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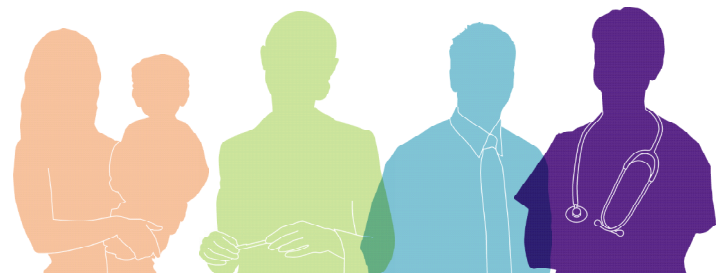
-Naomi Osugi, Billing Specialist

Apex Cardiology, an Inglewood, California-based practice, provides a full range of cardiology services to improve the cardiovascular health of its patients. Its seven renowned expert physicians, multi-boarded in internal medicine, cardiovascular diseases, nuclear cardiology, interventional cardiology and cardiac electrophysiology, see nearly 200 patients a day.

Running a practice with time and budget constraints while maintaining staff and physician satisfaction can be challenging. Apex needed a fast and easy way for its seven-person billing department to access patients’ financial, administrative and clinical information prior to submitting a claim, or even preferably, prior to care. Nearly half of Apex patients are covered by Medicare.

Naomi Osugi, billing specialist for Apex Cardiology, said, “Managing claims for Medicare patients is a particular challenge, as patients’ Medicare plans, eligibility and benefits often change.”

To alleviate the numerous challenges of communicating with multiple health plans, Medicare included, Apex began using NaviNet, America’s largest real-time healthcare communications network. NaviNet connects more than 800,000 providers with health plans across the nation – all from one, secure Web portal. In October 2007, Apex began using NaviNet Medicare Eligibility to access patient eligibility, benefits, claims status information and clinical histories and saw its value almost immediately, such as time savings and lowered administrative costs, increased revenue, and improved collections, patient care and satisfaction.



NaviNet Medicare Eligibility saves time on the phone

Prior to using NaviNet Medicare Eligibility, the Apex billing team would contact Medicare by phone to check patient eligibility and was limited to only three patient inquiries at a time. This added up to an average of 30 phone calls a day to Medicare.

Osugi added, "Now, from a single Web site, our billing department checks patient Medicare eligibility in real-time prior to appointments to ensure that the coverage on record is current."

Despite improvement in claims processing due to electronic submission, it could still take up to 14 days for Apex to determine if a claim was submitted properly and that the practice would be reimbursed in a timely manner. By using NaviNet Medicare Eligibility to access correct eligibility and benefits information before claims submission, the billing department became more confident that the claims they submitted were accurate, greatly reducing the possibility of denials based on incorrect coverage information.

Improving patient relations

NaviNet Medicare Eligibility has also enabled Apex Cardiology to improve patient relations and service because Apex staff now have the data needed to discuss and provide accurate, up-to-date insurance information to their Medicare patients prior to care.

"All the information our billing department needs to do our job is now at our fingertips; which allows us to give attention to other pressing issues," said Osugi.

Apex Cardiology NaviNet users now spend 20 percent of their day using NaviNet Medicare Eligibility. The team credits NaviNet Medicare Eligibility for improved collections, revenue and patient care.

The NaviNet story

NaviNet was founded in 1998 on the basis that America's healthcare industry can be made more inclusive, transparent and cost-effective by connecting providers, health plans and industry partners in real-time. NaviNet is deeply committed and singularly focused on this vision and has worked for more than a decade to make this powerful concept a reality. Today, NaviNet is America's largest real-time healthcare communications network. We foster collaboration and help government, health plans and providers improve the quality of healthcare and reduce its cost. How? By securely linking over 800,000 providers – as well as our nation's leading health plans and industry partners – through a single, secure Web portal. In a time when access to healthcare is a critical issue, NaviNet's advanced solutions, services and expertise streamline all our participants' business processes and drive industry-leading innovation.



NaviNet

Where healthcare comes together.

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