

wide electronic medical records system at both the hospital and its various physician office practices and clinic sites. Also, as will be seen later in this chapter, many projected financial implications for clinical application are favorable as well.

Integrating Data and Reporting to Support Enhanced Decision Making

The second IT strategic initiative—integrating data and reporting to support enhanced decision making—is extremely important to the organization. Without effective reporting and analysis systems, it is not easy for administrators to maintain proper control over their managers or for managers to gain a proper understanding of their department's operations.

Turning data into useful information is critical to the financial and clinical health of RHMC. Several areas of decision support allow managers to optimize the resources of their departments at all times; anything less than this type of commitment leads to inefficiency, ineffectiveness, and inappropriateness.

Effective Decision Support System Tools and Techniques Needed by the Health Care Organization

- Daily administrative and management dashboards on the computer desktop
- Monthly balanced scorecard of financial, clinical, quality, and satisfaction indicators (metrics)
- Benchmarking
- Flexible budgeting and monitoring
- Labor management
- Nonlabor management
- Service line, physician, and patient-level reporting and analysis

- Cost accounting technology
- Contract management technology
- Denials management software (Berger 2007, 63)

RHMC has, in fact, performed due diligence in this area and has selected the top-of-the-line business intelligence system, giving it all of the tools enumerated above as well as the easiest to use end-user interface in the industry. Without a very clean GUI (graphical user interface) the end-user (often referred to as the clinical and operating department manager) is unable to easily access the data to turn it into useful and excellent information. RHMC leadership is pleased to know that several of its competitors have selected systems with much poorer GUIs. Because of this, those competitors will not be able to recognize and understand their outcomes as effectively, giving RHMC the advantage.