



Clinical
Case Study

DCA Vantage Analyzer

Metabolic Disease Associates, Erie, PA

www.siemens.com/diagnostics



“It’s much easier to show patients what their results are right in the office and say, ‘You know this is what you need to do’ rather than call them on the phone trying to tell them what to do. This helps tremendously in patient adherence.”

Debi Welsh
Lab Manager
Metabolic Disease Associates

Quality Makes Everyone a Winner at Busy Endocrinology Practice

According to Debi Welsh, lab manager, Metabolic Disease Associates (Erie, Pennsylvania) is the largest endocrinology practice between Cleveland, Buffalo, and Pittsburgh. The practice employs two physicians (an endocrinologist and a pediatric endocrinologist), a diabetes educator/registered nurse, a registered dietician, and one part-time and seven full-time physician assistants. The lab is certified to perform both CLIA-waived and CLIA moderately complex tests. Welsh and a technologist perform a variety of tests on an immunoassay analyzer and operate three DCA Vantage® Analyzers, which are kept busy during office hours with the 75 to 100 patients a day, about 70 percent of whom have been diagnosed with diabetes.

In-Office A1c as Standard of Care

Welsh explains that in-office A1c testing is a powerful patient management tool for the physician, since results can be used to give patients face-to-face feedback and counsel patients as well as adjust treatments while the patient is still in the office. For patients, not having to make a separate trip to the lab is a convenience factor, not to mention doing away with the blood draw, since the DCA Vantage Analyzer requires only a finger-stick sample. Thus, at Metabolic Disease Associates, A1c results, along with blood glucose and a routine urinalysis, are ready for physician review in the exam room when patients come in for their follow-up visits, which occur every three months. The A1c analyzer, therefore, plays a critical role in the practice.

Answers for life.

Quality Saves Time

According to Welsh, her lab had been using DCA Vantage Analyzers for some time, but switched to another test three years ago because the analysis time was three minutes (instead of six minutes on the DCA Vantage Analyzer). After one year of quality problems, Welsh switched back to the DCA Vantage Analyzer.

Metabolic Disease Associates went back to the DCA Vantage Analyzer two years ago, and the three DCA Vantage Analyzers have been running smoothly.

Ease of Use Boosts Productivity

Another advantage of the DCA Vantage Analyzer is the ease of use. There is no reagent to prepare. The simple process of filling the microcuvette, putting it in the cassette, and putting the cassette in the analyzer requires very little hands-on time. Maintenance is just as simple. The reliability of the analyzer is also a plus.

Welsh comments that she had to promise the technologist who works with her never to switch A1c analyzers again, for fear of the technologist's "quitting her job" if she did.

"We had a lot of error codes with the other system. The extra three minutes we need to get a result from the DCA Vantage Analyzer is nothing compared to the headaches we had with the other analyzer. When we had an erroneous result, we had to find the patient and re-test them. And if the result still didn't come out correctly, we ended up not having the results to review with them while they were still in the office. This became a hampering effect right down the line and it affected the patients' appointments."

Debi Welsh
Lab Manager

Better Patient Care Is the Key

Welsh points out that a smooth A1c testing process and dependable, high-quality results allow the practice to focus on helping patients get tighter control of their diabetes. The lab benefits from consistent workflow rather than time spent troubleshooting. The physician assistant and the physician have the results ready when the patient is in the room. The immediacy of providing feedback while the patient is still in the office is a significant advantage.

In summary, the quality of the result, the time saving for everyone in the practice, the convenience for the patient, and the convenience for the physician assistant and physician are reasons that Metabolic Disease Associates considers the DCA Vantage Analyzer an integral part of the practice.



"We've had these three analyzers up and running for two years solid and we have not had a problem."

Debi Welsh
Lab Manager

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Order No. A91DX-POC-110695-GC1-4A00
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