Expanding Availability of Epic EHR Activity Data to Aid in the Understanding of Physician Wellness

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Problem

- Work-life integration is a key area of focus in the Elevate 2035 People Pillar.

- To design interventions that support this area of focus, the organization must be able to reliably track the time that physicians spend in the Epic Electronic Health Record (EHR).

- Availability of this data was limited, inflexible, and required manual refreshing when using Epic's Signal platform.

- Opportunities exist to use this data in both existing and new reporting and in turn enable targeted interventions.

- Access to this data can assist in receiving external recognition. For example, a component of the American Medical Association (AMA) Joy in Medicine Gold recognition requires the organization to measure time in the EHR and work outside of work.

Goal

- Build an EHR activity data mart in the Unified Data Platform (UDP) using Epic Clarity. The solution must be flexible and accessible for use in future projects that would benefit from tracking EHR activity.

- Create an ambulatory EHR Efficiency Tableau dashboard tracking the time providers spend in various activities in Epic, normalized by time they are templated using the new data mart.

- Align metric definitions in the dashboard with the AMA's Joy in Medicine Gold metric requirements.

Strategy

- **Understand Project Requirements:** The Clinical Data and Analytics (DSA) team met with Dr. Bree Andrews and Simone Maxey to understand the project's requirements and timeline.

- **Explore Existing Solutions:** The DSA team reviewed existing Epic documentation to understand the available data tables and their relationships, assessing current capabilities.

- **Identify Gaps:** By comparing project requirements with available Epic solutions, the team pinpointed gaps that needed to be addressed to meet the solution objectives.

- **Build the End Product:** The team developed the EHR data mart using SQL and subsequently created a Tableau dashboard tracking ambulatory EHR efficiency. Dashboard development was accelerated using existing Tableau dashboard starter templates developed by the DSA team.

Impact

- The ambulatory provider EHR Efficiency dashboard was released in July 2025.

- Outpatient templates for about 1,000 providers over 12 months were evaluated and EHR usage was evaluated in 5 key ways, representing about 240,000 hours worked by these providers to take exceptional care of patients.

- The new EHR data source was ready in time to submit a rebuttal to the AMA regarding the organization's Joy in Medicine rating.

- While this work was a small part of the larger Joy in Medicine submission, it is worth noting that UChicago Medicine received Gold recognition in September 2025.

- The flexible design of the underlying EHR activity data mart facilitated quick integration into existing reporting evaluating the Abridge documentation tool.
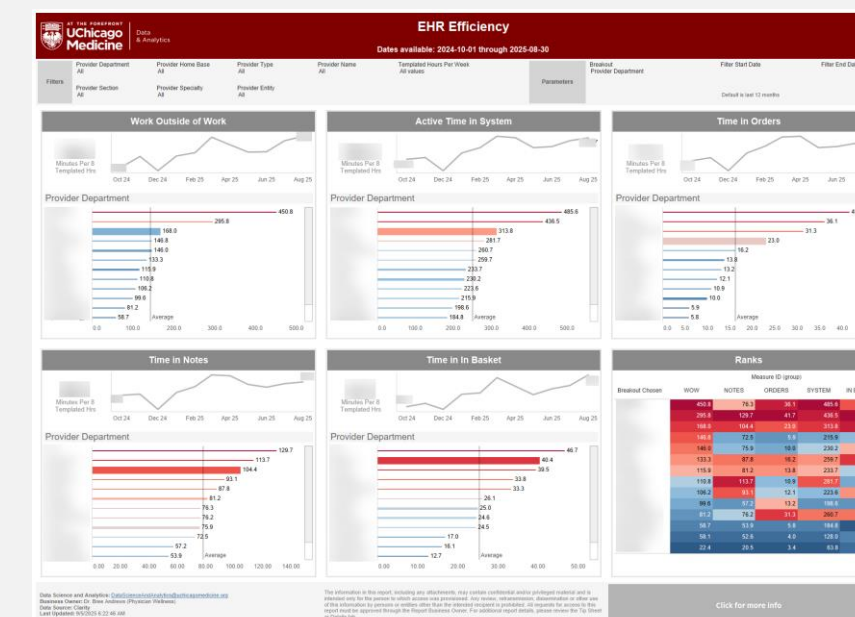

Figure 1: Tableau report displaying ambulatory provider EHR efficiency.

Figure 2: AMA Joy in Medicine Gold announcement for UChicago Medicine

Next Steps

- Design specific interventions to reduce the excess time spent in the EHR, identify redundancy, and use teams to off-load physician EHR tasks so that physicians can spend more time with patients, our learners and our colleagues.

- Continue to share this work throughout the organization with a goal of discovering other opportunities to use this data for positive interventions that will contribute to the Elevate 2035 People pillar.

- Create efficiency reporting for the inpatient and the emergency department settings. This will involve defining the method of normalizing the time data (like templated time was used in the ambulatory setting).

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