

IT Services and Consultants for the Healthcare Industry and Governments Nationwide Offering a Full Suite of Managed Services



April Cleek
Founder, President & CEO
EHR Concepts

CEOCFO: Ms. Cleek, what was the vision when you started EHR Concepts?

Ms. Cleek: I was a consultant in the healthcare industry myself and specialized in electronic health records. Having worked closely with many clients across the country, I knew the need for knowledgeable support in that area was great. I had developed a passion for closing the gaps between patient care and technology and it was this passion that drove the creation of EHR Concepts. Already knowing a great number of experts in the field and a network of industry leaders, I was able to create a company that would deliver high quality services while at the same time, offer opportunities for an organization where people actually wanted to work.

CEOCFO: As a description on your site it indicates, open, honest, fun loving group of “Non-Consultants”. What is the vision today and what are you providing?

Ms. Cleek: Since the creation of EHR Concepts, we have expanded our services in many ways--the most recent was the addition of government services centered around the IT space. While our service offerings have expanded, our vision today is the same as it was the day I opened the doors which is to offer superior healthcare IT services and to become the vendor of choice for clients nationwide. Our professionals are experts who bring insight and knowledge to each client by working collaboratively with them and becoming an extension of their team, this is what we mean by “non-consultants.” Unlike other staffing firms, our focus remained in the healthcare IT space which really allows us to offer very broad services to our clients with resources that are very focused in their area of expertise.

CEOCFO: Would you tell us about the range of services that you offer and what people are most taking advantage of, as well as areas that are overlooked?

Ms. Cleek: In the healthcare IT space, we offer everything from project management to integration and reporting services. Specifically related to EHR support, we offer training, implementation, and configuration. We have an entire program focused on optimizing EHR applications for clients that was perfected and overseen by Lean, Six Sigma certified experts. We have also partnered with various vendors to offer add on solutions designed to streamline application support for the end user, such as our Live Chat product.

Lately many clients have been taking advantage of our legacy support offerings. With years of combined experience and extensive knowledge in the applications, clients trust that we can maintain and support their current EHR as they move forward with implementing something new, which we can also help support.

While I would say that it is far from “overlooked”, I think some may not realize that we also offer staffing services. Having worked with the best in the industry, it places us in a prime spot to identify perfect candidates for full time placement needs.

CEOCFO: With so much being thrown at the healthcare system as to technology, implementation and regulation, how do you get attention? How do you reach out to prospective clients and how do they find you when looking?

Ms. Cleek: Prior to starting the business, I had already created a name for myself with many large, major medical centers so I was personally well known in the industry already. Based on my reputation, hospitals began working with our firm with the security of knowing that we truly delivered subject matter experts. From there our company grew organically and we received a lot of interest due to referrals, which is truly the greatest compliment for any business. For example, a

successful implementation with the University of Massachusetts Memorial Medical Center led to a referral to Hartford Healthcare Systems and so on. Our reputation sets us apart.

We also attend a number of conferences in the industry, often presenting valuable information to the clients while we are there. We have hosted a number of webinars and offered application specific newsletters to our clients with tips and tricks. We are big advocates of knowledge sharing.

I am also a member of the HIMSS chapter here in Georgia and am a certified Woman Owned Business, which also generates interest.

In regards to expanding our government line, we are partnering up with organizations that are looking for diversified vendors within the healthcare space.

CEO CFO: *What are some of the challenges in working with the government sector?*

Ms. Cleek: When we first entered the government contracting space, it was immediately evident that doing business with the government is a completely different world with its own language, restrictions, rules and strategies. As a women-owned small business that, up until that point, had done business primarily with the private sector, it was definitely a challenge to navigate. We decided that our best approach was to go all in, so we formed EHRGov, a division of EHR Concepts that is solely focused on the Federal market. We hired industry veterans who spoke the language of government contracting, program managers who have been in the trenches at federal agencies, and secured business development staff who understood the capture lifecycle and how to write winning proposals. We got our past performance in order, developed a competitive benefits program, got a DCAA compliant accounting system and invested in the tools we needed to be successful. It was a challenge, but paid off because we are now equipped and able to be a very valuable partner in the government sector.

“I had developed a passion for closing the gaps between patient care and technology and it was this passion that drove the creation of EHR Concepts... I would like to believe that our work speaks for itself; that we leave a legacy wherever we go.” - April Cleek

CEO CFO: *Why was this the time to move into the government space?*

Ms. Cleek: At EHR Concepts, we live and breathe healthcare IT. The government's recent focus on implementing a standard for interoperability with the use of EHR and numerous incentive programs such as meaningful use makes now one of the most exciting times for companies in our industry to partner alongside Federal agencies. Now, more than ever, we have the opportunity to be a part of improving the healthcare experience in America through the use of technology. The recent award for the implementation of a new DOD EMR system to public health and data initiatives at Health and Human Services agencies allows for many opportunities within government contracting. Leidos/Cerner won this contract and leaves sub contractors such as us with an huge potential. From a personal standpoint, I began my career as a HIT government contractor, training and implementing the previous DOD EMR at military hospitals across the country and abroad. Prior to joining EHRGov, our Director of Government Services supported the CDC and NIH by managing multiple public health, life science and IT contracts for last 8 years - so, needless to say, we are all personally invested and excited.

CEO CFO: *Where do you focus your humanitarian efforts? How do you decide on what projects?*

Ms. Cleek: For starters, my husband is a Purple Heart Veteran. He served in the Army and was wounded in Afghanistan, so we have worked with multiple organizations that are centered around disabled veterans, since that hits close to home for us. I personally went through infertility, and could not get pregnant. After finally going through the IVF process I was blessed with twins and now have four children. We have worked with many infertility centers, as well as pregnancy centers to help families in need that cannot afford adoption or IVF. We have also been involved with humanitarian relief work in Africa, Asia, India and Guatemala, where people internally at our company have wanted to go and do relief work, ranging from working in an orphanage to feeding programs or building homes. Therefore, we have sponsored those trips. In five years we have given away over a half million dollars in relief work and aid. In addition, we are considering starting a foundation in 2016, centered around the infertility route and couples that would like to have a family but just cannot afford it.

CEO CFO: *With such a full plate, how do you put everything together and have a balance?*

Ms. Cleek: I get asked this question all the time. I started my company five years ago and have had four children in three years. My response is always the same. It is the people around me that make my world go round. I have an incredible

support team, both professionally and personally. I have a really amazing husband who supports me. As a mom and CEO I find balance by creating boundaries for myself to ensure that I am able to give my children 100% of my time when I am at home, and my company 100% of my time when I am there.

CEO CFO: *Do most of your clients work with all parts of EHR Concepts or look for one area, such as training or implementation?*

Ms. Cleek: That is a great question. In the first few years of our existence, we were viewed more as a boutique; a small company focused on training and implementation. So it took a while for clients to realize that we offered a full suite of services. In the last year we have also put more focus on becoming more of a robust managed services firm, offering managed services on a greater scale to large organizations. Many hospitals are transitioning off of systems that they started with early on, perhaps switching from Allscripts to Epic or vice-versa. When that happens they typically chose one or two strong vendors to manage the legacy support and we are being chosen for a great deal of those projects. They include the full suite of services from Help Desk support to executive level leadership. Therefore, in the first few years we were only recognized for our specialty services, but now we are starting to get recognized as a full suite managed service partner.

CEO CFO: *Are you able to ramp-up or bring in personnel, if you have a great number of engagements that come your way at one time?*

Ms. Cleek: Absolutely! This past year is a perfect example, where we had one client that needed 150 resources at one time. In addition to our existing team, we do have a couple of strategic partners that we can work with to provide those additional resources if needed. We also have seasoned recruiters and account managers that are on an as needed basis. Therefore, we have figured out a way to deliver quickly, with excellence, and have a methodology in place to ensure project success for the client.

CEO CFO: *Put it all together for our readers. What should people remember about EHR Concepts?*

Ms. Cleek: I would like to believe that our work speaks for itself; that we leave a legacy wherever we go and that we are not just another firm that comes in, does the required work and leaves. We pride ourselves on building lasting relationships with clients by becoming an extension of their core team. I personally go onsite to meet clients and ensure expectations are not only met but exceeded. In addition, I also ensure that our consultants are happy by creating a collaborative environment in which they can thrive. I am very adamant about the people that we hire and our mark in this industry, professionally and personally.

We are a larger organization, but we deliver like a boutique.

We are true experts who deliver the first time, every time.

We are ordinary people with an extraordinary devotion to sharing our knowledge.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEO CFO Magazine



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