

Endocrinology + Primary Care Practices Care Coordination Projects

West Michigan Endocrine, PLC

A Plus Family Medicine

Improving Provider Communication Between EHR Platforms

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The Challenge

Communication between medical offices that don't use the same electronic health record (EHR) is a challenge that can lead to lower quality care for patients. We want to improve the ability for providers to communicate in a HIPAA compliant manner without having to make a phone call during a busy clinic day.

Root Causes

- 1. Not all medical offices use the same EHR
- 2. EHR systems often don't have a means for providers using one EHR to communicate with providers using a different EHR which can lead to suboptimal patient care and a less efficient practice model

Importance

Patients are best cared for when providers can communicate. Provider satisfaction increases when providers can easily communicate about patient concerns.

Goals

We worked to get an EPIC login for one provider in the A Plus Family Medicine Office. This login is cost-free to obtain. This login would give providers who use EPIC the ability to reach out to A Plus family medicine providers about patient concerns.

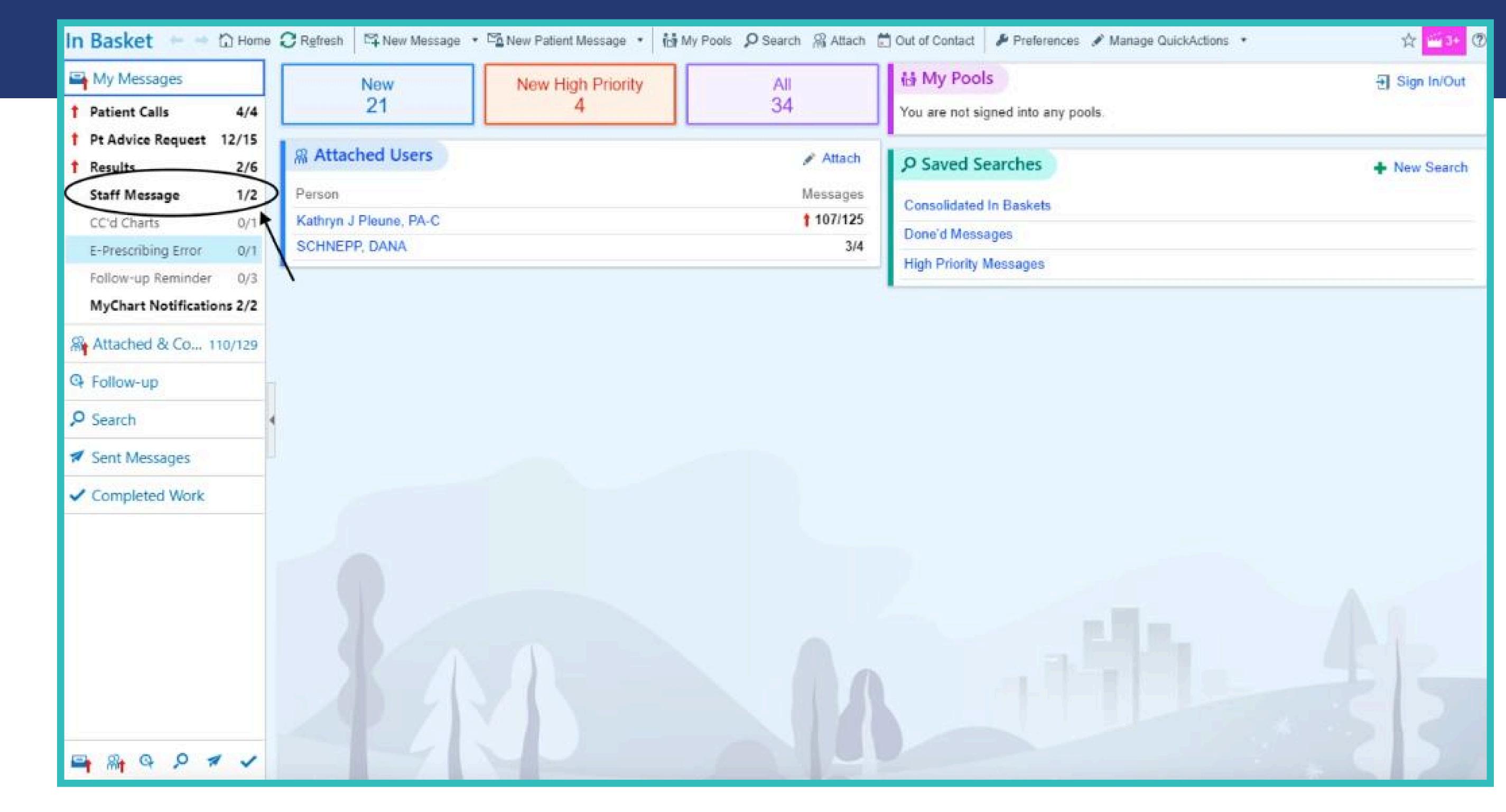


Figure 1. An example of what interoffice communications would look like when sent in a HIPAA compliant manner.

Current State

The primary care practice has worked to obtain a login for EPIC so that this office could receive online, EHR based, HIPAA compliant communication about their patients.

West Michigan Endocrine, PLC and A Plus Family Medicine don't have many patients in common so over the last several months we have not had the opportunity to use this new communication strategy.

Barriers

- Getting the logins to EPIC is not as easy as initially thought
- I believe if the physician organization offered an EPIC platform, many participating practices would choose to use EPIC which would ease communication
- Any advocacy from the physician organization or from MCT2D to EPIC to ease communication among providers between different EHR platforms would be helpful

Results

I don't believe that A Plus Family Medicine was able to obtain an EPIC login due to administrative challenges.

Recommendations

Given that EPIC is the EHR used by the most providers in West Michigan, I do think that we should continue to work to make free EPIC access easy for those who do not have EPIC as their EHR so that this can be used for interoffice communication.