

ReDoc: Increasing Productivity and Reducing Costs at Bay Area Medical Center

Situation

Bay Area Medical Center (BAMC) of Wisconsin is a 99-bed general acute care hospital that provides an array of medical services to people throughout Menominee, Michigan and Marinette, Wisconsin.

BAMC offers a broad range of rehabilitation services – inpatient acute care as well as outpatient physical, occupational and speech therapy. Bay Area Medical Center's outpatient rehabilitation services are offered through its Bay Area Mobility Center and in two clinics in Northeast Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The rehabilitation practice at Bay Area Medical Center has grown steadily and the practice's staff, which includes six physical therapists, four physical therapy assistants, two occupational therapists, three occupational therapy assistants and two speech pathologists, sees 90-100 patients per day across its 3 outpatient locations.

With a consistent increase in patients the last several years, transcription staff in BAMC's rehabilitation department were becoming backlogged and therapists' dictations were taking up to three days to be returned. This delay was beginning to affect patient care, shortening the amount of time therapists had with patients, holding up plan-of-care approvals from patients' primary physicians, and delaying reimbursement from public and private payers. To manage its backlog, BAMC began purchasing transcription services. The cost of these services escalated as the practice continued to grow, and BAMC found itself paying up to \$90,000 annually for transcription.

Finding a Solution

Members of Bay Area Medical Center's rehabilitation staff, led by rehab services director Ann Kresl, OTR, began exploring IT solutions that would allow them to computerize their documentation processes and spend less time and resources on transcription. To be effective, the solution would have to work cross-discipline and be applicable to the needs of physical, occupational and speech therapists. The solution also would need to be compatible and able to interface with BAMC's hospital-wide information system, MEDITECH.

After testing several potential solutions developed for rehabilitation services, BAMC chose ReDoc from The Rehabilitation Documentation Company, Inc. The ReDoc system was an ideal fit for Bay Area Medical Center's needs. The system is one of the few designed to work seamlessly across physical, occupational and speech therapy and interfaces with MEDITECH.

Moreover, ReDoc was designed by a rehabilitation specialist with the specific needs of the field in mind. The system has a convenient format and flow that appealed to BAMC staff because it mirrors how they treat patients and follows standard clinical protocols. Also, the ReDoc system includes unique features such as the ability to be used at the point of care.

Results

Bay Area MC began rolling out ReDoc in its three locations in early 2007 – realizing positive results immediately.

While some customization of the system was necessary as BAMC rehabilitation staff got used to ReDoc, everyone acclimated quickly. In just a few weeks, therapists were doing 80-90

percent of their notes in the ReDoc system and were able to spend less time on administrative tasks and more time on patient care.

Specific benefits of the ReDoc system include:

- In just one quarter, BAMC reduced the amount it paid for transcription services from \$15,000 in Q1 2007 to \$6,000 in Q2 2007.
- With no backlog of transcriptions, therapists can submit patient plans of care to primary care physicians for approval much more swiftly.
- Because ReDoc allows clinic staff to enter charges while doing their documentation, BAMC's administrative staff members spend fewer hours – 1-2 hours per day – entering charges. This frees up time for activities such as securing prior authorization from insurers.
- Because ReDoc easily interfaces with MEDITECH, therapists' notes, evaluations and interventions go into the MEDITECH system in real time, therefore simplifying and accelerating patient billing and insurance authorization procedures.
- By significantly reducing the need for handwritten documentation, ReDoc nearly eliminates legibility issues and poor communications.

ReDoc also allows BAMC to more accurately track its billing and capture all revenue. Because the system exactly mirrors the current procedural terminology (CPT) and diagnosis (ICD-9) codes that are commonly billed, BAMC has begun to see its denials from private insurers and public payers such as Medicare and Medicaid decrease.