Navigating the changing coder landscape, Part 2:

How three organizations are managing staffing challenges and coding overload with 3M outsourced coding services

Difficulty recruiting, training and retaining. High employee turnover. Scheduling conflicts. These internal issues resulted in low staff productivity, inability to handle coding volume and an opportunity to improve coding quality.

To handle the volume of coding support needed, this organization successfully deployed outsourced facility, professional and specialty coders, as well as experienced auditors from 3M.

Challenges with unbilled revenue and coding quality sparked the need for an improved coding quality program. This organization recruited a new coding director through 3M’s outsourced coding services to help.

What’s next?

For more information, call 800-367-2447 or visit us online at www.3m.com/his.


Hospital #1

Annual admissions: 200,000+
Beds: 5,000+

Hospital #2

Annual admissions: 13,000+
Beds: 400+

Hospital #3

Annual admissions: 150,000+
Beds: 4,000+

By outsourcing their medical coding with 3M, these three organizations have successfully navigated the changing coder landscape.

Even when you educate from within and grow your own coders, that doesn’t mean you can keep them.

— Hospital coding director


Changing Medicaid payment models, the ICD-10 transition and seasonal fluctuations were straining processes, causing backlog and threatening this hospital’s productivity. The hospital needed additional coding support.

However, recent state regulations prohibited overseas outsourcing. The organization either had to recruit an internal coding team or find a domestic outsourcing vendor. Two dedicated coders from 3M were assigned to code outpatient surgeries. Supplemental coding support from 3M allowed the hospital to get back on track without having to recruit, hire and then terminate temporary personnel.

The new 3M coding director transformed operations by:

Improving consistency in coding quality
Reducing DNFB (days not final billed) days
Implementing work in new specialty areas
Providing quality assurance
Reducing backlogs

As the relationship between 3M and this organization grows, the new coding director is shifting from an active improvement role to a strategic advisory role.

What benefits has the organization seen?

Stability and increased care was achieved
Access to a wider range of experienced coders that was available locally

What improvements has the hospital seen?

Reduced backlog
Consistency in coding
Improved turnaround time

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The current state of medical coding

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates medical coding jobs will increase 13% from 2016–2026.

Demand for coders is lack of qualified candidates. To handle the volume of coding support needed, the organization successfully deployed outsourced staff, including professional and specialty coders, as well as experienced auditors from 3M.

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