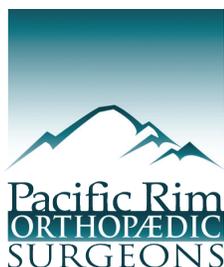


Pacific Rim Orthopedics Redefines its Revenue Cycle through Outsourcing and Analytics

About

Originally founded in 1968, Pacific Rim Orthopaedic Surgeons, PLLC, specializes in the treatment of orthopedic injuries and disorders, including those of the shoulder, elbow, hands/wrists, hips, knees, and foot and ankle. The Bellingham, Washington practice's four physicians and two physician assistants oversee 15,000 to 16,000 patient visits per year, employing the highest-quality care in a comfortable, caring environment.



Challenges

When Andrea Vitalich, Clinic Administrator for Pacific Rim Orthopaedic Surgeons, began working at the practice, she felt overwhelmed with droves of manual data that existed in multiple spreadsheets. No matter how hard administrative staff worked to process claims and update information, keeping up was a daily struggle. As a result, she lacked insight into the practice's financial performance in key areas, including collection rates, average days in A/R, and physician productivity.

Vitalich wanted easy access to key performance indicators (KPIs) so she could make better decisions and have the insights necessary to optimize and streamline the practice's finances and operations.

With limited resources and high employee turnover, Vitalich struggled to hire staff and consistently manage the practice's revenue cycle. But outsourcing billing to a third party was a new concept for administrative staff that felt "extreme ownership" over their workflows and were

reluctant to relinquish control over their tasks. Any significant workflow change would require greater staff buy-in.

Solutions

How Pacific Rim Orthopaedic Surgeons Uses MedEvolve's Services and Technology:

1. Revenue Cycle Management (RCM) Services

Pacific Rim began outsourcing its RCM to MedEvolve in August 2018. MedEvolve's team of revenue cycle specialists took over the bulk of billing, collections and claims processes. In addition to handling existing workloads, MedEvolve's team worked with Pacific Rim Orthopaedic Surgeons to resolve longstanding issues — such as backlogged refunds, redundant claims, etc. — that in-house administrative staff had fallen behind on.

“It helped us change the way we work from basically trying to keep our heads above water, to getting ahead of the game. We've been able to shift to more of a 'critical thinking' mindset.”

— Andrea Vitalich,
Clinic Administrator, Pacific Rim Orthopaedic Surgeons

2. Data Analytics

Pacific Rim uses MedEvolve RCM Scorecard: an analytics-as-a-service solution that provides an overview of a practice's financial status by a dedicated RCM Strategist in five minutes or less. Scorecard offers up-to-date metrics for the practice's RCM-based KPIs, including Net Collection Rate, Days in A/R, First-Pass Resolution Rate, Collections, and Write-offs. The benchmarks contained in the Scorecard also help Vitalich see how her practice compares with other groups in her geographical area or specialty. For access to her KPIs anytime, she also uses MedEvolve's cloud-based Practice Analytics application.

3. Practice Management Software

Pacific Rim Orthopedic Surgeons has used MedEvolve's robust practice management system for several years to support critical business functions, including scheduling, registrations, billing and operations. MedEvolve PM has evolved over time to handle increasingly sophisticated processes—Over the past couple of years, for example, MedEvolve's PM software has been essential in helping Pacific Rim track employee productivity, support accounts receivable, and easily reconcile information with the organization's electronic health record (EHR).

Outcomes

MedEvolve's analytics and practice management software, revenue cycle management services, and dedicated RCM strategist have enabled Pacific Rim to improve staff productivity and streamline operations.

The monthly RCM Scorecard, in particular, has transformed the practice dynamic, by continually highlighting areas of success — a net collection rate of 95 percent — and flagging areas that need improvement. Having insights through the Scorecard provides Vitalich and her staff with direction: They can zero in on their pain points, drilling down into the trends that help explain why they're missing the mark in some areas.

The scorecard has also changed the interpersonal dynamic with Pacific Rim physicians and administrative staff.

“When a doctor says, ‘it feels like I’m seeing fewer new patients than so and so,’ I can use the Scorecard reports to show the doctor ‘actually you’re seeing 40 percent of new patients,’ said Vitalich.

The data allows me to have meaningful conversations with my doctors. Feelings are not facts — and now I have data to support that statement.”

Additionally, the ability to leverage the practice's data has allowed her to automate processes and manage RCM more effectively so that staff feel empowered — liberated from the rut of manual data entry and free to focus their energies on resolving more complex issues.

Pacific Rim plans to continue working with MedEvolve to incorporate more automation and mobile solutions to improve and enhance the patient experience — as well as the staff experience.

“I want our lives to be less stressful and patients to experience more user-friendly, timely and accurate service.”