When he first opened his solo family practice in rural Williamston, N.C., Domingo Rodriguez-Cue, M.D., had to send his patients about 40 miles to the nearest laboratory for most blood testing they might need.

Dr. Cue and his patients often had to wait days for test results, and many samples were lost.

“As a physician who provides the full scope of family medicine, I need to be able to diagnose a broad scope of illnesses,” said Dr. Cue (pronounced QUAY). “It was very frustrating to depend on outside labs. The delays could be life threatening to my patients. I decided to look at point-of-care (POC) testing devices that would allow me to test patients quickly and accurately in my own office.”

After researching many POC instruments, Dr. Cue purchased the Careside System, which allows him to run a broad array of commonly ordered blood tests and receive results in just minutes, while his patients wait in his office. He can then write prescriptions or start other treatments immediately.

Dr. Cue credits the Careside Analyzer with saving the life of his patient Jeanne Ashmore. She was being treated by cancer specialists for brain and lung cancers, undergoing radiation, chemotherapy and steroid treatment. She arrived at Dr. Cue’s office complaining of extreme lethargy, and would suddenly just fall asleep. Dr. Cue ran her electrolytes in his Careside Analyzer and discovered that her sodium level was perilously low.

While Ashmore was transported to the hospital, Dr. Cue called the results of his lab tests to the emergency room staff. Upon arrival, they immediately started treatment for the sodium deficiency, which prevented her from going into a coma and dying, according to Dr. Cue. He said that Ashmore was likely within a half hour from death at the time she was in his office, so if she had been transported to the hospital and triaged in the emergency room with tests ordered there, she would likely have died.

The FDA-cleared Careside System includes the Careside Analyzer — which offers 41 FDA-cleared or exempt tests in the categories of chemistry, electrochemistry and coagulation – the Careside H-2000, a hematology device that gives complete blood count (CBC) results in just minutes, and the Careside Connect, a data acquisition and management system. The Careside Analyzer has the largest menu of any POC testing instrument on the market and provides test results within four to 12 minutes.

“I can run more tests here than the nearby hospital can,” Dr. Cue said.

*Continued on next page...*
CARESIDE Continued

The Careside System has enabled Dr. Cue to create an especially efficient office that provides faster, better service to patients while also improving his insurance reimbursement.

“The Careside Analyzer is really an amazing device,” Dr. Cue said. “It simplifies the practice of medicine by allowing me to receive fast, accurate test results. I am now able to quickly diagnose and make treatment decisions for many illnesses. I am able to download the results immediately into my wireless electronic sub-notebook that contains all my patients’ data, so I have all their information at hand during the examination.”

Dr. Cue, who has become a nationally recognized speaker on the benefits of physician office laboratories and the paperless office, has also utilized the Careside System to streamline the administrative and billing requirements of his practice.

The Careside Analyzer, which can be operated by non-technical personnel, has built-in quality control/quality assurance software that captures most of the data required by federal regulations of the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) of 1988. All patient data, including insurance and billing information, is entered prior to each test, which provides Dr. Cue with faster compensation from insurers.

The Careside Connect allows Dr. Cue to interface all his POC instruments for centralized, real-time data collection. The device uses proprietary, high-level software language to collect, store and display patient data from individual POC testing devices such as blood test analyzers, blood gas and blood pressure monitors, EKG’s, vital sign, fetal, maternal or urinalysis monitors.

“By having all my patient data and billing information computerized, I am now able to pre-certify all Medicare reimbursements, and I have very few denials from any insurance companies,” Dr. Cue said. “This allows me to increase my profitability without increasing patient load, which actually gives me more time to spend face-to-face with each patient.

“In my opinion, there is no downside to POC testing using the Careside System,” he said.

“They have helped me to greatly improve patient care and satisfaction, while economically streamlining the administrative side of my practice. This system benefits everyone.”

Using the Careside Analyzer has simplified his medical practice and insurance billing while also improving profitability, Dr. Cue says.