Ochsner Health System partners with TEKsystems to support the implementation of EpicCare Ambulatory electronic health records (EHR) software across its hospital system.

Client Profile
With headquarters in New Orleans, Ochsner Health System is a nonprofit, academic, multi-specialty healthcare delivery system dedicated to patient care, research and education. Ochsner’s system includes eight hospitals and over 38 health centers throughout southeast Louisiana. Ochsner employs over 13,000 healthcare professionals system-wide. TEKsystems has partnered with Ochsner since 1996.

Situation
The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 continues to stand at the forefront of national debate. With ARRA, the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH) was enacted, making the adoption of IT a critical priority for the healthcare industry. The government has also offered monetary incentives and reimbursements to encourage healthcare providers to make the transition from paper recordkeeping to electronic health records (EHR) systems.

Making the EHR transition proves to be challenging industry-wide. In fact, 65 percent of all enterprise software implementations fail to meet project expectations—resulting in loss of productivity, money and resources. There is much room for error if there is no upfront planning for its usability day-to-day and adoption with end users, and organizations can lose money and time if an implementation strategy is not carefully designed.

Ochsner sought to roll out the EpicCare Ambulatory EHR system—which would impact 600 end users across its 22 clinic facilities. Ochsner had made previous go-live attempts but saw slow adoption and utilization rates threatening its potential to achieve meaningful use. Now with an aggressive three-week timeline, it was critically important that the appropriate volume of resources and skill levels were obtained to drive...

1 “Lessons from ERP implementation failures,” Focus Research, June 10, 2010
efficiency and support Ochsner’s staff. To ensure the launch of the new EHR system was a success, Ochsner selected TEKsystems to support this initiative. Based on our long-standing relationship with Ochsner, TEKsystems has solidified our partnership and Ochsner was confident that we could once again deliver a successful project for them. The client also knew that TEKsystems had access to the sought-after EHR talent and skill sets necessary to provide end-user support and put them on the path to ensuring that meaningful use of the EpicCare Ambulatory modules was achieved.

Solution
Eligibility for government reimbursements and incentives relied on qualifying levels of use of the new system, and given the expedited timeframe and large number of end users who would need to be trained, Ochsner needed a solution that would ensure its physicians and end users were up to speed in time for the rigorous EpicCare go-live date. With that in mind, TEKsystems allocated three weeks prior to the go-live date to planning and consultant training. In that timeframe, the delivery manager worked collaboratively with client leadership to schedule site visits to the various clinics to offer support and advise them on the training schedule. The TEKsystems resource management team met extensively with Ochsner go-live project directors and managers to understand project timelines, department nuances, facility particulars and end-user requirements.

With the size and scope of resources required, it was important to both Ochsner and TEKsystems to plan and deploy the right resources to the right positions from the onset. Working with Ochsner leadership, our delivery manager and project coordinators created work assignments that ensured skill sets aligned with the specific needs of the clinics. TEKsystems was then responsible for resource management including sourcing, screening, selection, training and onboarding of qualified talent as well as scheduling to match skills with facility assignments. This ultimately resulted in activation efficiency, analyst and end-user compatibility on skill and experience, and further enhanced the quality of the activation and drove EHR adoption and utilization.

TEKsystems provided a team composed of 62 Epic analysts, 11 Epic lead analysts, two Epic project coordinators and a delivery manager to serve as a single point of contact for Ochsner’s principal trainers and training director. The team went through orientation and training in order to understand the organization and workflows, and subsequently maximize its effectiveness in providing end-user support. Under this team structure, TEKsystems also ensured clear lines of communication and escalation processes were properly in place; this maximized our ability to respond to urgent matters quickly, efficiently and effectively, while minimizing potential impact to the project and the team.

During the three-week period where TEKsystems provided go-live support, we monitored productivity and performance metrics to increase efficiency and course-correct when necessary. TEKsystems also managed the coordination of logistics including compliance, scheduling, management of expenses within the scope of this project, and issue mitigation, escalation and resolution. Working in concert with the client-side staff, this team coordinated the deployment and “at the hip” training needed to bring all 600 physicians, clinicians and facility administrative end users to a level of proficiency on the new system.

Benefits
With TEKsystems’ expertise and leadership, Ochsner’s 600 staff received hands-on training that can be applied to their day-to-day utilization of EpicCare Ambulatory, making the implementation of the EHR system a success.

Additional benefits include:

- **Time Savings.** Upfront, TEKsystems dedicated three weeks prior to the go-live date to planning and better understanding client priorities and skills needed, saving time on the back-end of an aggressive timeline. Additionally, our hands-on hiring approach enabled client leadership to spend time working on other strategic initiatives. Leveraging TEKsystems’ robust talent pool and a keen understanding of Ochsner’s candidate criteria, we were able to source the right people very quickly. As a result,
because we selected top quality resources upfront, the overall training program was completed ahead of schedule.

- **Knowledge Management.** Using our on-site knowledge, we sought to identify inefficiencies and ways to improve in order to stay on top of the client’s timeline. Framed by our observations, we managed daily communication and status updates, giving the client visibility into what we were finding. We provided tip sheets and updates at team meetings held with Ochsner.

- **Scalability.** The scope of this program called for 75 technical professionals at its peak, while fewer resources would be needed post-implementation. TEKsystems’ flexible and scalable model enabled Ochsner to ramp up and down as needed.

- **Cost Savings.** Finishing ahead of schedule allowed Ochsner to recognize a cost savings of nearly $44,000, or more than 380 hours. Additional savings was realized due to TEKsystems’ efficient deployment of resources which enabled a reduction in headcount by as much as 24 percent.

- **Financial Management.** TEKsystems tracked the expenses pertaining to the scope of this program. We monitored the budget burn down from program start to finish date. Ochsner has reported that it was able to reallocate 6.5 percent of the budget toward other projects.

- **Credentialing.** TEKsystems completed a credentialing system for Ochsner, ensuring the client had a means for measuring system knowledge and adoption among staff. Going forward, staff must exemplify workflow and application proficiency via a written assessment and presentation, with a pass rate of 80 percent or higher. This will prove invaluable for demonstrating meaningful use and quantifying adoption to the U.S. government.

- **Ongoing Support.** In addition to providing go-live technical support for the use of all Epic applications, Ochsner has access to assigned TEKsystems resources for a wide range of training and development materials, technical expertise and best practices.