

# Driving up volume



Kansas City Bone & Joint Clinic's usage of Centricity Practice Solution helps boost patient throughput by almost 25%.

## Summary

With nine physicians on staff, Kansas City Bone & Joint Clinic (KCB&J) is well equipped to manage a healthy volume of patients. But 1500 of them a week? That's an average of 33 patients per day per physician. Yet no one involved seems to feel rushed or overly busy.

**The reason:** GE Healthcare's Centricity Practice Solution. Implemented in 2005, has enabled KCB&J to:

- Increase patient volume by nearly 25%
- Enhance follow-up
- Speed reimbursements
- Maintain profitability even as reimbursements decline
- Help make patients feel more satisfied

Fueled by KCB&J's system administrator's passion for efficiency and contented coworkers, the Clinic's Centricity utilization is a case study in how to promote and manage rapid growth.



## Centricity-based efficiencies enable KCB&J to serve nearly 25% more patients in less time

Musculoskeletal problems may not always make headlines. But each year, more Americans report suffering from them than from any other medical condition.<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately, the 20th century saw the emergence of many fine orthopedic practices – including, in 1940, KCB&J.

Over the years, this group has remained consistently at the forefront of technology.

“We may not quite be cutting edge,” System Administrator Hilary Bias said. “But from installing digital x-ray to pioneering a patient portal, we’ve been among the leaders of the pack.”

A case in point: KCB&J’s 2005 implementation of Centricity Practice Solution from GE Healthcare – a move that has had a positive impact on KCB&J.

### Stress-free growth

Today, this practice welcomes more than 73,000 patients a year, averaging over 8,000 visits per physician. But before implementing Centricity Practice Solution, KCB&J served significantly fewer patients with comparable clinical staffing – and not always comfortably.

“I remember when we thought the world was ending if we had 40 patients on the schedule. We knew it would be a hectic day stretching into the evening.”

Today, the staff can easily handle 50 patients per provider and be finished by 5 p.m. And they’re able to seamlessly accommodate same-day add-ons.

“The remarkable thing is that no one feels busier,” she said, adding that Centricity Practice Solution is the primary reason for the improvement.

“There are other factors, including the installation of digital x-ray and a new building designed for high-throughput, however I’ve run the numbers; 18% of our growth in patient volume is directly attributable to Centricity Practice Solution.”

<sup>1</sup> The Burden of Musculoskeletal Disease in the United States, [http://www.boneandjointburden.org/pdfs/bmus\\_executive\\_summary\\_low.pdf](http://www.boneandjointburden.org/pdfs/bmus_executive_summary_low.pdf)

## The key: customization

Bias said that one of Centricity Practice Solution’s great advantages is the level of customization it invites. She has taken full advantage of it by:

- Building favorite paper forms directly into the interface
- Customizing many other forms, from workman’s comp to physical therapy
- Automating paper-based processes, such as flagging the next steps in patient care

Centricity Practice Solution has also enabled Bias to address the preferences of individual doctors.

“Our physicians share the same forms for vital signs and patient history, but when it comes to exam-level details, different clinicians like to report things differently. We’ve been able to accommodate them, even making the language suit them perfectly.”

This attention to detail is appreciated, she said. And she’s certain that it’s a good marketing tool for attracting new physicians to the practice.

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**Hilary Bias**

*System Administrator*  
Kansas City Bone & Joint Clinic

## Enhancing workflow

Centricity Practice Solution has made it easier for KCB&J to capitalize on specific workflow improvements – most notably, the use of professional, in-room scribes to generate notes.

The physicians love this arrangement – in part because the scribe contributes to documenting accurate communication between the physician and the patient.

“The scribes give our doctors the freedom to concentrate on their patients. They also get home at a reasonable hour, because they’re not spending hours on their exam notes; thanks to Centricity Practice Solution, these notes are ready for review and sign-off almost instantly.”

Patients appreciate the scribes, too, Bias said. “They’re delighted to have their doctor’s full attention while someone else is capturing all they say. For a patient, it’s the best of both worlds.”

## Rapid reimbursements

Centricity Practice Solution has also made welcome profitability contributions, particularly in terms of reimbursement speed.

“Because our claims are exhaustively documented, we rarely have to field questions from insurers, and seldom experience payment delays.”

The claims staff also takes full advantage of Centricity Practice Solution’s analysis capabilities – for example, using:

- Its clearinghouse to evaluate insurance eligibility, so no time is wasted submitting claims to terminated insurers
- Its trending capability to analyze – and avert – a payer’s denial tendencies
- Its claims analysis capability to identify and help us correct our recurrent coding errors

The results? Faster reimbursements across the board, and reductions of up to 12% in receivables over 91 days.

## Documenting Meaningful Use

Centricity Practice Solution is also helping KCB&J make the case for Meaningful Use (MU), Bias said.

It starts with gathering the right information up front. To telegraph the importance of that information to earning MU credit, her Centricity Practice Solution forms highlight the relevant data fields in blue.

“The system then does a great job of reporting,” she said, “tying the appropriate concepts together and automatically pulling and compiling the pertinent data – for instance, Core Measure 1 in this particular time frame. It streamlines our work for complying with the necessary documentation.”

## Applause all around

Bias said everyone from staff to patients seems to love the Clinic’s Centricity Practice Solution system.

“Our physicians in particular are pleased with the contribution it’s making to their quality of life.”

“I’m technology resistant,” said Clint Walker, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon specializing in the hand and upper extremity. “I don’t text, I don’t have a Facebook page, and if you could see my old-school flip phone, you would agree. But I love Centricity Practice Solution. With its remote access capability, I am able to leave the office and review and complete notes from home when needed.”

Thomas Samuelson, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon specializing in sports medicine, is another fan of Centricity Practice Solution’s remote access capability. “It allows me to leave here early enough to attend my family’s activities and then, in the evening, I can review and sign off on my notes remotely at home.” It has made a tremendous difference in my life.”

In point of fact, Bias said, she doesn’t know anyone concerned who is unhappy with Centricity Practice Solution. Some took a while to realize it, she admitted. “But we made the right choice, and we look forward to many years of continued growth because of it.”



### About Kansas City Bone & Joint Clinic

Kansas City Bone & Joint Clinic specializes in treating disorders of the musculoskeletal system, from broken bones and torn ligaments to tendon injuries and ruptured disks. The Clinic’s Board-Certified or Board-Eligible specialists offer the full range of therapies, including total joint replacements, hip resurfacing, hand microsurgery and comprehensive physical medicine and rehabilitation.

With two satellite clinics in addition to its new headquarters in Overland Park, Kansas, KCB&J joined Signature Medical Group, a physician-owned, multi-specialty group based in St. Louis, in 2011.

To learn more about KCB&J, please visit [www.kcbj.com](http://www.kcbj.com).

## About GE Healthcare

GE Healthcare provides transformational medical technologies and services that are shaping a new age of patient care. Our broad expertise in medical imaging and information technologies, medical diagnostics, patient monitoring systems, drug discovery, biopharmaceutical manufacturing technologies, performance improvement and performance solutions services help our customers to deliver better care to more people around the world at a lower cost. In addition, we partner with healthcare leaders, striving to leverage the global policy change necessary to implement a successful shift to sustainable healthcare systems.

Our “healthymagination” vision for the future invites the world to join us on our journey as we continuously develop innovations focused on reducing costs, increasing access and improving quality around the world. Headquartered in the United Kingdom, GE Healthcare is a unit of General Electric Company (NYSE: GE). Worldwide, GE Healthcare employees are committed to serving healthcare professionals and their patients in more than 100 countries. For more information about GE Healthcare, visit our website at [www.gehealthcare.com](http://www.gehealthcare.com).

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