



May 16, 2008

Quick Links

[CAP Home](#)

[Risk E-Notes Archive](#)

[CAPsules Archive](#)

[CAP Risk Management
& Patient Safety](#)

[Contact Us](#)



Clinical Data Tracking Software

Did you know that you may already have a computerized clinical data tracking system in your practice management software?

Tracking important clinical data, such as lab results, diagnostic tests, and referrals to specialists, helps your physician avoid delays in rendering a diagnosis or in providing necessary medical treatment.



Some software systems have specific fields to record and track data. Others are more generic and allow your office to customize reports. Ask your software vendor for help in utilizing these features in your practice management software.

If your software generates reports, we recommend that you establish the following office procedures:

- Run a tracking report at least weekly. (This can help your office determine which patients' tests and referrals are still pending).
- Review incoming clinical data. Check off clinical data/reports you have received. (This lets you know what test results or referrals are still outstanding).
- Before filing, give the clinical data/reports to the physician for immediate review and intervention.
- The procedure should include that the physician documents his/her review of the report. The physician's initials and date of review should be written on the report. (This creates a timeline for defense against allegations that the physician did not monitor or supervise the patient's health care in a timely fashion).
- Make sure the physician or designee notifies the patient of their results and documents in the medical record what advice was given.

- Amy McLain, RN, BSN and
Ann Whitehead, RN, Esq.
CAP Risk Management & Patient Safety

If you have any further questions, please use the "Contact Us" button to the left.

Published comments of this information should not be considered legal advice applicable to a specific situation. Legal guidance for individual matters should be obtained from a retained