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MANAGEMENT
Practice Management, Medical Billing & Consulting
Maximizing Your Office Potential

6 Tips to Boost Billing & Collections

November 26, 2019

1. Educate your patients

Insurance is complex and is getting more so. Patients could use a bit of schooling. Copays, deductibles, and other medical billing terminology can be a bit of a mystery to most people.

Consider printing a sample flyer that explains billing basics that can apply to any insurance plan. Direct patients toward the customer service number on the back of their insurance cards for more detailed questions.

Educating patients on where to get more information can also help improve patient relationships. Patients often blame the doctor when billing problems are really between patients and their insurance provider.

2. Talk to your patients in an effective manner

Make sure your staff knows how to communicate with patients about their bills. Never ask patients whether they want to pay their bill now or later. Instead, offer a choice of two options for paying. Assume that they're going to pay and ask them if they prefer to pay by check or credit card.

3. Stay on top of claims

This is one of the most important things you can do to improve your bottom line.

File claims on time, daily if possible, and have a routine system for checking open claims.

Be sure to file amended claims when necessary and never miss a resubmission deadline.

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4. Verify insurance

Do this on the phone before and at every patient visit.

When you verify insurance, be sure to also confirm the patient's contact information. People change jobs, switch email accounts, ditch landlines and move across town but don't always remember to notify their physicians.

Regardless of how you send bills, be sure to avoid sending statements to the wrong address. Be sure you have a way to follow-up if patients don't pay to avoid payment delays.

5. Review your contracts

Take a little time at the first of the year to review your contracts with payers.

Make sure you are aware of any changes from the prior year, especially if those changes require a change in workflow, process or staff retraining. Note all filing deadlines for the year ahead. This is also a good time to make a chart of when your contracts come due, so you can plan ahead for any renegotiations.

6. Designate a go-to person for billing

Make sure you have one person on your staff who is thoroughly trained and experienced in all things billing.
Refer any staff and patient questions or issues to this person. Spend the time and money training your go-to person, too, as your revenue depends on their capabilities. It's also wise to cross-train in case your billing pro has to miss work for a lengthy period.