

Five Ways to Reduce Costs Without Sacrificing Quality

Physicians need to lower overall costs of patients' care, as healthcare shifts to new reimbursement models. The following strategies can help doctors meet this requirement while maintaining – or even improving – the quality of care they deliver.



Understand patient attribution. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) attributes each patient annually to a physician based on the majority of primary care utilization. Private insurers use similar attribution methods. Payers determine your cost of care based on your attributed patients' medical costs, including payments to other providers. Make sure you understand who your attributed patients are – prioritizing those who are sickest – so you can address their health needs proactively and cost-effectively.



Coordinate care with other providers. As noted above, if your attributed patients see other doctors, the costs of that care will be attributed to you. Communicate with these other physicians to coordinate the patient's care and avoid duplicate services.



Manage inpatients. If your patient is admitted to the hospital, establish protocols to communicate regularly with the care team. If a patient enters a skilled nursing facility, manage their stay rather than simply handing them off. Keep in contact with the patient and the provider in charge of their daily care.



Increase patient engagement. Physicians can empower patients to maintain their health by educating them and reducing barriers to self-care. Follow up regularly with the patient (or caretaker) to ensure their needs are being met and to identify any changes to the patient's circumstances. Patients are especially vulnerable after hospital/ER discharge; primary care follow-up is essential within 24 to 48 hours.



Form a clinically integrated network (CIN). In a CIN, physicians share data and resources, enabling them to reduce overall costs of care and improve quality. One type of CIN – an accountable care organization (ACO) – is specifically designed for Medicare. A qualified enablement partner can help establish and manage the CIN, providing the support and expertise necessary for success.

Centralized Care Coordination

For help in implementing strategies 2, 3 and 4, an outside care coordination team can be a cost-effective option – especially for smaller practices.

In fact, Continuum's centralized care coordinators provide more than a dozen services that drive overall results. Learn more from our white paper on coordinated care.

Continuum offers a wide range of services to help physicians implement these strategies, and other methods to help patients and doctors thrive in today's changing healthcare environment. For more information, please contact Devon Renzi at 856.782.3300 x2419 or drenzi@continuumhealth.net.