

## Medical Billing Outsourcing

Medical billing is a time consuming task best outsourced. In a busy medical office it is difficult to find the time to prepare medical billing quickly and efficiently. Outsourcing the task makes sense financially and it frees up office staff to do more important work. Medical billing companies allow your office to focus on its job, healthcare.

Office size clearly varies, but in small offices in particular it makes little sense to hire a physician's assistant and then have them sit and do medical billing. It can make even less sense to hire a medical billing expert complete with all the paperwork, benefits and complications that entails. Having a medical billing employee in the office means that you need to find someplace for them to work and pay for all their supplies. Since it is unlikely that medical billing will be a full time position it is simply not efficient use of space. An hourly employee's salary is likely to be quite variable. Outsourcing the task of medical billing with a medical billing company addresses all those issues.

Individuals that aren't properly trained in medical billing can make unintentional mistakes, take longer to file claims and create problems in consistency. Outsourcing the job of medical billing reduces errors and speeds up the process of reimbursement from insurance companies. A medical billing company takes responsibility for ensuring that all their employees are up to date on changes in policy, coding and standard billing practices. When you outsource your medical billing you have no employees to train, which gives you more time to focus on your patients.

Employee turnover is another difficulty you will face with in-house medical billing. If the employee who was responsible for your medical billing leaves you must quickly hire a replacement or face a drop in revenues. Finding someone with good medical billing training can be a time consuming process, and may result in forcing you to consider less qualified applicants. Hiring and training a new individual takes you away from running your practice. If you outsource the job to a medical billing company you never need to worry about that again.

It is not uncommon for a medical office to only collect 70% of their earned revenue when medical billing is done in-house. Because the most accurate way to pursue medical billing involves computer programs and regular follow-up, a part time employee in charge of medical billing simply doesn't have the resources to do the job properly. A medical billing company keeps records of bills submitted and when they are paid. Bills that aren't paid in a timely manner generate inquiries as a matter of course. Since they don't get paid until you get paid, you know that they are going to follow up with any carrier that isn't paying promptly. If the whole process of medical billing has been outsourced you don't get involved in any of the hassles.

Since an outsourced medical billing company works entirely on computers they reduce collection time by as much as half. Claims are usually paid in less than two weeks. When medical billing is managed at the office

the whole process is extended needlessly. Additionally, outsourcing your medical billing improves security. Having an impartial set of eyes evaluating your business expenses can help pick up any deviations from normal practices quickly.

In the final analysis a medical office is a business much like any other. Doctors are not usually trained in business practices; they had enough to learn at medical school without adding an MBA to their credentials. A good medical billing company will provide you with regular financial reports so that you can see where your money is coming from and which insurance providers are more likely to reject claims or delay payments unreasonably. Such financial reports can indicate what kind of patients you are seeing and they can even be useful when trying to negotiate lower malpractice rates.

Any medical billing service you consider should be HIPAA compliant. They should have well secured systems and be able to provide you a firm price based on your client load and office procedures. They should be able to negotiate appeals and manage delayed payments. All their employees should be properly screened and trained, and their training should be kept up to date. All this frees up your staff to work on building your practice and providing excellent patient care.

A medical billing service does something that can't be duplicated by in house staff. It frees up the doctor to practice medicine. By outsourcing medical billing you allow yourself and your staff to concentrate on the patients, and after all, that is why you went into the profession.