

Impact of a Standardized Note Template on Note Length and Time in Notes

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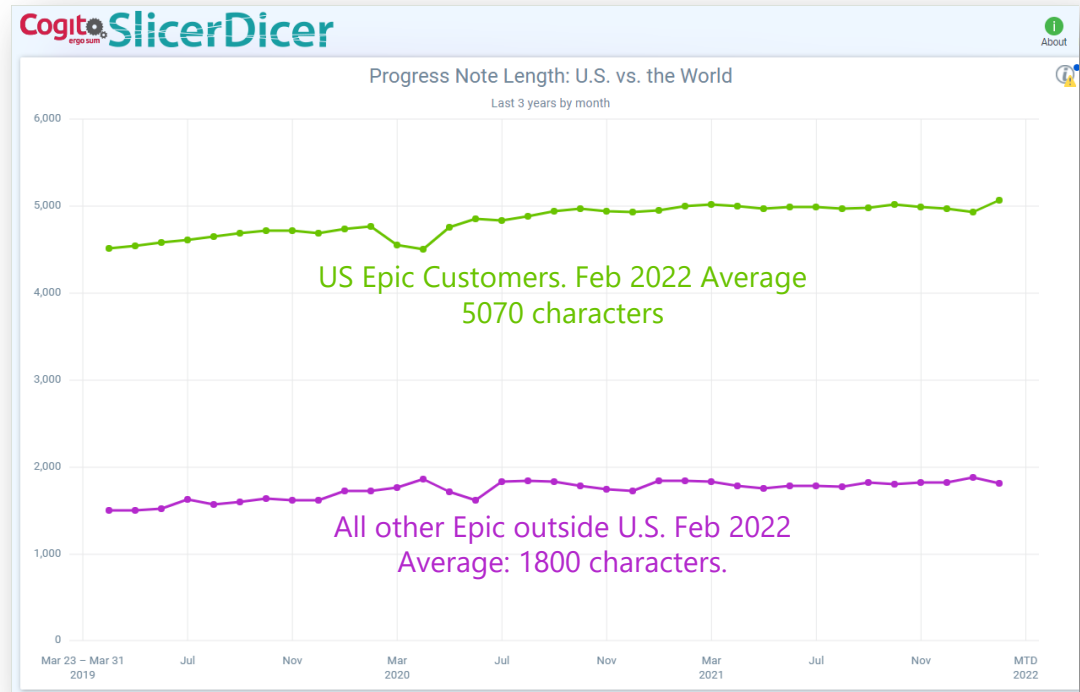
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We have no relevant financial relationships to disclose

Notes are Long

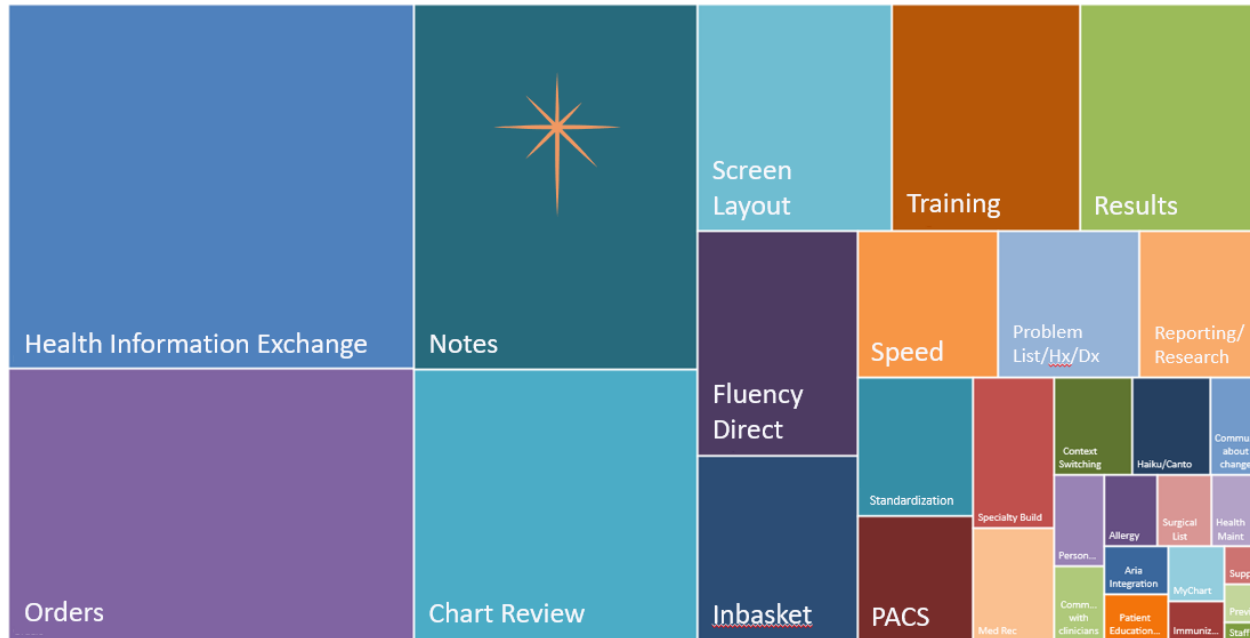
- And they're getting longer
- Moreso in the United States



Trouble with Notes

- Note writing drives provider dissatisfaction

If you could fix 3 things in our EHR tomorrow, what would you fix?



Notes continue to be problematic

- Something needs to change with notes
- “The **important clinical information is buried** in the note under other clinically useless information.”
- “**EVERYONE complains** about doing notes, when notes should be the least worry of everyone's to do.”
- “Help with Note Bloat.”

E/M Guidelines change in 2021

- No more counting HPI and Exam “points”
- Credit for Medical Decision Making
- Show your work
- Document the rest as needed

Impact of E/M Changes

- Despite coding guideline update, not much changes

Annals of Internal Medicine

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Table. E/M and EHR Usage Measures Before and After CMS Guideline Change

Outcome	Mean (SD) Before and After E/M Guideline Change (n = 267 475 Providers)*			
	Overall	September to December 2020	January to April 2021	
Total visits per week	36.1 (23.5)	35.1 (22.8)	37.1 (23.1)	
Total E/M visits per week	22.7 (18.3)	21.5 (17.4)	23.9 (18.1)	
Percent of all visits billed to E/M	64.0 (25.4)	62.7 (25.7)	65.3 (25.1)	2.60 [2.56 to 2.65]
Percent of E/M visits				

Actually, notes got slightly longer!

Level 5

Documentation length, characters per note

Time in notes, min per visit

1.85 [1.81 to 1.89]

24.37 [21.23 to 27.51]

-0.06 [-0.07 to -0.04]

Time in InBasket, min per visit	2.9 (3.4)	2.8 (3.3)	2.9 (3.5)	0.08 [0.08 to 0.09]
Time in orders, min per visit	2.6 (2.0)	2.6 (2.0)	2.6 (2.0)	0.09 [0.08 to 0.09]
Time outside of scheduled hours, min per visit	4.9 (6.8)	4.9 (6.9)	4.9 (6.8)	-0.01 [-0.02 to 0.00]

Next Steps after January 2021

- Policy Change alone will not change behavior
- We need to provide tools to support better documentation

→ Standardized Note Template

Easier note writing

Easier reading

Easier Maintenance

Tools for meaningful content

Same look and feel of all notes

New regulation, new functionality

Build a Team

- Physician Informatics
- Coding
- Compliance
- Information Systems/Physician builders
- Clinical Documentation Improvement
- Legal
- Training

Our Note

```
@ASSESSPLANBEGINHEADER@  
@ASSESSPLANAMBSTANDARD@  
***
```

Assessment at the top

```
@FOLLOWUP@  
@HISTORYBEGINCOLLAPSED@  
@PREFNAME@ is a @AGE@ @SEX@ who is here for ***  
@EXAMDATABEGINCOLLAPSED@  
@VS@  
***
```

That's it.

```
@ATTESTATIONBEGINCOLLAPSED@  
@CERMSG(1647484:88665)@@CERMSG(1647985:84749)@  
@CERMSG(1647485:88666)@@CERMSG(1647986:3100087)@  
@CERMSG(1649448:89693)@@CERMSG(1649449:89694)@  
@CERMSG(1649442:89692)@  
{Time Phrases (Optional):49507}
```

Pulls in Encounter-
specific compliance
statements

Template Rollout

Primary Care (Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Pediatrics):

Add “Speed Button” to call up template

Train early, train often

Get Leadership Buy-In

Show data early and often

- Individual users/subset
- Then division wide

- Studied Physicians and APPs
- Used out-of-box Epic reports to capture
 - Note length
 - Time in notes
 - Frequency of use of template
- Binned users to frequency of template use over 3 months
 - Never
 - 1-10 uses
 - 10-25 uses
 - >25 uses

212 Providers included in analysis:

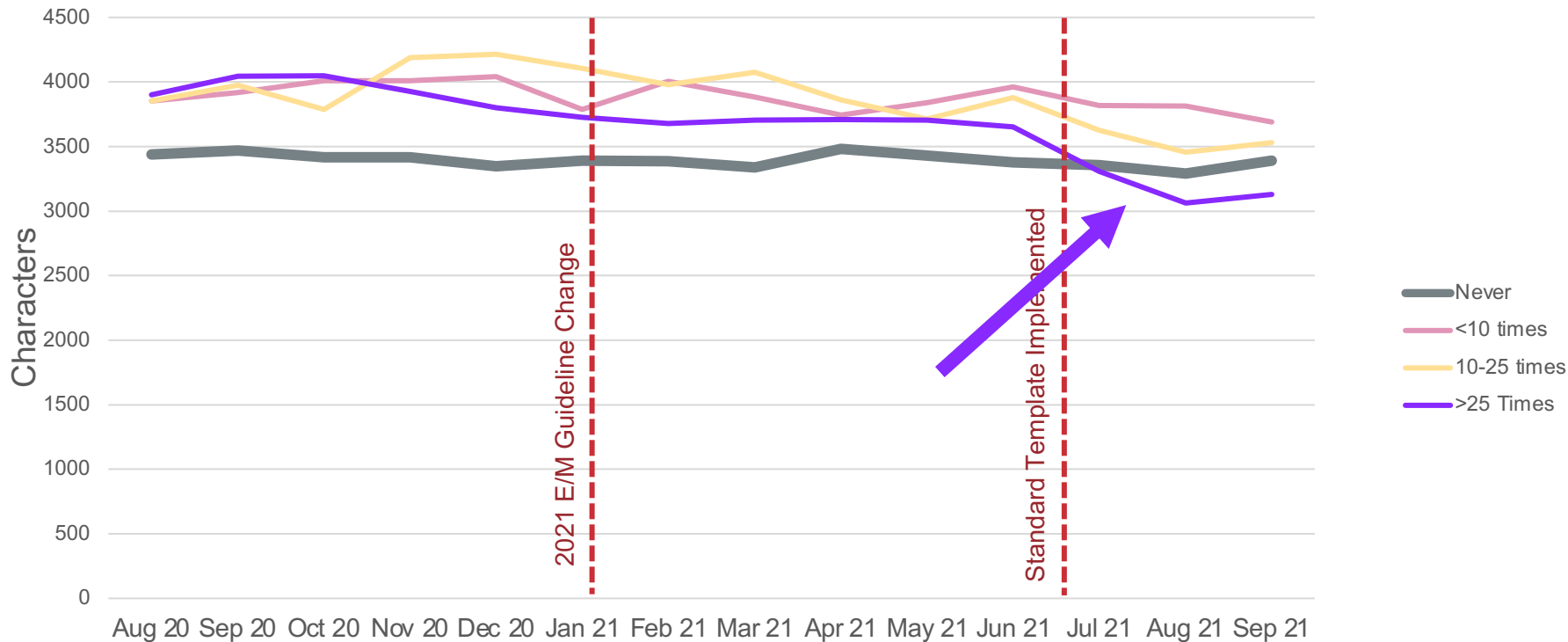
- 146 Family Medicine
- 76 Internal Medicine

In the first three months template was live:

- 146 Never used template
- 23 Used 1-10 times
- 10 used 10-25 times
- 33 used >25 times

Buckle up: These next results slides come fast!

Note Length Per Appointment



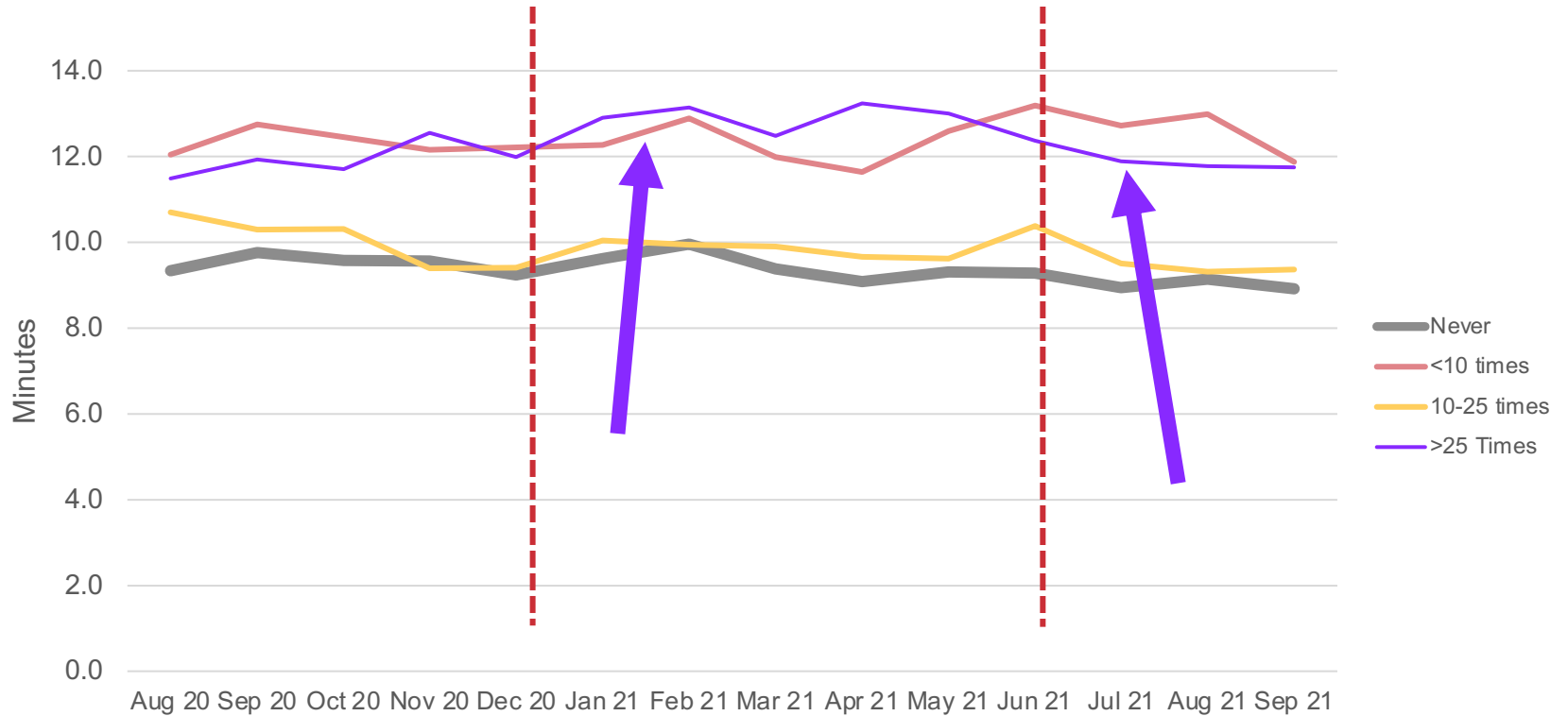
Note Length Per Appointment

Standard Template Usage	Aug 20-Dec 20 (Pre E/M Change)	Jan 21-Jun 21 (Pre-intervention)	Jul 21-Sep 21 (Post-intervention)	Intra-author Average change after 2021 E/M		Intra-author change after intervention	
Never	3442	3438	3366	-5	(0.29)	-72	(0.006)
<10 times	3964	3908	3773	-56	(0.20)	-134	(0.11)
10-25 times	3930	3873	3538	-57	(0.30)	-335	(0.0059)
>25 Times	3938	3708	3182	-230	(0.0045)	-526	(<0.0005)
Total	3614	3558	3380	-56	(0.075)	-178	(<0.0005)

Legend: Characters (p-value)

Red= p<0.05

Time in Notes Per Appointment



Time in Notes Per Appointment

Standard Template Usage	Aug 20-Dec 20 (Pre E/M Change)	Jan 21-Jun 21 (Pre-intervention)	Jul 21-Sep 21 (Post-intervention)	Intra-author Average change after 2021 E/M		Intra-author change after intervention	
Never	9.6	9.4	9.0	-0.1	(0.12)	-0.4	(0.0001)
<10 times	12.5	12.7	12.5	0.3	(0.17)	-0.2	(0.33)
10-25 times	10.0	9.9	9.4	-0.1	(0.43)	-0.5	(0.15)
>25 Times	11.9	12.8	11.9	0.9	(0.0005)	-0.9	(<0.0005)
Total	10.4	10.5	10.0	0.1	(0.08)	-0.5	(<0.0005)

Legend: Minutes (p-value)

Red= p<0.05

Results: Take Aways

- In first six months of E/M changes, notes didn't change much
 - Time trended upward
- With the new template everybody's notes got shorter
 - Even non-users
- People who used the template most saw most benefit

Summary

- Note writing remains a dissatisfier across organizations
- 2021 E/M guide brought an opportunity for change
- Old habits die hard
- Providing tools to support change is often necessary
- Relaxing polices alone won't change behavior

Next Steps

- Expanded go-live to whole organization November 2021
 - Data forthcoming
- Specialties desiring customization, reaching out for help
- Expanded note types (pre-ops, consult notes)
- Reinforcement, reiteration

Acknowledgements

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