Driving Improved Point of Service Collections at University of Vermont Medical Center

Challenge

Like many healthcare organizations, the University of Vermont Medical (UVM) Center was seeing an ever-increasing portion of their accounts receivable (AR) coming from patients themselves, due to the rise in patient deductibles, coinsurance and copays. The organization was looking for ways to increase Point of Service (POS) collections to better capture this rapidly-increasing source of AR at the time of service, while trying to minimize the associated staff effort around it. The organization overall was experiencing highly variable collections from clinic to clinic, with staff often having challenges adjusting to the new reality of high-deductible health plans.

Similarly, the organization had few tools to track the performance of individual clinics and front office staff, to both reward top performers and tap their expertise to assist lower-performing staff.

A key challenge in driving collections was that front-desk staff found it difficult to identify patient liabilities quickly and accurately during check-in, while minimizing patient wait times and frustrations.

Transforming POS and smoothing the arrival workflow

Integrating the POS collections module into front-end workflows improved collections while saving time and energy for staff and patients alike. UVM Center reduced the sizable effort that had gone into identifying co-pays and other liability amounts from insurance cards and payer websites. With fewer incomplete EDI eligibility responses, staff now spend less time deciphering what a patient should pay.

Today, with the POS collections module integrated directly into the check-in process, front desk staff are presented with the right information at the right time as to patient liabilities. The rules engine in the POS collections module delivers visit-specific liability amounts in an automated fashion, saving UVM Center significant staff effort in the process.

Solution:

- UVM Center implemented Centricity Business and integrated the solution’s POS collections module into their workflow
- UVM Center partnered with GE Healthcare’s Optimization Solutions consulting team to ensure the implementation was tailored for their specific workflows and payer needs

Results:

The impacts were significant.

POS collections showed immediate improvement in the first nine months following implementation:

- An effective doubling ($990,000 increase) of POS collections across the enterprise
- A 67% increase in inpatient collections
- An 8% increase in copay collections on the outpatient side, where collection efforts were already well underway
Just as important, staff say patients are more open to taking care of liabilities prior to care, indicating that the increased collections are not coming at a cost of patient satisfaction. Finally, the module allows improved tracking as to which front desk staff and clinics are completing the workflows successfully. With improved documentation, the medical center is better able to address problems with specific staff or clinics where liability amounts are not being collected.

"Implementing GE Healthcare’s Point of Service collections workflow played a significant role in helping us essentially double our time of service patient collections, year over year. It helps end users by putting the right information in the right place at the right time – with the result being far better cash collections."

Shannon Lonergan, Director of Patient Access, UVM Center

About University of Vermont Medical Center
The University of Vermont Medical (UVM) Center is a 447-bed tertiary care regional referral center that provides advanced care to approximately one million residents in Vermont and northern New York. Part of the University of Vermont Health Network, the UVM Center serves as a community hospital for some 150,000 residents in Chittenden and Grand Isle counties. For six consecutive years, the UVM Center has been recognized as a top performer among leading academic medical centers participating in the annual Vizient Quality and Accountability Study, recognized as the most rigorous and credible analysis of its kind.

University of Vermont Health Network has five partner hospitals serving the residents of Vermont and northern New York. More than 4,000 health care providers throughout the region work together to offer high-quality care more cost-efficiently and as close to home as possible.

About GE Healthcare
Harnessing data and analytics across hardware, software and biotech, GE Healthcare is the $19 billion healthcare business of GE (NYSE:GE). As a leading provider of medical imaging equipment, with a track record of more than 100 years in the industry and more than 50,000 employees across 100 countries, we transform healthcare by delivering better outcomes for providers and patients.