A conversation with Imran Chaudry, MD: Why he chose Medtronic's Customer Choice Rebate Program for his new OBL facility

Imran Chaudry, MD, FACC, Cardiologist, Monroe Cardiovascular Associates

1. Would you mind providing a brief overview of your background?

I completed my residency at University of Massachusetts (St. Vincent Hospital in Worcester, MA) and my Cardiology fellowship was through University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (Shadyside, PA). My Critical Care fellowship was performed at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York, NY.

After completing my fellowship, I have been practicing in Northeast Louisiana (primarily Rayville, Monroe, and West Monroe areas) for the past 25 years. I am currently the Chief of Cardiology at Glenwood Medical Regional Center. I see patients at our local area hospitals, as well as have my own practice with an office-based laboratory (OBL).

2. When and why did you decide to open your first OBL? How is practicing in the OBL different from your practice at the hospital, and how did you manage your pipeline of patients?

When I started my practice in the rural setting in 1998, there was not a cath lab easily accessible for my patients. The closest cath lab was 20–30 minutes away in a local area hospital, but my patients would come from an hour away to be seen in the office. I realized that a cath lab was needed; therefore, I made the decision with my partner at the time to start an OBL. Our primary goals for the OBL were to have a more family-oriented environment while providing personalized care and making it easily accessible for patients. Another reason for an OBL was to create more efficiency and accessibility to a cath lab for physicians who have busy schedules. Our patients love having the OBL because it allows them to be outpatient and avoid hospital admission. Patients also have remarked that they prefer how knowledgeable and experienced our staff has become. We have been fortunate in that we have been able to avoid any turnover since the start of our OBL in 2006. As our practice grew, the overall number of outpatient procedures increased as well. Over the past two years during the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for outpatient procedures has also grown. Our patients prefer coming into the OBL versus the hospital for their procedures to help prevent exposure to COVID-19.



Pictured above, left to right: Imran Chaudry, MD, FACC; Ramona Crow, MSN, FNP APRN-C; Mark White, RN, BSN, CCRN, and Director of Monroe Cardiovascular Associates.

3. What made you decide to move Monroe Cardiovascular Associates to a new facility? Were you concerned about relocating?

I decided to start a new OBL because the old OBL cath lab was at the end of its life and needed to be upgraded, and my partner decided to join a local hospital. I did not have the ambition of joining the hospital team; therefore, I started my own private practice with the plan of a new, upgraded OBL. The new practice was moved to a better location due to the difficulty of patients getting to the current practice. The goal was to move to an area that would provide the patients easier access to my office and provide them with upgraded equipment that would allow myself and my team the ability to provide the best possible care. My biggest concern was the amount of time it could take for a new lab to be installed. Working with Medtronic helped make this transition easier than I had anticipated.

4. Why did you decide to work with Medtronic?

We considered several different vendors to supply the new cath lab, but ultimately decided on Medtronic because of its leadership in the peripheral device space and the customer service we've experienced over the last 10 years as well as their relationship with GE Healthcare (GE). We knew we would be in safe hands when we considered this history of customer service and Medtronic's sales representatives. The sales representatives are always professional and knowledgeable when providing

product support to our staff and physicians. Medtronic, broadly, has also shown a dedication to supporting peripheral vascular treatments in office-based labs beyond just products. We put careful thought and consideration into who we work with, including weighing the benefits and any limitations, and Medtronic excelled in meeting our expectations.

5. What attracted you to Medtronic's Customer Choice Rebate Program?

Medtronic's Customer Choice Rebate Program helps our company by providing us the option to direct rebates earned on purchases of Medtronic products toward the cost of associated equipment. When we were considering capital for our new OBL location, we looked at both cost and longevity of the equipment. We learned that GE offers a brand-new cath lab system specifically for the outpatient market and it was priced more competitively than other vendors' refurbished equipment. The communication and service from both Medtronic and GE was extremely helpful in bringing everything together.

During the process of purchasing the OBL, Medtronic provided exemplary service. In the pandemic, we had major concerns about Medtronic's availability to meet with us, but Medtronic was able to adapt and schedule conference calls or Zoom meetings to review and answer any questions. After initial discussions, GE made several in-person visits to ensure we were able to choose the perfect equipment to meet our needs. After our decision on the best equipment for our facility, Medtronic and GE formulated an equipment and products plan that would help us to achieve our vision for our OBL.

6. Opening your new OBL provides you with the opportunity to apply learnings from your first experience. What did you do differently this time around?

Our original OBL was built around the office and was adjusted to fit to the office itself. This time our office is being customized for our OBL. We are taking into consideration the patient flow throughout the rooms and cath lab, a storage room designated only for cath lab equipment, and more workstations for our employees to allow for better efficiencies in documentation and record-keeping. Overall, I am using our experience from the past OBL, as well as optimizing the new OBL, to ensure the most efficient and easy maneuverability for both our patients and staff.

7. What advice would you give to other physicians opening a new OBL or expanding their OBLs?

The advice I would offer others is to take into consideration what is most beneficial for you and your partners when evaluating your financials. You should also consider what your vision is for your OBL. I would make sure that you do thorough research including looking at what types of procedures will be performed in your OBL and what resources are currently available in your location. After doing your research, I would then go with the company that is the most aligned to your goals and will be the company you want to continue to work with long after the sale of the equipment and products. I would not go with a company that just wants to make a sale. Another key factor is to ensure that you have knowledgeable staff that is well-trained and can multitask when needed (e.g., administration of medications, billing, documentation, etc.). Our goal is to provide a family-oriented setting that allows patients to feel relaxed and know that they are going to receive excellent care with the most up-to-date equipment. If you figure out your goal for your OBL and make sure you work with a company that aligns well, your outcome will be beneficial for your patients and broader community.

Note: Rebates on Medtronic products are available regardless of whether you purchase capital equipment. At any time, you may direct rebates earned to your capital purchase balance or receive payment in the form of a check. Capital equipment must be appropriately capable of use in the same procedures as Medtronic products. This program does not guarantee payment for capital equipment, and you remain responsible for your capital purchase balance if no rebate is earned or directed to that balance. You are obligated to report rebates earned to your state and federal payors in accordance with applicable law.