

## The Doctors Are In: EPISODE 4: Dr. Jeremy Theal's go-live tips for MDs *[Transcript]*

*Introduction: You're listening to the CST Audio Network, the voice of clinical transformation.*

*Hello, the doctors are in. Dr. Jeremy Theal, a gastroenterologist, is chief medical information officer at North York General Hospital, where he led the implementation of a Cerner clinical information system. As a recognized expert in designing and implementing advanced EMRs, he advises hospitals and health systems in Canada and around the world.*

*In 2017, he came to Vancouver, where he shared his views with the local medical community on the realities of learning to work with a new system. In this excerpt from his presentation to a group of physicians at Lions Gate Hospital, he talks about how entering orders and documenting electronically represent a tectonic shift in medical practice, and he shares some tips on how to prepare for the big change.*

**Dr. Jeremy Theal:** There will be a phase when you turn on this system, once that honeymoon period wears off in the first couple weeks and you realize: this change is actually not going to be easy. You need to be mentally prepared that there will be a period of time where it's going to be tough. You're probably all at the enthusiasm and knowledge stage: we're enthusiastic about the project but we don't actually know a lot of details about how it's all going to work when we get to the final stage. And then when the rubber hits the road and we actually have to use it, oh my goodness, this is not as easy as I thought. But over time, you will get some wins and then you will eventually get back to a point where you're probably going to be even more productive and more effective than you were before.

You can review and enter your orders any time, any place. You don't have to have all these fragmented pieces of information anymore, so there's one place for the MAR, one place for the diabetic record, another place for the nursing notes, another place for the x-rays; it's all in one place. And you're going to get fewer callbacks for legibility and incomplete orders and so forth. With this you can be more mindful about how you do that work, but you have to be patient

with yourself. Just as you learned telephone dictation many years ago when you started, that same period of time is going to be required to switch to this new form of documentation.

The other piece with these system implementations is people have the tendency to want to only measure one small piece of one slice of the workflow. You know, picking up that phone or using front-end dictation, and saying, well since that one piece of the workflow is a little bit slower, I hate it. But you have to look at the bigger picture.

It takes time. We all have to be patient with ourselves. I think we all want to be experts at everything right away. It's that immediate gratification aspect of our society now and this is not like that. This is tectonically changing the way you practice and you can't expect to just wake up overnight and go, oh I'm as efficient as I was before. Not possible.

You need to be able to anticipate that you will not be as fast at the beginning and you need to, for your outpatient clinics, you need to schedule fewer patients, or you need more docs on, because if you try to do business as usual, you're setting yourself up for failure. When we turned on our OR system, we did reduce our number of elective cases for a couple of weeks until people got their legs under them. When we went on in our Emerg, we staffed up. These are things you have to do.

*Outro: Thanks for listening to the CST Audio Network. We look forward to your next appointment. In the meantime, please let us know what you think of our podcast, what you like and how we can improve. Send us an email to [info@CSTproject.ca](mailto:info@CSTproject.ca)*