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## **NEW ENGLAND ORTHOPEDIC SPECIALISTS INVESTS IN ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS SYSTEM FOR PATIENTS**

**PEABODY, MA, Nov. 14, 2006** – When the subject of advanced medical technology arises, it is often in the context of new diagnostics or treatment protocols. However, one of the most important developments is the ability to maintain and access patient records electronically. Electronic medical records (EMR) enable doctors to retrieve vital information 24 hours a day, resulting in enhanced patient safety, greater communication between doctors, and less possibility of medical errors.

Many hospitals have embraced the idea, but until recently, few private practices made the investment in this technology. New England Orthopedic Specialists, however, has been using EMR to enhance patient care for three years.

“Providing truly advanced medical care includes all aspects of the doctor/patient relationship. Investing in an electronic medical records system makes it possible for us to offer the highest level of sophistication throughout our practice,” said Todd O’Brien, M.D.

While most of the system is behind the scenes, patients will notice that O’Brien brings his tablet personal computer into the exam room, rather than paper-based files. All of the patient records – including lab tests, x-rays, MRI results, or surgical notes – have been scanned into the system and are readily accessible from the PC. All of the information has been encrypted to ensure security and patient privacy.

This paperless system also results in faster and more efficient communication between doctors at New England Orthopedic Specialists and outside the practice, such as a patient’s primary care provider. “We can email the primary care physician while we’re talking with the patient. This capability also streamlines the referral and billing process,” said O’Brien.

Improved patient safety is another key benefit of the system. As an example, O’Brien cited a hypothetical drug recall. “With the EMR system, we can search our entire patient database to determine who was given a prescription for the drug and get results in seconds, and then quickly generate a letter to alert the patient. With a traditional paper-based patient records system, this instantaneous capability is not possible,” he noted.

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EMR is just one of many technologies in which New England Orthopedic Specialists has invested. The group is the only orthopedic practice on the North Shore to offer digital x-rays, for example.

“Our goal is to leverage the power of technology to enhance patient care at all levels. A new feature that we want to bring to market is allowing our patients to schedule their appointments online 24 hours a day. The only way this is possible is to have the most current and up to date electronic medical record system. This will also allow our referring doctors to make appointments in our appointment books at their convenience, improving the care of their patients,” said O’Brien.

Located in Peabody, Massachusetts, New England Orthopedic Specialists (formerly Orthopaedic Trauma and Reconstructive Associates) is the premier orthopaedic care center in northeast Massachusetts. The practice is committed to providing patients with the most current, sophisticated, technologically-advanced treatments for virtually any orthopaedic need. New England Orthopedic Specialists is comprised of a diverse team of fellowship-trained, highly experienced and Board-certified physicians, each of whom focuses on a well-defined subspecialty within orthopedics. For more information, contact New England Orthopedic Specialists at 978-531-0800.

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