her eligible to participate in a clinical trial.
- **Configure BestPractice Advisories** so that they do not disrupt end users workflow. However, allow clinicians to take action on the advisories that will be sent directly to the research coordinator inbox.
- **Functionality to select an education help** key to learn more about the trial before discussing it with their patients. Ability to print this education material and provide it to their patients.
- **Setup the BestPractice Advisories** to add an exclusion modifier to prevent future alerts when patient is not eligible or not interested in the clinical trial.

The Solution

- **Capitalize on the EMR's ability to store, manage, and distribute** volumes of information on thousands of patients by extending it to serve as a foundation for identifying and recruiting clinical research trial candidates.
- **Developed strategy for testing records and releasing BPAs into the production environment.**
- **Analyze inclusion and exclusion criteria** with project researchers, physicians, and information services (IS) representatives to define reasonable criteria to build into the clinical trials BPAs.
- **Analyze advisory impact** so that research recruitment BPAs were presented to the appropriate group of users. Guarded against alert fatigue for end users.
- **Built clinical trial specific BPAs.**

The Results

- **Implemented an effective point of care recruitment strategy** for when patients present at Penn Medicine.
- **Penn Medicine has seen a significant improvement** in the quantity and appropriateness of candidates associated with the clinical trials in this EMR-based project since December 2010.
- Kurt Barnhart, MD, professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Penn, says:

"This enhancement can remind physicians that certain patients may benefit from taking part in research trials, assist in streamlining the process of determining eligibility, provide information to potential subjects, and refer patients to a study coordinator. Together, these steps respond to the time constraints of the typical clinical visit and allow physicians to provide potential benefits to their patients as well as assist their research colleagues in the frequently difficult process of finding appropriate research subjects for clinical trials."