



Cerner CPOE and Zynx – Compliant and *Timely* Meaningful Use

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I believe that a recent quote from a harried hospital CIO neatly summarizes the current state of Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE) implementations in most US hospitals: “We are in a hard drive to support Meaningful Use (MU) and we are all feeling the pressure and timelines.” The American Hospital Association (AHA) provides further evidence of this “pressure” via their most recent survey - although 95% of hospitals surveyed have plans to pursue MU and certification requirements, fewer than 2% reported that they currently meet the specific requirements of MU and/or have certified Electronic Health Records (EHR) systems. For clinical systems in general, and CPOE in particular, both compliance and timely implementations must now go hand in hand.

However, CPOE implementations are both information intensive in nature and enterprise-wide in scope. A wise project manager should ensure that the organization has a solid foundation in place **before** the actual CPOE build begins. This foundation should include a physician order set identification/approval strategy, a comprehensive enterprise-wide consultation mechanism, well managed process analysis, and control and resource allocation for testing and training. Cerner’s excellent suite of CPOE products (PowerPlans® for order set build, PowerOrders® for individual/one-off order entry), offers functionality which is both physician friendly and MU compliant. However, given all the non-build activities required to ensure a solid foundation, it is clearly not an application that can be built at the drop of a hat. Indeed, the same wise project manager, faced with a demanding timeline, could ask the following question: “Is there a Cerner friendly toolkit available that can help facilitate both the foundation and the application build?” The answer is “yes.”

Zynx® is well known in the marketplace as being the industry leader in providing pre-built, evidence based order sets for physicians. However, something less well known is the availability of several Cerner compatible tools within the Zynx product which, if properly managed, can really facilitate a successful CPOE implementation. In my opinion, the most important Cerner friendly tools in the Zynx toolbox are:

- **Two Way Cerner/Zynx Integration:** Cerner/Zynx integration has two components; (1) Utilizing a functionality called Configurable Workspaces (unique to Cerner and Zynx) and with vendor assistance, clients can have the order catalog, order entry formats, and code sets from Cerner downloaded and available in Zynx. This allows CPOE order sets to be built that are both evidence based and Cerner compatible. (2) Clients also have the ability to export Zynx order sets into Cerner and have PowerPlans auto generated. It should be noted, however, that not all orders move freely between the two systems (e.g. multi-ingredient IV orders). These special cases would have to be built as one-offs in the PowerPlan after it has been uploaded from Zynx. Despite this limitation, with **careful**

supervision, there is potential to significantly reduce build time during a CPOE implementation with this functionality.

- **Zynx AuthorSpace® - Easy to Use Editing Tool:** The editing tool in Zynx (AuthorSpace) is web enabled and easy to use. As with the integration tools above, careful supervision can result in faster build times if Zynx serves as the “source of truth” for order set content. A word of caution here - there **must** be both timely catalog updates (so that the two systems are current) and well managed change control. If either of these two conditions is missing, the use of Zynx as the source of truth can quickly become the source of a big headache.
- **Pre-Built Evidence Based Order Sets – A Running Start:** More than 450 pre-built, evidence based order sets are available for use in Zynx. This means that (1) the client does not have to build every order set from scratch and (2) pre-existing paper order sets can be updated in Zynx to include the most recent best practice evidence.
- **Zynx ViewSpace - Virtual Forum to Build Consensus at a Faster Pace:** Depending on the client’s corporate culture, another powerful tool which can facilitate order set feedback/approval is ViewSpace. This application has blog-like functionality which allows reviewers to offer feedback on order sets electronically. It can greatly reduce the time required to get clinical content identified and approved. I must insert a word of caution here as well. A common mistake when first implementing ViewSpace is the notion that this tool can totally replace the need to have face-to-face meetings in the physician approval process. ViewSpace can help reduce the number of meetings but it can never replace the need for physicians to meet periodically to agree on order set content.

In summary, Cerner CPOE and Zynx are both very strong stand-alone products. In a marketplace increasingly dominated by MU imposed deadlines, these two products (with careful supervision!) can work together to help produce a compliant and timely CPOE implementation.

If you would like more information about Cerner CPOE/Zynx or other Cerner Solutions offered by VCS, contact us at 610.444.1233 or vcs@getvitalized.com. More information about the services and solutions offered by VCS can be found at our website, www.getvitalized.com.