



Leveraging Technology Quick Tip

Technology such as electronic health records (EHR) and telehealth have been helpful in organizing COVID-19–related processes such as screening, resident monitoring, PPE inventory and use, testing, reporting infection prevention and control data, and staffing. An EHR can improve outcomes and reduce staff time.

Below are a few practical approaches that leaders can take to reduce the need for extra work by nursing and other staff.

ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD

Under the contract, your EHR vendor should provide support and collaboration during the pandemic with specific assistance related to COVID-19 policies and clinical practices.

Your vendor should be able to determine whether your software is up to date and optimized per your contract. Areas you may want to discuss with your vendor include but are not limited to:

Eliminate Duplication and Reduce Staff Workload

- Review current assessments and other practices for updates and eliminate any unnecessary steps. ◆
- Identify system automation updates including triggering of care plans, care plan updates based on charting and assessment, and other processes. ◆
- Take advantage of ways to pre-populate forms from other areas of the EHR. ◆
- Ensure system is in place to trigger all parts of the incident report process automatically from assessments and documentation. ◆
- Streamline Quality Assurance Performance Improvement (QAPI) process – electronic infection control logs, incident report trends, risk management trends, unit and shift trends. This process should automatically generate statistics and data for reporting to stakeholders and for saving nursing time. ▲

Achieve Effective Use of EHR for New Hire Orientation

- Identify whether the vendor has an orientation program for onboarding new employees. ◆

Potential Integration

Work with your vendor to enhance effective EHR use and reduce staff time.

- Determine whether EHR vendor has COVID-19–specific modules, assessment processes, and documentation systems. ◆
- Pharmacy
 - Electronic pharmacy integration: reduce medication interactions, errors, and time used to manage medication entry and/or medication pass. ◆
 - Promote deprescribing/dose reduction of medications when possible. ▲
- Labs/Radiology
 - Electronic lab and radiology integration: test results should flow directly into the resident’s chart within the EHR. ◆
- Nutrition Software
 - Electronic nutrition integration can allow dietary orders to flow between nurses and the nutrition team as well as trigger menus and meal cards. ◆
- Vital Sign Machines
 - Electronic integration with vital sign machines (for example – mobile devices to monitor vital signs) decreases the need for manual entry of vital signs. ◆

KEY

◆ = easy or relatively short amount of time to implement

■ = moderate time to implement

▲ = easy / moderate amount of time to implement

● = longer amount of time to implement