



Optimizing Moments: What our customers are saying



The advanced, flexible scheduling technology of Physician Scheduler® enables The Heart Center of Huntsville, Alabama, to manage complex cardiology scheduling demands and adapt to rapid practice expansion

When you ask Jan Reynolds, Chief Operating Officer at the Heart Center in Huntsville, Alabama, how her cardiology practice would handle physician scheduling without Physician Scheduler® software, the reply is swift and direct.

“It’d be impossible,” she states, simply.

Each day, Reynolds relies on Physician Scheduler to ensure accurate scheduling and appointment coverage for its 30 cardiologists and 12 nurse practitioners—all of whom rotate among The Heart Center’s four main practice locations throughout the Tennessee Valley.

“With so many moving parts related to scheduling for our cardiology practice—whether it’s assigning staffing to multiple daily tasks based on specific compatibilities or changing task shifts and assignments at numerous locations on the fly—I couldn’t imagine how we would manage without Physician Scheduler,” she says.

The flexibility to handle complex scheduling rules and accommodate practice expansion

Reynolds points to the software’s flexible, scalable scheduling engine as why Physician Scheduler can accommodate the most intricate cardiology scheduling rules and meet the highly complex scheduling demands of a rapidly growing, multi-site practice environment.

“We started using Physician Scheduler software in 1998, and since that time, we’ve tripled our number of practice physicians, added nurse practitioners, and introduced a multitude of new task shifts and assignments to serve our new satellite office locations,” Reynolds says. “The software has easily adapted to our growth. Its flexibility is the key. It can handle any number and type of new rules, and do it quickly, accurately, and reliably.”

Because Physician Scheduler can adapt to how each specialty group schedules and can incorporate an unlimited number of assignments linked to an infinite number of rules and subsets of rules, it allows users to optimize and gain maximum benefit of the software’s automation.

Reynolds cited several examples of how The Heart Center relies on Physician Scheduler to synchronize complicated cardiology scheduling requirements.

“It’s essential that I be able to set up certain tasks that can be linked with other tasks,” she says. “For instance, morning clinic assignments need to be linked to afternoon hospital assignments, and night call has to be linked with the next day off.

“In addition, as tasks are set up, each task has certain ‘same-day’ compatibilities to ensure that I don’t assign two conflicting tasks on the same day. I also can set up blocks between assignments on various days so that if a physician is on call one evening, he or she won’t be put on call again within a designated time period. I can also set limits to the number of times any assignment can be scheduled within certain time periods.”

Backed by its proven conflict-checking capabilities, Physician Scheduler delivers The Heart Center with the assurance and peace of mind that the right, qualified physician will always be on hand to provide the right type of cardiology care.

“The software supports the quality patient care because physicians are assigned only to the appropriate shifts for which they qualify,” Reynolds explains. “If I try to schedule a physician in a task for which he or she is not credentialed, the system will alert me to the issue.”

The capability to equalize call schedules and the reporting to prove it

By ensuring fair, equitable cardiology scheduling, physicians and nurses at The Heart Center know that their individual needs and schedule expectations will be addressed along with the requirements of the practice and patients.

While optimizing coverage at its multiple locations based on the unique skill sets of cardiologists, Physician Scheduler ensures an equitable rotation and balanced workload. Reports are available to demonstrate schedule fairness and to justify all staffing decisions.

“I run statistical reports in the software to show that assignments are balanced, whether it’s equalizing the night call, assignments to the cath lab or weekend call,” Reynolds says. “Monthly reports are generated to track all time, from clinic days to meeting days, per physician to ensure that schedules are fair to everyone.”

Solving the challenge of scheduling follow-up appointments a year in advance

Because Physician Scheduler adapts and configures to the way each specialty group schedules, The Heart Center leverages the software to address certain specialized requirements. An example is found in how the practice schedules patients’ return cardiology appointments.

“Scheduling follow-up appointments has always been a challenge because it’s difficult knowing an appropriate physician’s availability months into the future,” Reynolds says. “We only release our schedules one month in advance, and previously we were unable to schedule return appointments for patients until the schedules were released.

“About two years ago, we recognized that we could establish 12-month patterns within Physician Scheduler to assign each physician to a certain clinic each week or every other week. By doing this in the software, we’re able to accurately schedule patients’ follow-up appointments up to a year into the future.”

About The Heart Center

Founded in 1979, The Heart Center in Huntsville, Alabama, is one of the nation’s largest private cardiac and vascular facilities, with 30 board certified cardiovascular specialist and over 200 highly trained support staff.

In 2009, The Heart Center joined Huntsville Hospital, bringing together the region’s premier cardiac hospital with the largest cardiology practice in North Alabama.

The Heart Center’s primary, state-of-the-art facility encompasses more than 90,000 square feet, offers a full spectrum of patient focused, centrally managed cardiovascular care, and sets the benchmark with its diagnostic testing and in-house catheterization lab. The practice, with offices in Huntsville, Sheffield, Fayetteville and Decatur, offers comprehensive prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the heart and blood vessels throughout the Tennessee Valley.

For more information, visit www.theheartcenter.md.

About Physician Scheduler®

For more than 10 years, thousands of physicians across the country have relied on Physician Scheduler to automate the demanding, time-intensive task of creating an equitable schedule based on the complex rules of individual physician groups, while ensuring an equitable share of call and adequate coverage.

Physician Scheduler delivers:

- Rules-based automated scheduling according to each practice’s specifications
- Real-time decision-support tools to address last-minute changes
- Schedule access from anywhere over the Web
- Coverage optimization across multiple sites
- Complete enterprise-wide capability

Physician Scheduler is developed and marketed by Clairvia, which serves more than 1,200 healthcare organizations, medical facilities, nursing departments, and group practices with advanced software solutions for patient and staff management.

For more information on Physician Scheduler, visit www.physicianscheduler.com. For more information on the complete range of healthcare software solutions from Clairvia, go to www.clairvia.com.