



Healthcare: Case Study

EMPHASIZE CONTRACT COMPLIANCE, IDENTIFY UNDERPAYMENTS

The Client

Tucson Orthopaedics Institute, the largest orthopedic group in southern Arizona, offers comprehensive musculoskeletal care including operative and non-operative care, radiology and rehabilitative therapy. The private practice includes 63 providers located at six different facilities.

The Challenge

Tucson Orthopaedics' billing group struggled to identify when payers were underpaying them based on their contracted fee schedules, resulting in inaccurate reimbursements for their services. The billing office also needed a simpler way to price its services to better collect patient payments in advance. The practice had previously contracted with a vendor who provided tools to help support these processes, but found the tools challenging to use and too burdensome on the staff, and received insufficient customer support from the vendor. Tucson Orthopaedics also needed the ability to more closely monitor payer fee schedules and details associated with payer contracts so the practice could better negotiate contract terms. The vendor's product did not provide this functionality.

The Solution

Recognizing the need for a more robust solution, Tucson Orthopaedics signed on with TriZetto Provider Solutions® for its suite of revenue analytics tools: contract management, contract modeling and patient responsibility. With the contract management solution, the practice now can pull reports to easily uncover underpaid and denied claims, reducing the need to manually check each payment. These reports provide more insight into the group's reimbursements by identifying which pricing rules the payer applied. This provides clarity into why certain reimbursements amounts were received for specific services. Tucson Orthopaedics also uses the tool to automate the appeal process and reduce billing staff legwork by auto-populating payer-specific redetermination forms and medical appeal letters, along with necessary support documentation. In addition, the contract management solution helps the billing office uncover trends in its providers' reimbursements, such as which codes tend to yield the most denials and whether current Medicare rates are being applied. This information helps the practice correct any errors in billing to avoid further denials.

"TriZetto Provider Solutions' contract management tool is much more user-friendly than the competitor's version," said Linda Fimbers, revenue cycle senior lead at Tucson Orthopaedics. "More importantly, TriZetto Provider Solutions extracts data from the original payer explanation of benefits (EOBs). Our previous vendor only pulled data from what was entered in our system, which was subject to errors from transferring data from our system to the vendor's, or from issues related to the integrity of the EOB data posted in our practice management system. Now, we know that the claims data, pricing and coding edits extracted are more accurate because it represents exactly how the payer reimbursed that claim."

TriZetto Provider Solutions' contract modeling tool provided added capabilities to analyze the practice's payer contract options, a functionality that was not available with Tucson Orthopaedics' previous vendor. This tool goes beyond simple fee schedule comparisons by applying all payer-specific clinical edits and pricing rules to the practice's actual claim history. With this information, the billing office can more accurately measure whether a proposed fee schedule will provide an increase or decrease in revenue for Tucson Orthopaedics. It also saves staff time by reducing the manual process of building a fee schedule and analyzing proposed agreements before entering contract negotiations with payers.

In addition, the billing office is in the early stages of implementing the patient responsibility tool, which can quickly estimate how much a patient owes at the point of service, based on benefit information

and payer fee schedules, pricing rules and clinical edit rules. This will enable Tucson Orthopaedics to accurately price claims at the point of service, which helps improve patient collections.

The Result

Within the first year of using TriZetto Provider Solutions' revenue analytic tools, Tucson Orthopaedics experienced significant improvements in its revenue cycle. For example, the practice discovered that reimbursements were not matching a payer's contract, and was able to raise this concern. The payer reprocessed its reimbursements to provide Tucson Orthopaedics with the additional revenue it was owed, according to its contract. Altogether, the billing office has identified more than 6,500 denials over the past year.

"I love the depth of information TriZetto Provider Solutions provides," said Fimbers. "We now have access to reports that quickly isolate reimbursement issues, and I can easily slice and dice our claims data to understand what is impacting our reimbursement. When one of our physicians has a question about his reimbursement, I can get a good picture of what happened and why. Because these insights are so readily available in an easy-to-use format, we can more easily fix claims issues and collect the revenue we're owed." With strong contract modeling process in place, Tucson Orthopaedics now has a better understanding of the overall impact changing payer rules can have on their reimbursement. This will continue benefiting the practice as they enter negotiations over payer contract changes.

"I have been impressed by the depth of experience TriZetto Provider Solutions demonstrates when it comes to understanding payers," said Treg Pabst, chief financial officer at Tucson Orthopaedics. "Its tools are up to date with the latest changes to payer fee schedules and pricing rules, which helps me share accurate feedback with our physicians on their revenue cycle performance and recoup more revenue."

One of the most valuable improvements Tucson Orthopaedics has experienced with TriZetto Provider Solutions is proactive, one-on-one customer support. "Strong customer service was one of the primary reasons we switched to TriZetto Provider Solutions, and we have been very pleased with the ongoing support we've received from Danielle, our dedicated account representative," said Fimbers. "During the first six months of implementation, she touched base with us weekly to help answer any questions we had about the tools, and conducted one-on-one training calls with our providers to introduce them to the new system. She continues to keep a close eye on our performance to catch errors we may have missed and help us use the tools."

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