

# Buying an Occupational Health EHR: The 5 Most Important Criteria to Consider

As an Occ Med provider, you require software to handle both the complexities of clinical documentation and the ability to manage employer protocols, billing and reporting. Your software should be able to chart encounters quickly, and automatically code the visits. An important link in the electronic health care community, you also need to provide both patients and employers access to data, and share data electronically with referral providers. An electronic health record (EHR) used in Occ Med clinics should therefore meet these five most important criteria:

## 1 A certified EHR that meets national standards

As an Occ Med provider, even though you are not eligible for incentive payments under ARRA, having a certified EMR is no less important. As the rest of the US health care community moves to EHRs, using a certified EHR ensures data compatibility with personal health records, payors, referral providers and hospitals. Each of these parties will make increased demands on you for access to clinical records. Be one of the Occ Med providers who prospers: enable patients and client employers to look to you for care, not to your competitors.

COMMUNITY	EXPECTATION
Employers	<b>An EHR to reduce costs.</b> Employers won't care whether you are eligible for ARRA payments. As they become informed of the savings and safety improvements associated with EHRs, they will expect you to be using a certified system. <i>And when your competitors install their certified EHR, you can be sure they will market that fact to your clients.</i>
Patients	<b>Access to health records.</b> With the increasing use of personal health records (PHRs), patients will soon be asking for access to their clinical data. Sharing data with them requires a certified EHR that meets national standards for "interoperability". You will need both to provide online access via a patient portal, and to give them their records on a thumb drive. And PDF copies won't make the grade.
Referral Providers	<b>Electronically share clinical data.</b> You commonly refer patients to primary care physicians (PCPs) or specialists. While your referral documentation has probably satisfied these providers so far, in the future they will expect to receive data from you electronically – and send data back electronically. In the not-distant future, PCPs and specialists won't be staffed for manual data entry.
Hospitals	<b>If your clinics are owned by a Health System,</b> the Health System will want you to report statistics from your software that will help meet "meaningful use" criteria. The statistics required for meaningful use reporting are not restricted to Medicare or Medicaid patients -- all patients can be counted. A certified EHR will enable you to report the required statistics with a few simple clicks, and easily enable you to support your Health System's reimbursement application.  A certified EHR will also be able to send and receive continuity of care data to and from your Health System's Ambulatory EHR.

Agility EHR™, meets the needs of these health care community members.

## 2 An EHR designed to provide data access while maintaining HIPAA Privacy

Occ Med and Workers' Comp requires an EHR that meets HIPAA privacy standards and ensures no personal health history is reported to employers, work comp carriers or payors. The EHR should be able to distinguish occupational and non-occupational visits while giving you, the provider, a full view of the patient's chart.

An ARRA-certified EHR must include a *patient* portal that enables your patients to see their lab results, drug tests, and other clinical data, whether those data were captured in an occupational or non-occupational visit. At the same time, the *employer* portal must severely restrict data access, protecting personal clinical results (except drug screens), while enabling the employer to see other key data such as a work status summary and new hire or return-to-work clearance.

Agility EHR™ meets these requirements.

### 3 Software to Simplify Workers' Compensation

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With the paper-thin margins in most state Workers' Comp reimbursement, you need software that captures required data and eliminates complicated workarounds for work comp submission. Agility EHR addresses detailed work histories, work restrictions, and injury specifics not normally found in a certified EHR. In Agility EHR, mandated state work comp forms such as the California 5021, PR2 and PR4, are filled from your charting notes and submitted automatically with claims, thereby eliminating additional work normally associated with compliance reporting.

In addition, with Agility EHR you can start your follow-up charting from the previous note and update only what's changed since the last visit, making documentation fast and easy. Employers and payors can readily retrieve an online work status summary when you give them access via the employer portal – eliminating phone tag for both your staff and theirs.

Cut your costs and grow your margins: use the right tool for the job: Agility EHR

### 4 Software that manages employer protocols, billing and reporting

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As an Occ Med provider, your clinic needs medical software that easily tracks an unlimited number of company-specific visit protocols. Each protocol should produce a patient-specific flowsheet that includes all staff instructions needed to complete the visit correctly the first time, without the staff having to sift through a lot of unnecessary information about the employer, other types of visits, etc.

Both Agility EHR and Stix Practice Management offer unparalleled flexibility to define complex protocol requirements, as well as billing rules that eliminate time-consuming biller intervention in the invoicing process. Patients receive the correct services and employers receive a correct bill every time, making them happy. Your clinical staff is more productive and your billers can work on collections instead, making you happy and improving your margins. And with Agility's templated provider charting, you can readily eliminate down-coding by providing real-time feedback to providers during the charting process.

### 5 An EMR with a Hosted *or* Installed Solution

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To reduce up front hardware costs and to count on predictable software expenses, Occ Med providers may prefer to take advantage of a hosted software solution. Since both hosted and installed solutions offer advantages, your technical and financial objectives should determine the right choice for you.

Agility EHR™ can be deployed as either a hosted solution or on-premise installation – the choice is yours.



Learn more about Agility EHR and how it is ideally suited for Urgent Care providers practicing in mixed-use clinics that also treat Occupational Medicine, Work Comp and Family Practice patients. [Contact us to view an online demonstration.](#)