Credentialing, Contracting, and Third Party Payer Requirements in the New Health Care Environment

DEBBIE WOOD, MBA, PT
Disclosures

• Nothing to Disclose
Objectives

• Identify steps involved in obtaining and maintaining a contract with a third party payer
• Understand how to most efficiently move from contract execution to payment for services rendered
• Identify and communicate contract deliverables internally and to the third party payer
• Understand the evolving reimbursement and clinical outcomes requirements and opportunities to prepare to meet them
Contracting with TPP’s – Why?

• More clients presenting with insurance, revenue opportunity
• Decreasing grant funds
• Increasing operating costs
• Can allow for reimbursement for services outside of traditional family planning services
Contracting Process

• Generate Interest
• Negotiations
• Credentialing Clinicians
• Time Sequence of Events
• Communications
• Monitoring/Maintaining the Relationship
Generating Interest

• Do your homework - know what you offer that would be attractive to the TPP

• They need EHP’s in their network

• How many of their clients come into your door currently?

• They need providers who can electronically share data and produce results (is paper even an option for claim submission?)
Generating Interest (cont’d)

• Know their geography and existing network – strengths and weaknesses

• Know their current status vs. benchmarks – HEDIS measures, meaningful use

• Are they your TPP?

• Other
Negotiating

• Request a copy of the TPP’s standard contract as soon as possible
• Plan an in-person meet to discuss
• In current reimbursement environment, negotiate fees for services (how do these rates compare to your fee schedule/market rates)
• Types of services
Negotiating (cont’d)

• Claim submission timeframe (churning makes this necessary)
• Clean claim payment terms
• Rate review/change process
• Denials/edit review process (both contractually and practically)
• Data reporting requirements
Negotiating (cont’d)

• Labs – in-house for some? Which lab do you need to use?
• What are their expectations for 24-7 coverage and how will you meet those expectations
• Payment for telemedicine services
• Differential payment for Saturday/after hours services
Negotiating (cont’d)

- Adding new services - processes
- Rates for use of extenders vs. MD’s
- EOB suppression?
- Go in prepared – ask colleagues what they were able to accomplish during negotiations
- Talk with your billing team
- Other?
Credentialing

• Find out the TPP’s process – who is responsible, projected timeframe once information is submitted, internal vs. use of national data bank

• As part of your clinician hiring or contracting process, obtain the needed information for clinician credentialing

• Keep data needed on file for each clinician, review/update annually or as needed
Credentialing (cont’d)

• Send out reminders to clinicians when documentation is due to be renewed

• Maintain a master database for all clinicians, all TPP’s (software available)

• If you plan to use/increase use of extenders, know contract terms, practice limitations, and impact on credentialing
Credentialing (cont’d)

• From start to finish, this process can take 6 months.
• Others?
Timing

• Plan to work on credentialing, contract negotiations, and electronic interfaces simultaneously

• Assure transfer of data files back and forth occurs smoothly (test files) months before implementation

• Assure eligibility check process (electronic/prior to client arrival)
Timing (cont’d)

• At least one week prior to the contract implementation, educate clinic and billing staff.
• At best, the process will take a minimum of 3 months, and can take closer to 9 months.
• Other
Communications

• Assure alignment of clinical goals
• Provide feedback to clinic staff regularly on TPP issues (sent specimens to wrong lab, utilized wrong billing codes, submitted claim too late, billed for a supply not covered, etc.)
• Build data warehouse reports to easily access the necessary information for your staff and TPP’s
Communications (cont’d)

• Clinic staff need to receive data on the measures the TPP requires proactively
• Consider QIP’s for HEDIS/other measures that are substandard (ex)
• Consider sharing this as well with TPP
Communications (cont’d)

• Keep a spreadsheet highlighting all TPP key reimbursement specifics at multiple locations in each clinic. Update it regularly.
• Utilize this information to negotiate terms with TPP’s when they are on outlier in a specific area.
• Other
Maintaining a Relationship with the TPP

• Why is this important?
  - renegotiating rates
  - denials resolution
  - adding new methods/services
  - edit/coding issue resolution
Maintaining a Relationship with the TPP (cont’d)

- considering bundled/outcomes based reimbursement opportunities

- possible reference for another TPP with whom you are negotiating
Maintaining a Relationship with the TPP (cont’d)

- Report on HEDIS/other measures vs. benchmarks even if you are not prompted by the TPP
- Willingness to discuss/try new reimbursement strategies
- Ability to share additional data TPP needs (prenatal, primary care HEDIS measures)
- Partner with the TPP to improve their outcomes (ex: implement strategies such as mailers to their clients to come in for services needed)
Maintaining a Relationship with the TPP (cont’d)

• Share client survey results (utilize TPP input to create/enhance survey)

• Improve/enhance electronic communications with the TPP

• Promptly answer all of their data requests

• Be tolerant of the TPP’s IT issues (within reason)
Monitoring for Successful Implementation

• Be familiar with contract terms and changes, and educate your team

• Solid contract terms don’t translate to effective execution always

• Code changes/issues arise unexpectedly, and can lead to non/decreased payments – develop monitoring processes for contract terms and issues to allow for prompt identification and resolution
Monitoring for Successful Implementation (cont’d)

• Be aware of potential lapse in credentialing issues (ex: Medicare/1 year)

• Other
Evolving Deliverables

• Title X guidance/measures

• How is the TPP reimbursement evolving? What do you do/can you do to meet those needs? (pt. data and outcomes information)

• Other
DISCUSSION