

Kearny County Improves Revenue Cycle with TruBridge

Hospital, clinic reduce AR days with TruBridge Revenue Cycle Consulting



Background

Having the correct processes in place can mean the difference between surviving and thriving. Often the right processes stem from having the right product in place operated by people that understand the needs. But sometimes it takes a little help to ensure those processes are running smoothly.

Lakin, Kansas-based Kearny County Hospital knew they had opportunities to make changes, but were cautious going into a consulting agreement. Chief Financial Officer Kelly Ann Speckman saw an opportunity with TruBridge.

"I didn't feel like we were doing horrible, but we weren't doing great," said Speckman. "But, as I talked to my CEO about it, we decided it would be worth the investment because TruBridge would bring more in than what they cost us, which ended up being very true."

TruBridge offers a broad range of services designed to help hospitals improve all facets of their operation. From consulting and managed IT, to full business process outsourcing, TruBridge offers solutions that span the end-to-end revenue cycle. Kearny County decided that TruBridge Revenue Cycle Consulting was what they needed.

Discovery

After making the decision to utilize the TruBridge Revenue Cycle Consulting services, the team at Kearny County Hospital knew the first step would be the most painful – discovering what wasn't working.

Case Study Highlights:

- Hospital AR days went from 60 to 44, a reduction of 27%.
- Clinic closing days went from 80 days to 42, a reduction of 48%.
- Hospital discharge-to-bill-drop days went from 19 to 5, a reduction of 74%.

The team at Kearny County was introduced to TruBridge consultant Jennifer Kelly, one of many quality TruBridge consultants. And like at many smaller facilities, acceptance was not instant.

“She met a lot of resistance. It was really hard but she persevered,” said Speckman. “The great thing about Jennifer is that she wouldn’t just tell you to do something. She would tell you why, explain everything about it and make it logical to understand. After we understood it, we were more willing to accept it.”

Part of the road to improvement involves TruBridge learning about how the various processes work at a facility, and it was no different for Kearny County. TruBridge made sure to take the time to get to know how things worked.

“They needed to see what (our staff was) doing to understand how to fix what (our staff was) doing. The longer they were here, especially at the clinic side, the more they found because you don’t do every process every day,” Speckman said.

Results

Once Kearny County and the TruBridge consultant began to dig into what was going on and making various recommendations, positive developments began happening. On the hospital side, the AR days began to drop and claims were being processed faster.

Following their work at the hospital, TruBridge transitioned to the clinic side, to help them improve their processes, a welcome plan after seeing the success that was starting at the hospital. Clinic Patient Account Supervisor Mary Hoodenpyle said the clinic was ready for change, knowing their processes also needed to be improved.

Just a few months after implementing many of the recommended process changes, both the hospital and clinic saw the following improvements:

- Hospital AR Days went from 60 to 44, a reduction of 27%
- Clinic AR Days went from 80 to 42, a reduction of 48%
- Hospital discharge-to-bill-drop days went from 19 to 5, a reduction of 74%

“The bottom line for us is that they took the time to understand our processes and knew exactly what we needed to improve. The biggest value is they know so much about how revenue cycle operations should work in community hospitals,” said Speckman.

While the effect to both AR days and the time it takes to bill claims from the hospital was significant, the impact Jennifer Kelly had on the staff was just as impressive. Since Jennifer would always challenge their way of thinking the staff decided to create reminder bracelets emblazoned with the words “What Would Jennifer Kelly Do?”

Speckman is very happy with their success. They plan on continuing the relationship with TruBridge Revenue Cycle Consulting with quarterly visits to help maintain their success and provide additional support for their new Financial Services Director.

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