

Real Solutions To Challenges That Face Our Practices

President's Message
The Challenges of Today and Tomorrow

by Mark Schwall, PT

As we approach the Spring 2008 NJSIPT Business Meeting we continue to face many challenges in private practice. NJSIPT was created out of recognition that there was an absence of a cohesive organization whose sole mission was to advocate for and support the private practitioner. There was not a unified singular voice to represent the interests of the independent Physical Therapist. Over the past two years that has changed dramatically. In the offices and hallways of the State House your voices are no longer heard as anonymously singular but as a now recognized unified chorus advocating for change in a practice environment which deprives consumers of appropriate coverage and providers of reasonable compensation for Physical Therapy services.

Since its inception NJSIPT, while not abandoning cooperation where possible, has eschewed the passive retreat and capitulation strategies in favor of well reasoned and forceful advocacy to protect our practices and the interests of our patients. Our successes, though admittedly not yet complete, including the introduction, and passage of A3790 in the New Jersey General Assembly, the introduction and passage last month of A2123 in the Assembly Insurance and Financial Institutions Committee, the raising of more than \$65,000 in funding for the NJSIPT Political Action Committee, are a testament to what is possible when there exists a determined membership.

To continue the successful advocacy we have established over the past two years and to continue to provide solutions in the future, all that is needed is a membership committed to doing what is necessary. What is necessary at this time is to promote membership by those of our colleagues who have not yet joined the Society and to encourage Associate participation by those therapists employed in our practices, as ultimately this is their fight for a future as well. Additionally, it is important that we continue to speak to our colleagues from other settings in regards to our advocacy efforts in order to combat what can only be characterized as a continued campaign of misinformation and the spreading of unsubstantiated fears.

NJSIPT, which has established itself as a presence in Trenton and elsewhere, continues to advocate on behalf of its current initiatives including A2123 and it's soon to be introduced Senate version as well as on a host of regulatory and legal issues. In recognition that there are other challenges now and ahead, NJSIPT will be also be rolling out new programs and opportunities for our membership. The programs include educational programming and practice management resources which will give our members the necessary tools to be successful in the health care marketplace.

I hope you will be able to join us for our Spring Educational Programming and Business Meeting on April 5th, 2008 to personally hear of the exciting actions and opportunities taking place. Your membership and support help to ensure that our best days may yet lie ahead.

Join Us!



Spring Meeting

Saturday,

April 5, 2008

Programming will include a 2 hour course on Contracting and Cash Based Practice (CE's applied for) and our Spring Meeting where you will hear a presentation from our sponsor



We will also update you as to what your society has accomplished in the past year and our plans for the upcoming year.

Register early!

Don't miss out on this exciting event!
(for more details go to www.NJSIPT.com)

Clinicient Rewarding Great Care

Providing exceptional patient care is the cornerstone of building a successful physical therapy practice. As most clinic owners have come to realize, building a healthy practice extends beyond providing patient treatment. Managing your office profitably, establishing efficient processes and providing your staff with the right tools to do their job is just as critical – and directly affects the level of overall care you give your patients. However today, in a climate of constantly changing technology and payer rules, increased regulations and decreasing reimbursements, more and more private practices are struggling. This has mandated a change in the model for successful practice management. Clinicient is committed to helping clinics navigate through these issues, and has worked with thousands of therapists, thousands of payers and clinics of all sizes across the country. We make it our job to help our customers be successful and avoid the traps of what we know doesn't work. These are some of the factors of success we've come to understand:

You Have to Be More Than a Therapist

You are an expert at evaluating patients and developing a plan for their care. As a clinic owner, you must also be an expert and develop a plan for success to running your business if you are going to see the outcomes you want. For many owners, this requires not only a different set of skills that may need to be learned, but dedicated time away from treating patients.

Process Will Get You Everywhere

High performers have well-defined processes that drive patient workflow's through their clinic. From the front desk, to the therapist, to billing – each function plays a critical role in patient care and in ensuring efficiencies that will maximize reimbursement. Without defined structure and relentless adherence, these areas can operate as individual silos – often causing gaps that decrease productivity, delay payments and diminish profits.

Knowledge is Key

Every payer has different rules and pays at a different rate. Staying on top of payer knowledge is a must. As rules change, you must have a system in place to document those changes, determine how they affect patient intake, treatment and billing, and then make changes to processes as necessary. Many clinics rely on internal resources to manage this manually, unaware they are bypassing revenue with unnecessary write-offs, claim denials or under-billings.

You Don't Know What You Don't Know

Thriving clinics make it a practice to monitor metrics. Do you know your clinic's rates for reimbursement, therapist productivity, referrals, under-billed visits, inactive patients and claim denials? Is your average A/R under 50 days? Understanding and comparing against the current level of performance among other clinics in your area is just as important. It's important to have a system that constantly measures your business and pushes your key metrics, so you can identify and isolate potential problems before they occur.

Outsourcing Can Be Risky

These days, keeping on top of payers and their billing rules is extremely challenging, even for stellar billing experts. Handing your billing off to a service is a good option, but it's not worth the risk if you don't have real-time visibility into your financial's, and if they can't completely integrate with every aspect of your practice management system.

Software Alone Will Not Make You Successful

Most clinics believe they just need to find the right software and their problems will be solved. Software is a critical tool and is absolutely a necessity. But, as partners to thousands of therapists in private practice, we have learned that without industry knowledge expertise, proven processes and efficient clinical workflow's behind your software, you will not solve underlying problems.

With ever-decreasing payment schedules and the shortage of therapists, clinics are getting squeezed from both sides. What was already a tight margin is getting tighter. To flourish, new infrastructures are needed, that typically only large, multi-site organizations have the resources to build and maintain for growth. At Clinicient, we make it our business to understand the complexities of running a therapy practice. Our combined team of experts, proven processes and one-of-a-kind platform brings clinics the infrastructure they need to be successful, without having to build it themselves. As a partner, we provide free web-based software for scheduling, documentation and reporting, built on the industry's largest payer knowledge base and rules engine. We work with each customer to improve processes, bringing expert-level billing services, and unprecedented improvement, visibility and control of your business.

To learn more, visit us at the April 5th NJSIPT Spring conference and business meeting, or visit www.Clinicient.com

