

The Secrets of Optimizing your EHR

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lev·er·age [lev-er-ij]

- Increased means of accomplishing a purpose
- The use of a small investment to gain a very high return
- To use a quality or advantage to obtain a desired result

Making your EHR run better = **leverage**

Yes. That's what EHR optimization is all about.

Creating leverage for your practice to be all it can be for your patients, your staff, and you!

It's not that hard. This eBook summarizes best practices for fine-tuning your EHR system.

Question:

Are your physicians or staff satisfied with your EHR?
Or are they frustrated and struggling?

Answer:

EHR optimization can help staff go from
"like" to "love" your EHR...
...And can eliminate root causes of frustration
and struggles with your EHR.

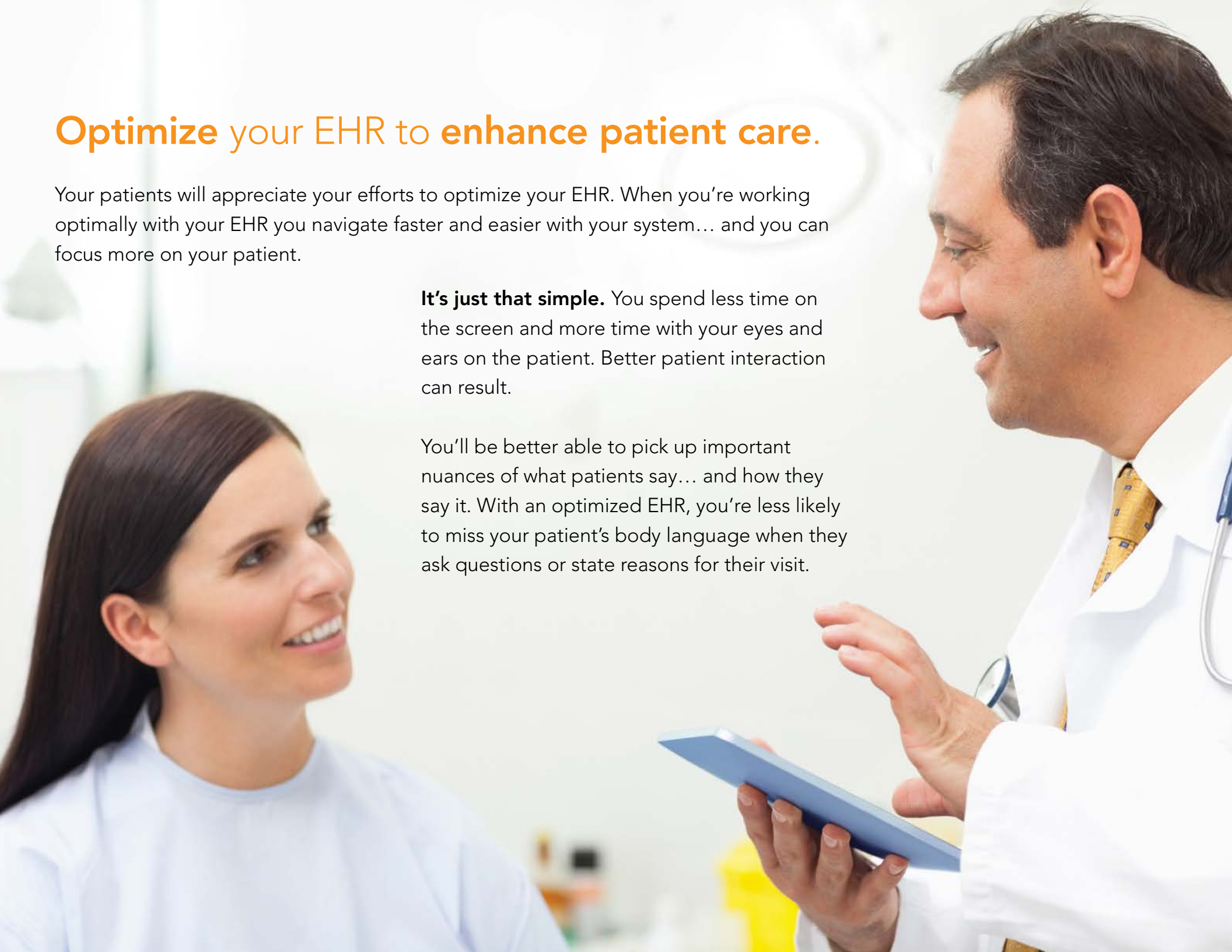
How should you begin your EHR
optimization process? **Read on.**

Optimize your EHR to enhance patient care.

Your patients will appreciate your efforts to optimize your EHR. When you're working optimally with your EHR you navigate faster and easier with your system... and you can focus more on your patient.

It's just that simple. You spend less time on the screen and more time with your eyes and ears on the patient. Better patient interaction can result.

You'll be better able to pick up important nuances of what patients say... and how they say it. With an optimized EHR, you're less likely to miss your patient's body language when they ask questions or state reasons for their visit.



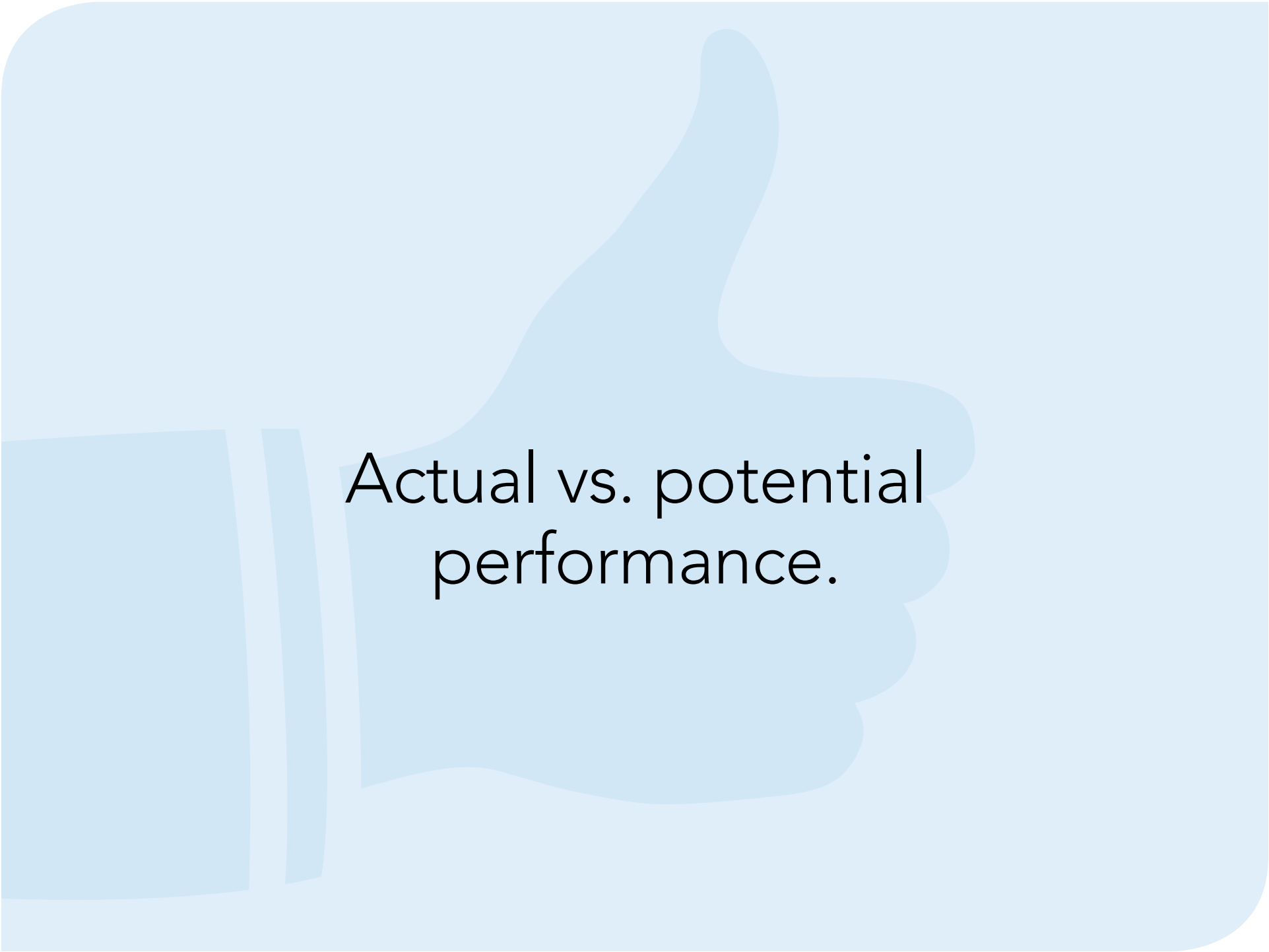


On your mark,
get set, STOP!

OK. With the important “why” question answered, let’s get on with “how.” **The very first step? Stop. Yes, stop... and look around.**

Look at every aspect of your practice. Every part of every workflow that involves using your EHR system.

- Know the workflow(s) of every person in your office that touches the EHR –
 - . Inputs
 - . Reviews and checks
 - . Documentation
 - . Reports
 - . Data sharing (with patients and/or HIEs)
- . Claims submission process
- . Data back-up
- . Data analysis
- . Practice performance measurement
- . Integration with your practice management [PM] software (full? partial? workflow implications?)
- . Performance and role of 3rd party interfaces in your EHR and PM system(s)
- How much of your administrative workflow (PM system) integrates with your EHR?
- Who does what tasks related to your system(s)?
- How can (or should) each staff member’s work style and/or preferences be incorporated or adjusted for the most effective use of your EHR?



Actual vs. potential
performance.

In other words: Conduct a workflow analysis – a “GAP Analysis.”


It's the best way to identify “gaps” between the optimal use of your software resources and your current workflows and system usage patterns.

Include everyone.

Understand every step and stage of all staff workflows inside your office – physicians, nursing staff, medical assistants, clinicians, etc., as those workflows relate to patient flow and back-end medical coding and billing.


- It's the only way to truly uncover how to optimize your EHR.
- It's the only way to leverage the performance already built into your EHR.
- And it's the only way you can communicate your optimization needs back to your EHR vendor.





What does my EHR
vendor have to do with
optimizing my EHR?

Everything.

A man in a light blue shirt is shaking hands with a woman in a light grey button-down shirt. The woman is smiling and holding a black folder. They are standing in front of a window with white curtains. The background is bright and out of focus.

Because they know your system better than you do. So after they know *your* specific objectives for leveraging your EHR, they can get you there much faster (than on your own).

You may not need much help. Or, you may need a lot. It doesn't matter. Just be sure to involve your EHR vendor because they are expert at getting the most from their own system.

Take full advantage of your software features in the most efficient way possible.

Partner with your EHR vendor.



What's Next?
After the GAP Analysis?

Every EHR optimization process will be unique to every practice or facility.

It will depend on your clinical and administrative workflows, patient populations, culture of your practice, and the goals and objectives you have for your practice.

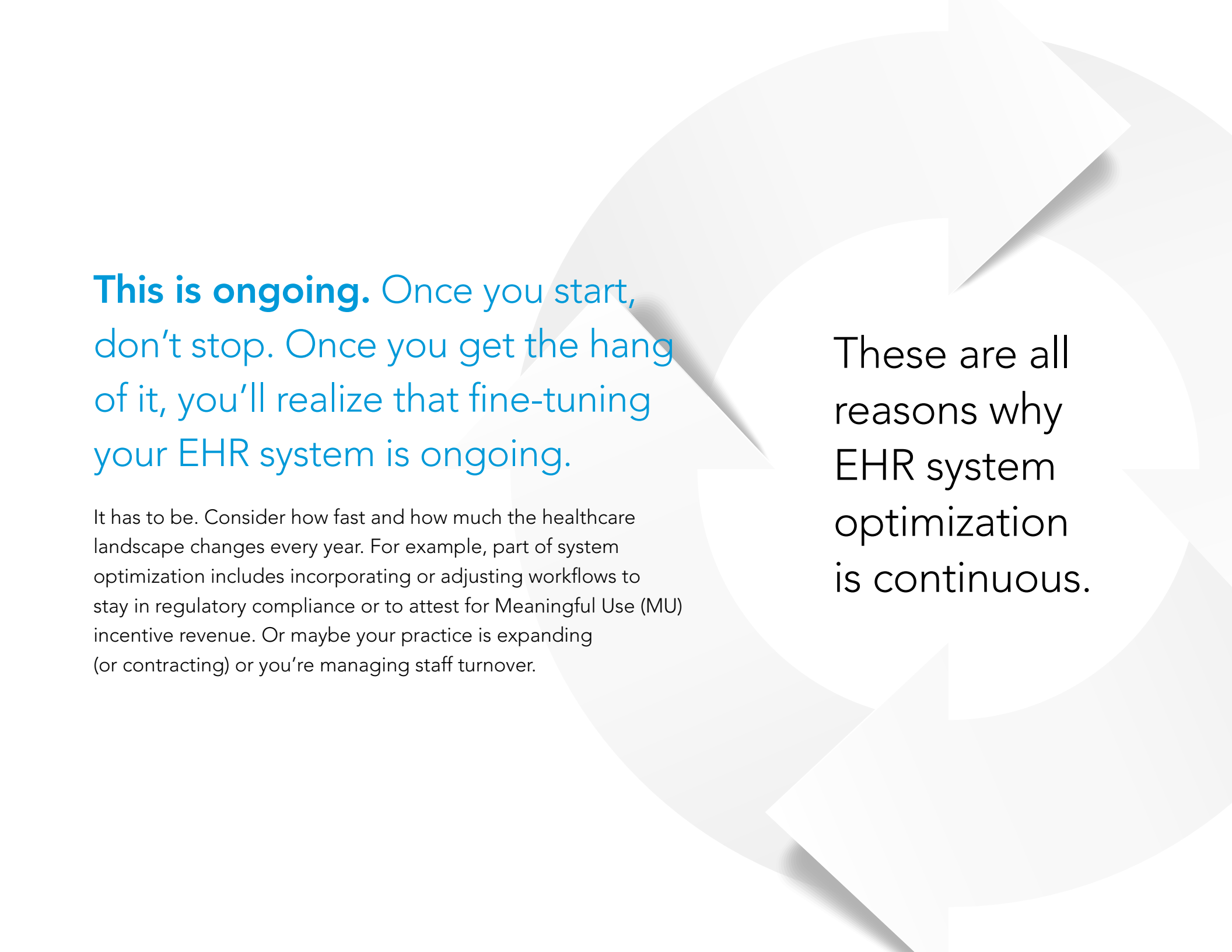
So what's next, after the GAP analysis? Step-by-step alterations and improvements in how you and your staff input, share, report, and back up your clinical and administrative data using your EHR system.

Are you or your staff using “work-arounds” instead of solving root cause work flow issues?





EHR Optimization:
Not a one-time deal!



This is ongoing. Once you start, don't stop. Once you get the hang of it, you'll realize that fine-tuning your EHR system is ongoing.

It has to be. Consider how fast and how much the healthcare landscape changes every year. For example, part of system optimization includes incorporating or adjusting workflows to stay in regulatory compliance or to attest for Meaningful Use (MU) incentive revenue. Or maybe your practice is expanding (or contracting) or you're managing staff turnover.

These are all reasons why EHR system optimization is continuous.



It's not just about
"how to fill out the screen."

It's about walking your staff members (providers, clinical support staff, administrative staff) through the tasks they perform each day with a focus on how to minimize the number of touches needed to accomplish each task. Or how to accomplish new tasks, or alter existing ones, using features of your EHR system that no one on your staff was aware of.

You might ask: "Can I accomplish this training within normal business hours?" The answer is: "Not very well."

Schedule some of this training in addition to your normal office hours. Or don't schedule patients for a few blocks of time each month – *especially in the beginning*. The overtime costs, or the loss in productivity, will help increase your long-term return on investment (ROI) from your technology system.



3

Personalize and
recognize differences.



One size does not fit all. Just like there's 10 different ways to accomplish the same task using word processing software, so, too, does your EHR offer many different ways to accomplish the same task.

Particularly with physicians, don't try to force them to use the EHR all the same way. Physicians have different preferences and clinical work styles that a robust EHR can accommodate.

Honor physician preferences as you work through EHR optimization cycles; you can do both.

“Superusers” in your practice can help others use the system better.

4

Anticipate stress
and extra effort.

EHR vendors develop system functionalities that can make various data capture and sharing tasks easier, but to say that EHR optimization “is easy” isn’t accurate.

Worth it? Yes. Easy? Not the right word, although the process of continuous optimization *does* get easier with time and experience.

Do it again. And again. And again.

EHR optimization is an iterative process. The myriad functions and features of your system will bring new efficiencies to your practice. But it’s not realistic to expect those improvements to happen all at once, during the first few months of your EHR optimization process.

If you and your staff adopt a “long-haul” mindset, EHR optimization can become second nature.

It’s about realizing the fullest potential of your software.



5

One-on-one checkups
every six months.



Many practices make it a point to schedule one-on-one EHR optimization sessions with each staff member twice a year or even four times a year, in addition to ongoing optimization activity.

This extra one-on-one face time gives you a chance to really ferret out concerns or constraints that individual staff members may have that might not come to light in day-to-day activities and workflows.

Set goal dates for using more advanced EHR features.



While you're at it...
"optimize your patients"
with patient portal.

More and more practices are ramping up patient portal technology as part of their EHR optimization process. Makes sense. Particularly if you're pursuing MU incentive revenue.

Having digital, two-way communication with your patient population is a natural extension of optimizing your EHR. And patients like the new options and convenience of using a patient portal to connect with your practice.

The technology is a productivity booster for both the patient and your practice.

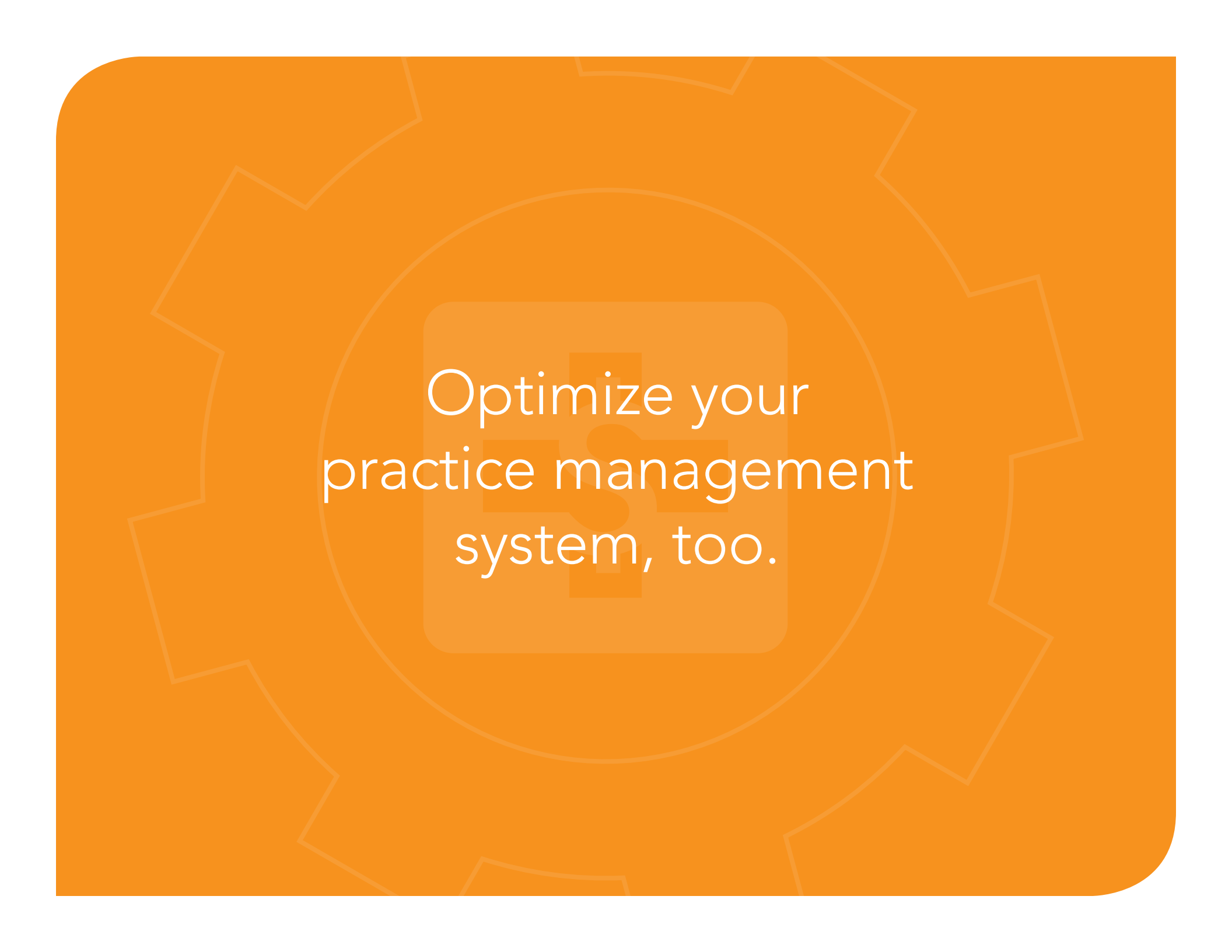
The screenshot shows the NextGen Patient Portal interface within a Windows Internet Explorer browser window. The browser's address bar displays the URL: <http://184.172.0.172/NextMD/Message/AccountSummaryNew.aspx>. The page title is "NextGen Patient Portal - Your Medical Home on the Web".

The main content area is titled "NEXTGEN Patient Portal" and features a navigation menu with "Home", "Inbox", "Sent Items", and "My Account". The user is logged in as "Brian Sauers" and can click on "Logout".

The interface is divided into several sections:

- Home:** Contains a "Welcome to NextMD" message, a notice about H1N1 shots, and contact information for Mr. Robert Smith (795 Horsham Road, Horsham, PA 19044; 215-657-7010; rsmith@nextgen.com).
- Appointment Reminders (1 Items):** Shows a reminder for 12/3/2012 at 8:00 AM with Joseph Barclay for Brian Sauers.
- Alerts (5 Items):** Lists several alerts, including missed recall plan letters and yearly physical reminders.

A sidebar on the left provides quick access to various features: My Practices, My Appointments, My Medical Record, Mail (Inbox, Sent Items), Tasks (Compose Message, Pay Statements, Renew Medication, Request Appointment, Request Health Record, Research Center), and My Account (Account Settings, My Information, Manage User Grants, Manage Practices).

The background is a solid orange color with a large, faint gear graphic centered on it. Inside the gear, there is a square containing a plus sign. The text is centered over this square.

Optimize your
practice management
system, too.

When you optimize your practice management (PM) system, you use its reporting capabilities to gain insight into the overall performance of your practice. You identify opportunities to increase revenue.

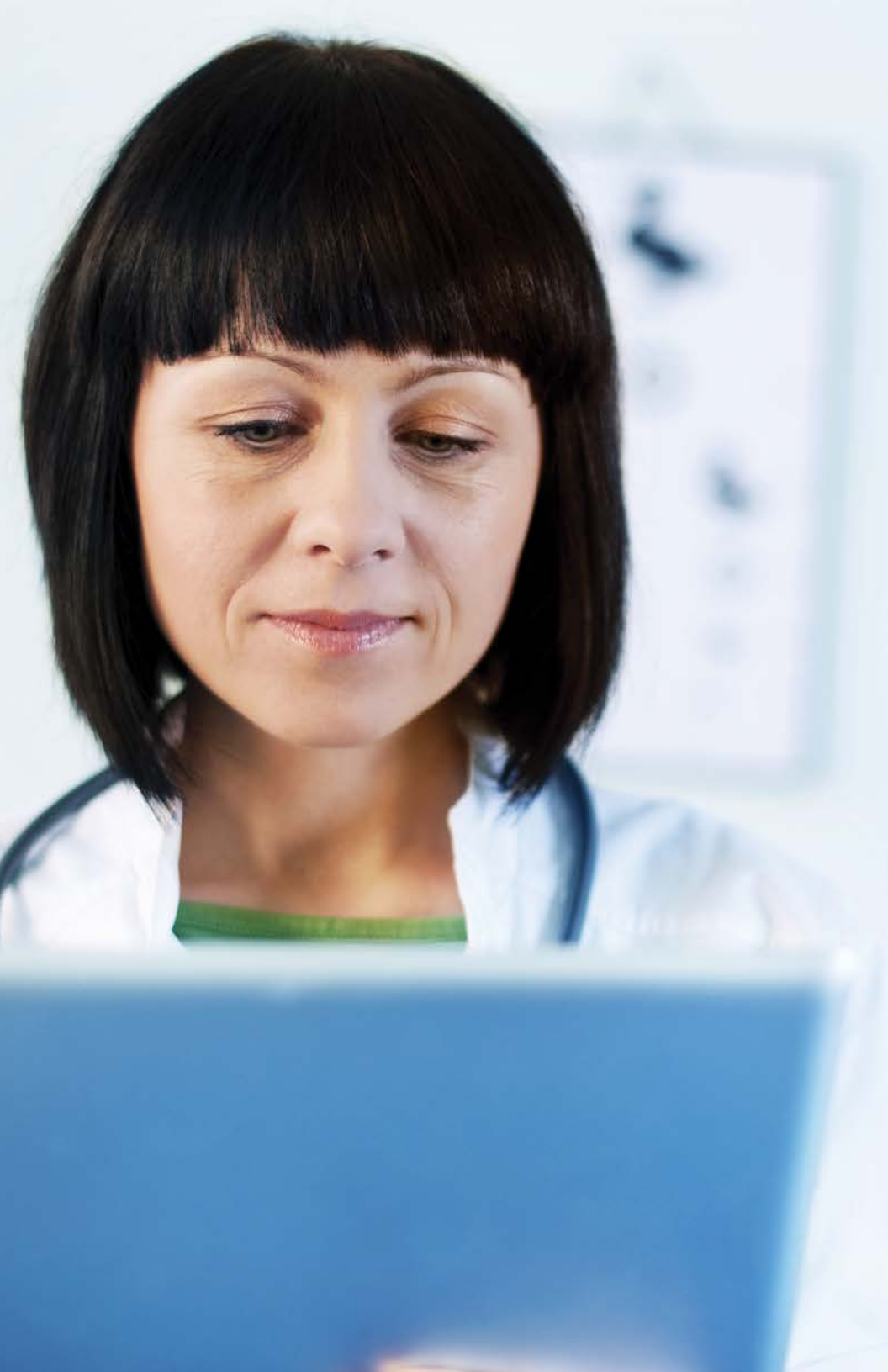
Practices that use an integrated EHR and PM platform can leverage similar reporting functionalities in their EHR to gauge the effectiveness of clinical protocols and even measure the productivity of physicians.

You scale the reporting functions on your EHR and PM system to suit your clinical and administrative performance objectives.

An EHR and PM system that's not fully integrated hinders optimum, overall system performance.

The background is a solid blue color with rounded corners. In the center, there is a faint, semi-transparent watermark consisting of a gear shape with a hand inside it, and the letters 'NEM' overlaid on it. The text is white and centered.

Use the latest software releases
from your EHR vendor.



When you use the most current version(s) of software offered by your EHR vendor you automatically position your practice for optimum use of your software.

The newest software versions fix previously identified problems.

The new features vendors develop for their latest releases can help your practice get more from your EHR. The primary driver for new versions of software is to provide users with the most streamlined workflows and ease-of-use as possible.

Achieve the highest possible productivity while increasing patient care quality.



Ten Reasons to choose
NextGen Healthcare
EHR solutions.

① Our entire product suite, including EHR and PM, is integrated for a complete solution

③ Delivers a strong, proven ROI via better cash flow, streamlined reimbursements, and more

②

④ Provides the foundation you need to meet quality goals such as MU, PCMH, ACO, and more

NextGen®
Ambulatory EHR
Version 5.8.2
is 2014 Edition
Compliant*

⑤ Developed with the patient in mind to help you deliver quality care


⑥ comes with a proven optimization methodology designed to fit your specific needs

⑦ countless physicians have quickly adopted and embraced our user-friendly design

⑧ comes with 24/7 support via a 100% U.S.-based support team

⑨ scalable to any practice size, specialty, or role—and can be personalized to each user

⑩ content and functionality developed by physicians for physicians



**NextGen Healthcare is a strategic partner,
not just a vendor.** We're ready to partner
with you to help you meet your evolving goals,
including getting the best and most from your
NextGen Healthcare solutions.

NEXTGEN[®]

HEALTHCARE

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Take the next step.

Contact us at 855-510-6398.

Or visit EHResults@NextGen.com