



# Helping A Leading ACO Keep Referrals In-Network

## CHALLENGE

### Out-of-network referrals that decreased revenues by an estimated \$200 million

An analysis showed members were sending 25 to 30 percent of all specialty referrals to out-of-network providers – a move that had wide-ranging repercussions including:

- Working with out-of-network providers was more expensive
- Downstream diagnostics, procedures, and admissions directed to more costly facilities
- Harder to coordinate patient care
- THN providers were losing an estimated \$200 million in specialty revenues annually

Executives knew that to turn the tide, they needed to track and manage referrals across the ACO. But to do so, they needed to solve an important technology challenge. THN providers were using almost 60 different types of EHRs.

Faxing information had become the default for issuing referrals and for sharing patient information. That made it hard to gather data, analyze patterns, and provide real-time guidance to reduce out-of-network leakage.

### A Solution to a Costly Problem

After evaluating several alternatives, THN adopted PH Exchange<sup>®</sup> as its referral management solution. Now members can share information easily and securely online. PH Exchange serves as a cloud-based software that functions as an EHR companion. PH Exchange bridges the technology divide and allows information to be imported and exported to a practice's EHR platform of choice.

Triad HealthCare Network (THN) is a physician-led accountable care organization with more than 900 practitioners in central North Carolina. Though the organization was thriving, its leadership team knew that it faced a significant challenge.



51,000 referrals  
have gone through  
PH Exchange in  
6 months



DESIGNED FOR  
PHYSICIAN ADOPTION



SUPPORTS HEALTH  
SYSTEM INTEGRATION



DELIVERS  
IMMEDIATE VALUE

## SOLUTION

### Using PH Exchange to retain and manage referrals across incompatible EHRs

If a referral is routed out-of-network, users are required to enter a reason code. That means THN administrators can track the number of exceptions, where they originate and why they happen in real time or on a look back basis.

“We know there are valid reasons for some referrals to be sent out of network – from patient preference to a lack of local capacity to meet urgent care demands,” says Dr. David Grapey, Specialty Medical Director at THN. “But many referrals were being sent out-of-network because of a simple lack of awareness. We now have a ready way to intervene before the referral is made.”

#### Identifying In-network Providers

With referrals managed online with PH Exchange, THN now can track and analyze referral activity and can establish important controls to keep more referrals in-network. At the time a referral is created, the originator selects a provider from a customized in-network drop down directory built into the application. It becomes simple to determine which specialists are part of THN and which aren't.

#### A powerful user interface makes it simple to:

- Create or accept a referral
- Share documents
- Send and receive HIPAA-compliant messages
- Organize and store information for easy retrieval
- Request follow-up details
- Generate reports, and more

## RESULTS

### Improvement of over \$2 million in keepage associated with adoption in just six months

#### Producing Breakthrough Results

THN realized an immediate boost in in-network referrals as soon as PH Exchange went live. And the results have been easy to document using built-in reporting tools. In the first six months of use, over 180 practices and 1,000 users have been on-boarded and over 51,000 referrals have gone through PH Exchange. Using the PH Exchange solution, THN has significantly decreased its out-of-network referrals and improved professional fees captured.

“We expect PH Exchange to pay for itself many times over,” says Elissa Langley, COO of THN. “It has helped us address an immediate need and realize a significant financial benefit, all while delivering better coordinated patient care.”

## ABOUT PROFICIENT HEALTH

Proficient Health is a healthcare information technology company specializing in solutions for the secure exchange of clinical information. Our affordable, online services and mobility solutions connect physicians, hospitals and other providers – helping them easily share and manage information, improve service and care delivery, drive down costs, speed reimbursement and get more out of their electronic medical records platform.



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