

Marin Community Clinics



ENHANCING INTERACTIONS, VITAL SIGNS ACQUISITION + EFFICIENCY

Outgrowing your existing facility can be a big problem, especially when cramped space is impacting staff efficiency and patient comfort. But, it also brings new opportunities and the chance to start anew with a blank slate for workflows and equipment that enhance the patient experience and improve operations.

This was the situation for Marin Community Clinic as its leaders realized that one of their current facilities was no longer large enough to support the number of patients they were seeing and the type of care they wanted to provide.

Marin Community Clinics, an independent, nonprofit organization, has provided compassionate and affordable healthcare to uninsured and low-income residents of California's Marin County for more than 43 years. As the largest community health center in the county, they serve more than 35,000 individuals every year in their five clinics spread throughout the region. They provide a full range of primary healthcare, as well as dentistry, behavioral health, obstetrics and gynecology, family planning, optometry, chiropractic and some specialty services.

MIDMARK PRODUCTS USED BY MARIN COMMUNITY CLINICS:

- Midmark 625 Barrier-Free® Examination Chairs
- Synthesis® Cabinetry
- Midmark® Workstations
- Wall-Mounted Midmark® Digital Vital Signs Devices
- ECG Systems
- Spirometers
- Ritter® 253 LED Exam Lights
- Ritter® Air Lift Stools
- Midmark Side Chairs

CAPITALIZING ON CONTINUED GROWTH

Marin Community Clinics has always embraced growth opportunities, having grown from humble beginnings where volunteer physicians and nurses saw patients in church basements to a modern provider striving to offer modern facilities, the latest technology and sophisticated diagnostic, treatment and prevention programs.

Susan Wiebers, senior director of medical services for Marin Community Clinics, embraced the organization's latest growth pains as another opportunity to enhance the level of care provided to patients.

"Our patients love the new clinic. We've even had patients tell us that the new facility is 'very fancy' and the perception is that the quality of care they now receive is higher—even though we've always delivered high quality care."

Susan Wiebers
Senior Director
of Medical Services

"As we reached capacity with one of our facilities, we identified another building near our property we could completely remodel for a new clinic," said Wiebers. "Since we enjoy a good relationship with Midmark, it made sense that we would work with them to equip and configure this new space."

The Midmark team worked closely with Wiebers and her staff to set up a simulated exam room where equipment and workflow options could be introduced and discussed.



INCREASING VITAL SIGNS EFFICIENCY + ACCURACY

As part of the new layouts, vital signs acquisition was one of the processes that received an update. When the clinic first opened, there was a vital signs station in the hallway. It wasn't unusual to have patients lined up in the hallway, waiting their turn.

"The Midmark team conducted an onsite workshop where we got a chance to see which equipment would work with what we wanted to accomplish. They also did a wonderful job of helping us design a workflow that fit our needs, including increasing vitals efficiency and accuracy," said Wiebers. "The end result was a completely different exam room than what we had in the old facility. That could be daunting for some clinics—to employ an exam room totally different than what's familiar. But, it honestly made us more excited for the project because we saw the potential for better care and a better experience for our staff and patients."

"We eventually eliminated the hallway vital signs station and moved vital signs acquisition into the exam rooms. It was still done manually, so it took at least three to four minutes per patient to capture the vitals we needed," said Wiebers. "In our new facility we

have the Midmark 625 Barrier-Free® examination chair with integrated digital scale, as well as the Midmark® Digital Vitals Signs Device to automate the process and trim the acquisition time down to about one minute per patient."

"We also integrated this with our electronic medical records (EMR) so we no longer have to manually enter the vitals information into our system. Our caregivers used to write everything down on a piece of paper and then leave the room to enter the information at a workstation. By automating the process and keeping it in the exam room, we have increased efficiency, further ensured data accuracy and allowed our caregivers to spend valuable additional minutes interacting with the patients."

Wiebers believes the readings themselves can better reflect the true state of the patient. And, studies show that manual transcription of vital signs data produces a 17 percent rate of error on average¹. Not only are



caregivers able to spend more time interacting with patients, but readings are more accurately recorded, as well.

"Now patients come in, get on the table and we can take all their vitals from there. Since we no longer have to walk patients to and from each station, we are able to more consistently capture a resting heart rate. This is especially important for our elderly patients. We also like how the exam table automatically calculates body mass index (BMI), eliminating the chance for any errors from manual calculations or entry."

Wiebers points out that staff training was a major factor in the clinic being able to utilize the new vital signs equipment to effectively enhance patient care.

"It's important that you have the right type of training, otherwise you could have a bumpy start. If there is no, or very little, focus on the medical and workflow components connected to the equipment, your staff will learn how the equipment works, but they won't really understand the best way to use it in the practice," said Wiebers.

"We partnered with Midmark for onsite training to help everyone have a better understanding. They showed us the best way to use the equipment and pointed out features we weren't aware of that could further enhance workflow."

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allows caregivers to maintain eye contact with the patient at all times. It is also a great teaching tool. It's easy to use to move the monitor around so the patient and family members can see charts, information, etc. We do a lot of group visits, and it's easy for us to just wheel in the cart with everything on it."

"Besides the quality and durability of the equipment and casework, the thing I like the best about Midmark is that they stand behind their products," said Wiebers. "The Midmark team is fast to respond whenever we have an issue or question; they are ready to help us troubleshoot and figure out the right solution."

ENHANCING PATIENT INTERACTION + SATISFACTION

"Our patients love the new clinic. We've even had patients tell us that the new facility is 'very fancy' and the perception is that the quality of care they now receive is higher—even though we've always delivered high quality care."

The physicians and caregivers at the facility especially like the Midmark® Workstations.

"The workstations are an amazing perfect fit for our facility! It's easy to move around and enables us to bring all our supplies to the point of care. Having the monitor on the cart also