

Trident Medical Imaging Remittance Processing Case Study

Recent Federal Government healthcare initiatives include more rigorous enforcement of HIPAA regulations with increased penalties for breaches. In addition, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provides significant incentives for providers to adopt EMR technology. These new governmental initiatives have taken the focus away from some of the basic, cost saving solutions available to providers. Providers must now navigate a maze of new regulations while simultaneously finding ways to increase efficiencies and reduce operational costs.

The Case

Trident Medical Imaging is experiencing significant growth – both organically and through acquisitions. They are planning to broaden their healthcare presence in the region by taking on additional business lines which will increase claim volumes.

“We were in a growth mode, but needed to stabilize our A/R costs.” – Guy Messer, CFO

Operating as a central billing office (CBO), Trident manages the revenue cycle and billing operations for six stand alone locations - all of which are experiencing claim volume growth. Trident’s billing office staff was already working at peak efficiency. Posting payments was a challenge and the end-of-month posting and reconciliation process required a substantial allocation of overtime. Trident CFO, Guy Messer, actively investigated numerous solutions to increase

operational efficiencies without a significant outlay of capital.

“Printing out the electronic ERAs was cumbersome and time consuming. We were wasting a ton of paper!” – Crystal Gates, Director of Patient Accounts

In addition to posting paper EOBs manually, Trident was also manually posting their electronic ERAs because of the varying formats received from the payers. The ERAs were converted and printed on an EOB mock-up form and posted by hand. Further, Trident was processing a significant amount of paper to handle denials, secondary claims, patient billing, customer support and other follow-up activities. The volume and complexity of the transactions were clearly increasing and adding staff with the same level of expertise did not seem to be the best solution.

Trident understands the value proposition behind remittance process automation. They know that they can achieve a greater return on investment by leveraging technology to limit the increase in head count as they grow their business. Trident chose MediStreams as their remittance automation partner.

The Solution

In conjunction with Trident's Lockbox vendor, MediStreams arranged for all remittance-related images (EOBs, check images and correspondence) that are scanned at the lockbox to be electronically forwarded to MediStreams. In addition, Trident arranged for the electronic ERA files processed by their clearinghouse to be sent to MediStreams. The EOBs and payments are matched and a fully reconciled and customized posting file is produced using both the electronic (ERA) and paper (EOB) data.

"MediStreams worked directly with my practice management vendor," stated Crystal Gates, "The implementation process was fast and painless."

In addition, the EOB images are indexed, stored and made available online through MediStreams secure website portal. The ERAs are also indexed and stored as an easily viewable EOB and placed on the portal as well. This allows Trident's authorized users

to access their remittance information instantly, regardless of the format, by searching on any key field on the ERA/EOB, claim or check.

"Searching for a patient on the clearinghouse website required that I know the ERA where the patient was located – I had to hunt down each and every patient," stated Crystal Gates, "The MediStreams website allows me to search based on patient name or chart number regardless of how the remit arrived."

Additionally, the original billed claim data is shown directly on a HCFA-1500 form and is associated with the corresponding EOB or ERA. This makes denial management, secondary billing and follow-up a breeze. The result is an immediate improvement in time management, storage and retrieval costs.

Security levels are set and maintained by an administrator governing specific levels of access to individual users in the enterprise. Basic overview reports are generated showing daily running totals of outstanding claims, denials by denial reason, and denials by procedure or volume totals.

The Outcome

Trident is pleased with all aspects of the MediStreams service offerings. They find

the user interface of the website to be fast and user friendly. MediStreams worked closely with the Trident staff to complete a smooth implementation. Trident is now achieving the promise of lowering the cost per claim to post payments - thus insuring their ability to contain costs as they grow.

EOB posting accuracy immediately exceeded Trident's expectations. Paper storage and printing costs, as well as lockbox postage costs, were significantly reduced. Now, all remittance related documents are accessible on line.

"Posting time has been reduced significantly. We no longer have to work overtime hours posting remits." – Crystal Gates

About MediStreams

MediStreams is a healthcare revenue cycle management company with a focus on streamlining the remittance process. Our processes were built with flexibility in mind. We focus on integrating with multiple patient accounting and practice management systems in addition to adapting to the constant evolution of the healthcare space. MediStreams is SAS 70 Type II and HIPAA audited and is fully redundant with both onsite and offsite ISO 9002 data centers.

If you would like to learn more about how the MediStreams solution can work for you, please visit the MediStreams website at: <http://www.medistreams.com> or call us toll free at: (888) ANSI-835.

Executive-level dashboards and online reports offer both broad and detailed overviews of the transactions. This includes posting velocities, denials, revenues outstanding, payment cycles and additional measurements.

Duplicate claims and other denials can now be substantially reduced. The appeal process for denied claims is now enhanced and streamlined due to the ability to quickly retrieve and easily research each claim.

As a result, Trident's staff allocation is now positioned to generate more bottom line revenue for the company and handle significantly more volume without further investment in staffing resources.