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Health

# The quest for a more efficient revenue cycle – RevElate Patient Accounting beta testing best practices from BayCare Health System





Efficient management of the revenue cycle is essential to the vitality of healthcare organizations. It's critical for delivering a quality patient experience from the moment of intake to final billing and reimbursement.

To help health providers achieve these goals, Oracle Cerner has launched RevElate — a cross-venue patient accounting solution that builds on and advances the clinically driven capabilities of Cerner Millennium while adding the scalable, enterprise capabilities of their proven Soarian Financials platform. RevElate couples upstream billing intelligence with an automated, extensible integration platform that enables organizations to reach across their technology ecosystems – all surrounded by a common user experience.

BayCare Health System in Clearwater, Fla., a current Soarian Financials and Cerner Millennium client, working with Oracle Cerner as a beta validation customer is the first customer to go live with RevElate. To learn more about their experience, Becker's Hospital Review recently spoke with three of BayCare's revenue cycle and patient accounting leaders:

- Lynnette Clinton, interim CIO and vice president, applications
- Lynda Gorke, vice president, patient financial solutions
- Ryan Moran, senior solutions architect

## BayCare Health System: A pioneer on the RevElate journey

BayCare Health System is an integrated system that operates 16 not-for-profit hospitals in West Central Florida, as well as a diverse network of ambulatory services including laboratories, imaging, surgical centers, urgent care locations, wellness centers and one of Florida's largest home care agencies — BayCare HomeCare. The system is also the region's largest provider of behavioral health and pediatric services and BayCare Medical Group is one of the area's largest provider groups.

As a long-time user of the Cerner Millennium clinical EMR electronic medical record and Cerner Soarian patient accounting, BayCare Health System started their journey to RevElate with an initial foundation of a base integration between these two systems, the predecessor of RevElate. "Approximately 9 months after the implementation of the Soarian capabilities which carry forward in RevElate, we had reduced our AR days by 10. The main reasons are the worklisting capabilities and the ability to implement substantial automation workflows." Lynda Gorke, VP Patient Financial Solutions, BayCare Health Systems

"When Oracle Cerner announced that they had decided to create better integration between Millennium and Soarian, we were thrilled," Ms. Clinton said. "We were already using the two core platforms which are the bones of RevElate. We were happy that Oracle Cerner asked us to partner with them on the beta program because we strongly support the mission of RevElate."



BayCare implemented Soarian in 2015 and at that time, the team used its own internal integration engine to create custom interfaces between Millennium and Soarian. RevElate is designed to reduce that technical complexity while bringing forward a seamless common user experience and advance automation across the revenue cycle workflow. With a more standardized approach to integration, data can be passed appropriately from Millennium to RevElate. In addition, maintaining master files in one place, rather than two, will reduce errors and unnecessary manual effort.

"We are looking forward to the time when we'll no longer have to maintain master files in two different systems," Ms. Clinton said. "As Oracle Cerner brings Millennium and Soarian together in RevElate with core integration, we hope to maintain our master files in one place. The services-based integration in RevElate is very similar to what Oracle Cerner and other technology companies use for their other products."

While reducing maintenance work and complexity are important goals for BayCare, another top priority is protecting the integrity and efficiency of the revenue cycle.

"We want to maintain our AR days and revenue levels," Ms. Gorken said. "For a patient accounting department, systems can really make or break you. We're pleased that RevElate is built on the backbone of Soarian. For the past eight years, Soarian has supplied us with good metrics and supported automation."

## **Pilot programs and other beta testing best practices**

For BayCare, creating a pilot program was an integral part of the RevElate beta testing process. "After we realized that there could be an impact to financials, the team quickly developed a pilot plan," Ms. Gorken said. "It was one of the best decisions we made."

BayCare's pilot program focused on one hospital and six ancillary outpatient sites. "We piloted the charges interface and the ADT interface to validate the system and ensure that the interfaces are behaving as expected," Mr. Moran said. "Although we had a couple of bumps in the beginning, everything has smoothed out and it's been really good so far."

Overall, the team has a very positive view of the beta validation partnership. "We've already seen big improvements in our systems due to this project," Mr. Moran said. "The added upgrades and fixes make the platform perform better and it's been a huge win."

Key to the success of the new integration was to ensure that the new interfaces have had no impact on end users. "It's all very technical, working through the issues related to data passing, but our end users haven't been affected at all," Ms. Gorken said.

The partnership between the BayCare and Oracle Cerner teams during the beta program have been particularly valuable for both organizations.



“What’s gone really well is that Oracle Cerner’s entire team and executives are engaged,” Ms. Clinton said. “They listen to our feedback and they take action based on it. They know we aren’t an easy client and we won’t go live with anything we aren’t comfortable with. They also know that they will get quality feedback from us — we don’t pull any punches.”

### Next steps for BayCare and RevElate

Now that the pilot program has demonstrated the success, BayCare’s goal is to roll the RevElate enhancements out to the broader enterprise.

“We have one hospital and its outpatient sites live on those two interfaces, so our next step is to go live at the rest of our hospitals and ancillary sites in ‘at one time,’” Ms. Clinton said. “The date for that will be driven by factors like our domain strategy and the timing of our next Oracle Cerner upgrade.”

The BayCare team plans to deploy its full enterprise rollout which will include the RevElate user interface changes and the master files later this year. “We expect to do this after our upgrade to avoid any complications,” Mr. Moran said. “We also will be developing new job aids and documentation to support employees affected by the user interface modifications.”

Reducing the friction in the revenue cycle increases the efficiency of the health system overall. “We want our patients to have a smooth experience from registration and scheduling to billing,” Ms. Clinton said. “Our goal is to create a smooth and dependable process and we think this is a movement in the right direction.”

### Conclusion

“We are so pleased about Oracle Cerner’s commitment to enhancing the patient accounting system that we know and love,” Ms. Clinton said. “By participating in the beta program, we are making the system better. We’ll all have a brighter future together when we are on the new RevElate solution with a true vision going forward.”

RevElate Patient Accounting is now generally available.

To request a live demo, please contact an [Oracle Health RevElate expert](#) or [click here to learn more](#).