On Saturday, September 9, the Epic Implementation team successfully upgraded from the 2015 version of Epic to the latest Epic 2017 version. This version will be implemented throughout Atlantic Health in 2018, beginning with Chilton, Overlook and Home Health on February 4, 2018. The upgrade offers new functionality designed to simplify usability, improve patient care and better meet healthcare industry requirements.

Staff from outpatient practices impacted by the upgrade reported a ‘seamless transition,’ with no disruption to daily workflows. This achievement was the result of extensive efforts across multiple ISS teams. “The successful transition to Epic 2017 is the culmination of many months of planning, building, creating training materials and preparing Atlantic’s IT infrastructure to support the upgrade,” says John Arch, manager, Epic Technical team.

The upgrade involved extensive collaboration between the Epic Technical team and over 30 staff members, spanning 10 diverse application and technical teams, as well as over a dozen clinical and operational staff. Staff worked closely to build and test the new system, ensuring any issues were addressed and mitigated before go-live. “This accomplishment is a direct result of the integrated efforts of our clinical, operational and ISS teams,” says Michael Fitzpatrick, project manager, Epic Ambulatory team.

No upgrade is without its challenges. “As with all health information technology projects, our greatest challenge is ensuring the functionality and tools offered meet and exceed the needs of all users, regardless of their role or specialty,” says Fitzpatrick. All teams conducted extensive rounds of testing to ensure functionality worked as intended and that staff were informed of how changes would impact their daily workflows.

This is neither the first nor last of Atlantic Health’s Epic upgrades.

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New Devices for Epic Deploying at Chilton, Overlook and Home Health Ahead of Technical Dress Rehearsal

In preparation for the launch of Epic at Chilton and Overlook Medical Centers and Home Health on February 4, the Epic Implementation team will conduct a Technical Dress Rehearsal on every Epic-related device throughout the system to confirm it is ready for go-live. This testing includes workstations, document printers, label printers, document scanners and barcode scanners. This new technology is necessary to support Epic 2017.

New devices will be rolling out at Chilton, Overlook and Home Health through November. Many of these devices will have limited use until go-live while the TDR team conducts its testing. These devices can only be fully used after TDR testing is complete.

Staff at Chilton, Overlook and Home Health are encouraged to keep an eye out for signs and table cards, which will indicate what capabilities these devices will have until go-live. Devices that have been tested by the TDR team will have a green Epic@AHS sticker (above top). Devices that have a red Epic@AHS TDR sticker (above bottom) require another round of TDR testing.

Epic TDR for Chilton, Overlook and Home Health is scheduled to begin in late November 2017 and run through January 2018.

Why I love Epic: An Interview with Marisa Keyes, RN

Marisa Keyes, RN, Morristown Medical Center, first used Epic as a nurse at Baylor Scott and White Hospital in Temple, Texas where she worked when they went live with Epic. In her career as a nurse, Marisa has also used Soarian, Net Access and McKesson electronic health records.

“Nothing I’ve used compares to Epic,” says Keyes. Keyes has learned how to maximize Epic’s ability to simplify her daily workflows and find important patient information and documentation.

“Everything in Epic ‘speaks to each other,’” says Keyes, with information input by one clinician immediately available to anyone on a patient’s care team. “It’s so easy to find something a clinician in a different department has documented.” She also loves functions like the input and output flowsheet. “It makes calculating much easier. And there are no papers to lose!”

Learning Epic was a time commitment, but one Keyes feels was essential to her ability to use and understand the system. “It was tough,” she acknowledges. “No one had any experience with Epic and it really did take weeks for us to feel comfortable using the system.” The time spent paid off. After taking Epic e-learnings and in-classroom training to learn how to use the system, she could quickly identify tools and shortcuts to support her day-to-day work. Keyes encourages everyone to practice in the system. “Use the practice charting system often,” she recommends. “It’s worth the extra effort and will be so helpful after go-live.”

Keyes is excited for Epic’s impact on Atlantic Health and its patients. “I know it seems like a scary transition, but once you learn Epic and get used to it, you’ll love it. Your patients will love it, too.”
The Epic Implementation team held its second and final Epic Workflow Walkthrough on Tuesday, September 12, at the College of St. Elizabeth’s Dolan Theater. The event was designed to give providers and employees a high-level view of Atlantic Health’s custom-built Epic system.

Over 200 staff from across Atlantic Health attended, included Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), managers and others involved in the build and design of the system. For many SMEs, the Walkthrough was the first chance to see the results of their input on the design and build of the system. For others, it was the first chance to see how workflows will change when Epic goes live.

The session was the result of months of planning that involved identifying which workflows to show, writing scripts, recruiting team members to read and perform the scenarios, and coordinating logistics to ensure it was a meaningful and interesting experience for staff.

Atlantic Health employees responded to the event with engaging questions and comments that showed an interest in the new system and its impact on staff and patients. “This is an exciting time for Atlantic Health System,” says Denise Fochesto, Chief Nursing Officer, Business Director. “The Implementation team has shown us a great view of how Epic will not just change our day-to-day lives but transform the way we care for our patients.”

“We strive to upgrade our electronic medical record regularly, to equip our staff with the latest technological advancements that assist in delivering safe, efficient and effective care,” adds Fitzpatrick.

John Arch sees Atlantic’s success with the Epic 2017 upgrade as a strong indicator of the system’s readiness for future go-lives, including its next Epic go-live at Chilton, Overlook and Home Health. “The infrastructure teams led by our director, Pat Zinno, have built a robust infrastructure for Epic. Any future go-lives and upgrades will be successful. In addition, our project managers, Jerry Meier and Mike Fitzpatrick did a wonderful job managing the project.”

More information about Epic 2017 is available in Epic via the AHS Learning Dashboard. You can read a detailed guide highlighting the most helpful changes to the user experience under the 2017 Upgrade Materials section.

Have an idea for an Epic@AHS News story?
Email EpicCommunications@atlantichealth.org
There are now less than five months until the Epic goes live at Chilton, Overlook, Home Health. See below for upcoming events and milestones.

**OCTOBER**
- Ambulatory/Cadence/Prelude Go-Live, Oct. 3
- 120 Day Go-Live Readiness Assessment (GLRA), Oct. 5
- Parallel Revenue Cycle Testing (PRCT) Round 1, Oct. 6
- Integrated Testing Complete, Oct. 6
- Credentialed Trainer (CT) Program Begins, Oct. 16
- End User Acceptance Testing Round 2, Oct. 16
- Epic Hardware deployed to CMC, OMC and Home Health, beginning Late Oct.

**NOVEMBER**
- Dry Run of Cutover activities begins, early Nov.
- PRCT Round 2 Complete, Nov. 3
- Ambulatory/Cadence/Prelude Go-Live, Nov. 7
- 90 Day GLRA, Nov. 9
- Integrated Testing Round 5, Nov. 10
- CT Credentialing, Nov. 14–16
- PRCT Complete, Nov. 24
- Super User Training begins, Nov. 27

**DECEMBER**
- End User and Provider Inpatient Training Begins, Dec. 4
- 60 Day GLRA, Dec. 6
- Clinical Readiness Day, Dec. 6
- Integrated Testing Round 6 Complete, Dec. 8
- Cutover Dry Run, Dec. 13
- Shadow Charting Begins, Dec. 17

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