

MEETING TODAY'S REIMBURSEMENT CHALLENGES:

A CASE STUDY

FOR SUCCESS

Presented by

Caryl A. Serbin

*President and Founder
Serbin Surgery Center Billing, LLC*



and

Becky Ziegler-Otis

*Administrator
Ambulatory Surgical Center
of Stevens Point*

TYPICAL SIGNS OF A TROUBLED CENTER



- Days in A/R 
- Revenue 
- Non-compliant
- Inefficient



- A/R increasing
- Not collecting all available revenue
- Worried about compliance
- Behind in billing

CENTER HISTORY

- **When evaluated, Center open less than a year**
- **Multi-specialty**
- **Two operating rooms**
- **Medicare certified**
- **100 cases/month average**
- **Clinic and ASC same site**

SPECIALTIES

- **Orthopedics**
- **Ophthalmology**
- **Pain Management**
- **Urology**
- **Podiatry**
- **General Surgery**
- **Plastic Surgery**

EVALUATION REQUEST

- **The ASC of Stevens Point requested that our company perform a reimbursement cycle evaluation to determine if:**
 - 1) their processes are efficient**
 - 2) their reimbursement is optimized**
 - 3) they are meeting compliance guidelines**



*EVALUATION
FINDINGS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS*

CENTER INFORMATION

- **Open for 10 months**
- **Semi-rural area**
- **Solely owned by physician and non-physician partners**
- **Average case volume – 80-100 month**
- **Physician clinic same building**
- **Clinic staff doing billing – payroll reimbursed by ASC**

PAYER MIX / RATES

- **Payer Mix**

Medicare	Medicaid
BCBS	W/C
PPOs	Indemnity

- **Contract reimbursement mixture of:**
 - **percentage of Medicare groups**
 - **discount off billed charges**

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PROCESSES

- **Using practice software**
 - ***Recommend purchasing ASC software***
- **No CMS list of ASC covered services or matrix of insurance contracts**
 - ***Recommend providing both to scheduler and insurance verifier***
- **No up-front collections**
 - ***Recommend notifying patient of financial responsibility before DOS***

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

REIMBURSEMENT

- **Billing not up-to-date**
 - *Recommend hiring additional staff or outsourcing*
- **Coding inaccuracies identified**
 - *Recommend coding audit by certified coder – rebill where necessary*
- **Not following up on submitted claims**
 - *Recommend audit to determine timely filing, refunds, resubmission claims*

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

COMPLIANCE

- Receptionist making patient contact calls
 - *Recommend moving these calls to back desk for HIPAA reasons*
- No notification to payer of OON
 - *Recommend notifying payer at time of verification and again at claim submission*
- No advance notice of financial policy to patient
 - *Recommend providing written policy prior to DOS via phone or brochure*

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Review fee schedule**
- **Contact insurance network to request insurance contracts**
- **Changes in staffing tasks**
- **More separation between Clinic and ASC**

A large black arrow pointing to the right, centered on a white background. The arrow has a thick black outline and a solid black fill. Inside the arrow, the words "BOARD DECISIONS" are written in a white, bold, italicized sans-serif font.

BOARD DECISIONS

PLANNED CHANGES

- **Revise fee schedule**
- **Request copies of payer contracts**
- **Outsource coding and billing**
- **Appoint new administrator**
- **Discontinue leasing employees**
- **Adopt business office recommendations**

"WIN-WIN" RELATIONSHIP

- **Teamwork**
- **Common goals in improving reimbursement**
- **Excellent communication**
- **Desire to grow the center**
- **Value compliance**

AMBULATORY SURGICAL CENTER OF STEVENS POINT



**Presented by
Becky Ziegler-Otis
Administrator**

CHALLENGES

- **Practice software not meeting all ASC needs**
- **Billing outsourced to clinic billing staff resulting in:**
 - **overwhelming volume**
 - **increase in errors due to lack of ASC billing knowledge**
- **Revenue stream reduced to trickle**

CHALLENGES

- **Days in A/R escalating**
- **Claim backlog growing**
- **Denial rate climbing**
- **Cost of staffing and supplies as a percentage of revenue continuing to increase**
- **Non-compliance concerns mounting**



*CHOICES
TO BE MADE*

DECISIONS

1. Have center evaluated for efficiency and compliance

↓ AFTER EVALUATION DECISIONS
↓

- **Outsource coding and billing**
- **Incorporate suggestions received from evaluation**

CHOOSING A BILLING COMPANY

- **Specializes in ASC billing**
- **Experienced in your facility's specialties**
- **Reputation within the industry**
- **Uses only certified coders**
- **Understands and follows current compliance regulations**
- **Has up-to-date programs for HIPAA, Red Flag and RAC audits**
- **Performs internal audits**
- **Fees based on productivity**
- **No off-shore outsourcing**

CHANGES WE MADE

- **Appointed separate ASC Administrator**
- **Changed to ASC software**
- **Revised fee schedule**
- **Acquired copies of payer contracts**
- **Initiated use of bank lockbox**

CHANGES WE MADE

- **Created new insurance verification position**
- **Established process to collect co-pays**
- **Developed financial policies to handle self-pay patients, payment plans, financial hardship cases, etc.**
- **Made changes in business office task responsibilities**



ADVANTAGES

OUTSOURCING ADVANTAGES

- **Outsourcing company uses experienced billing staff whose only tasks are coding and billing**
- **Eliminates billing calls to center**
- **Reduction in front office staff results in:**
 - **less payroll and benefits**
 - **less computers and desks**
 - **more space**

OUTSOURCING ADVANTAGES

- **Allows ASC staff to concentrate on other tasks**
- **No worries about billing staff coverage for vacations and employee turnover**
- **Decreased A/R dollars and days**
- **Regular revenue stream**
- **Reduced compliance concerns**
- **Daily interaction with billing company**

RESULTS - ONE YEAR LATER

- **Outsource date - January 1, 2008**
- **100 cases per month**
- **Days in A/R decreased from 79-44 (25%)**
- **Over 120 decreased from 22% to 8%**
- **Average Collections increased from \$160,000 to \$250,000 per month**
- **Average Gross Charges increased from \$353,860 to \$584,055**
- **Meeting compliance guidelines**



*EVOLUTION
OF OUR
RELATIONSHIP*

THREE-STEP PROGRAM

1. Reactionary

- “just get us through it all”

2. Educational / Informative

- learning curve
- details important to ongoing survival

3. Advice / Consultative

- payer input
- compliance input
- collaborative team

"WIN-WIN" RELATIONSHIP

- **Teamwork**
- **Center able to focus on patient care**
- **Adding new physicians**
- **Increasing caseload**
- **Daily communication with billing company**
- **Billing company provides worry-free billing services**
- **Assists with business policies and procedures where applicable**



**NEED MORE
INFORMATION?**

- **Caryl Serbin**
- **239-274-1000**
- **cas@ascbilling.com**

- **Becky Otis**
- **715-345-0500**
- **beckyo@ascstevenspoint.com**



Certificate of Participation

Name

**Meeting Today's Reimbursement Challenges: A
Case Study for Success – Webinar**

Date