Medplum
by Operations Manager

Headless EHR   **Electronic Health Record**

Details

Review Date	10/04/2023
Purchase Date	Q1'21
Implementation Time	3 months
Product Still in Use	Yes
Purchase Amount	Flat Monthly Fee
Intent to Renew	N/A
Review Source	Vendor

Product Rating

Product Overall		4.5
Use Case Fit		4.5
Ease of Use		4.5
API		5.0
Integrations		4.5
Support		5.0
Value		4.5

About the Reviewer

Purchasing Team   **Implementation Team**

Product Oversight

Reviewer Organization

N/A

Reviewer Tech Stack

N/A

Other Products Considered

N/A

Summary

- **Product Usage: The product is used frequently across multiple teams, integrating well with various workflows and systems to manage and track customer data, orders, and results.**

- **Strengths: The product's strengths include being HIPAA compliant, a user-friendly API, affordability, robust security, stringent implementation, and dynamic adaptability for a wide range of scenarios.**

- **Weaknesses: A noted weakness is the product's basic user interface and the lack of some features initially tailored for lab testing.**

- **Overall Judgment: Overall, the product is reliable, useful, and easy to build upon using its API, making it a great choice for healthcare-oriented startups.**

Today, we're talking about Medplum. Could you give an overview of the company and describe your role when you were there?

Our company is an at-home diagnostics company serving health providers. I served as a Manager of Operations there.

What drove the need for a product like Medplum?

We needed a comprehensive patient data storage system that could store patient information, interactions with physicians, and lab data, as well as manage various review processes for lab results and new health tests. It served as the central data repository for the company.

Which criteria did you consider during this evaluation process?

We prioritized HIPAA compliance, a user-friendly API, affordability, and security.

Which other vendors did you evaluate, and how did they compare to Medplum?

We evaluated larger Electronic Medical Record (EMR) systems, including Siemens EHR, and an out-of-the-box, HIPAA-compliant data store that's no longer available in the market. Medplum stood out due to its clear, forward-thinking API, ease of deployment, stringent security, and HIPAA compliance.

How did the pricing models compare among these options?

The larger implementations, like the Siemens solution, were on-premise and charged per year as well as per user. In contrast, Medplum offered a flat fee per month.

How was your overall experience with the sales process, onboarding, and implementation?

The sales process with Medplum was very straightforward, partly because I already had a connection with them. As for onboarding and implementation, this is where Medplum shines. Their team is highly engineering-oriented, so implementation is a strong point. They were always available and set up a custom Slack channel to help us navigate any issues.

Could you highlight the specific use cases and features of Medplum that supported the end-to-end diagnostics workflow?

The primary use case was storing and tracking patient data and storing information about health orders through each stage: ordering tests, receiving and returning kits, lab processing, physician approval, and test result distribution. Essentially, it housed all our information. It was critical to our workflow, as our entire business revolved around managing health orders.

Was there a requirement to interface Medplum with any traditional lab information systems?

Yes, we partnered with certain labs for specialized tests and backup, so we created a custom integration for that. When we needed to outsource certain tests, the integration funneled orders to those labs and funneled the results back into our system. Medplum's API was quite user-friendly, which made it easy to connect with those systems.

Did you use any other core features within Medplum, such as provider or patient portals?

Yes, Medplum was used by our lab team and approving physicians to monitor and update the status of orders, and accept and release orders, as they progressed through the lab system. The warehouse also used it to create and manage new orders, including shipping out tests and updating the order status throughout the process.

Did you build any custom tools that integrated with Medplum, or did you use the Medplum UI?

We did build some custom tools for our warehouse team via the Medplum API, but the other teams used the Medplum user interface for their tasks. Medplum allows you to set up different views for various user types, which was very useful to us, as each user had to review orders, interact with patient data, and perform certain updates.

The warehouse team could probably have used this same feature, but due to their need for faster processing, batch processing, and integration with things like barcoding for shipping and receiving, we opted to create custom tools for them.

Which other features of Medplum did you use to help manage logistics?

Medplum served as our complete back-end tool. For instance, when a customer's package arrived with the sample, the USPS or UPS API would update this in the Medplum system, which would then alert the user. All of our status updates would be routed through Medplum.

We also had the option to subscribe to notifications and set up actions based on these. Medplum's robust engineering was certainly designed with the technical team in mind, although it may not have been quite as user-friendly for medical staff.

Was Medplum less effective for medical staff?

Medplum's UI was fairly simple. We could build custom tools on top of it, but initially, it lacked certain features that we needed for lab testing, which falls outside the typical healthcare provider's scope. We had to develop these through custom tooling, which wasn't overly challenging; the features just weren't initially present in Medplum.

What are the relative strengths and weaknesses of Medplum?

Medplum is an extremely developer-friendly product compared to other EHRs, and it's very future-proof. The FHIR protocol is very comprehensive and can accommodate a wide range of scenarios, from diagnostics and lab tests to physician approvals, making it highly adaptable.

As for weaknesses, the UI is very basic to begin with. On the plus side, that simplicity leaves a lot of room for flexibility.

Did you find the open-source element of Medplum useful?

We primarily extended Medplum's features ourselves or had them extended as needed. We didn't use or contribute much to the open-source aspect.

How would you rate the overall reliability and stability of the Medplum platform?

It was good – the platform was generally reliable. There were instances where issues arose, but they were resolved swiftly. This was during the platform's early stages, so I'd expect its reliability to have significantly improved by now. So, the performance was good, if not exceptional, considering the stage of the product.

How did you build on top of Medplum to support your unique use cases?

We made several enhancements to support our operations. On the warehouse side, we had to handle a large volume of orders daily, so we built special barcode scanning, bulk processing, and label-making webpages on top of Medplum.

On the lab side, we integrated features for recording the receipt of orders through a simple scanning system, and we built custom pages for these processes. We also added lab functionality that allowed scientists and physicians to approve and manage bulk orders.

We also built an API integration for analytics, but given the amount of data, we found it more efficient to dump the entire SQL database, which Medplum was able to facilitate. That should probably work for other users, too.

How would you describe the API documentation and the process of building on top of it?

It was exceptional; that's their forte.

Did you use any of Medplum's pre-built integrations with entities across the lab network?

No; those entities were essentially our competitors, so we avoided using them.

Do you have any advice for organizations looking to build on Medplum in similar ways?

While the software is somewhat raw and new, building on Medplum can prevent significant re-architecting later. It's an excellent platform to build on, particularly due to its emphasis on FHIR. It's a standard that's not commonly used in many health tech companies, but it's extremely beneficial for long-term codebase viability. It doesn't have all the features of larger systems such as Epic or Athena, but its flexibility allows for easy customization. I think it's what a modern EHR should look like.

How was your experience interfacing with the account management or support teams at Medplum?

Our experience was outstanding. Our account manager was continually available to help us. We had an open Slack channel with them, and they provided us with help, advice, and tutorials. Their support was truly top-notch.

Do you think choosing Medplum was the right decision?

Yes, I believe Medplum was a good choice. It's built the way telehealth companies should structure their products. If not Medplum, something similar should be considered because it seems to offer the right architectural framework.

Do you have any additional advice for potential buyers?

I think that Medplum is very well suited to high-scale startups.. It might be a bit too advanced for traditional settings like hospitals, but for a startup, Medplum should be a top contender.