Practice Manager Success: Strengthening the Armor of Healthcare Leaders

By: Kem Tolliver, CMPE, CPC, CMOM

President, Medical Revenue Cycle Specialists

Healthcare Management is a Changing Landscape

As healthcare leaders, we are in a constant state of change. The process of managing change requires us to be the rudder of our organizations – offering direction to physicians, other providers and our workforce. Our mission is to be the go-to person who has knowledge (or at least the ability to access information) that allows healthcare organizations to make decisions that impact patient care, reimbursement, the work environment and compliance.

Successful healthcare leaders identify the external factors that will impact our organizations now and in the future. We take this information to develop, educate and execute plans to manage changes in the industry that will impact our business strategies.

*RISK MITIGATION* – There are minefields within a changing landscape. To avoid these minefields it’s valuable for Practice Managers to have trusted resources to rely upon to obtain information about changes that will impact their organizations. Analyze each change to identify and mitigate your risk.

**Call to Action**:

1. Who: Will be your champions as you navigate the changing landscape?
2. What: Strategic plan are necessary to address these changes?
3. When: Will internal plans need to take effect and be fine-tuned?
4. Where: Do you turn to get credible and accurate information?
5. Why: Are these changes occurring?
6. How: Do these changes impact your organization?

Managing Stakeholder’s Expectations

Leadership in healthcare requires the ability to view problems from the perspective of many stakeholders. Each category of stakeholders requires Practice Managers to view their role in the care continuum from a unique perspective. As we take each stakeholder’s needs and perspectives into consideration, let us also analyze those needs as past and future trends impact our capabilities to succeed and improve in delivering the outcomes expected by each stakeholder.

*RISK MITIGATION*: There’s a quote by Kate Zabriskie, “The customer’s perception is your reality.” Each stakeholder is our customer. Our risk of failure is dependent upon their perception. We manage our risk by improving their experience.

**Call to Action**:

1. Who: Identify the stakeholders you interact with and mutual shared impacts.
2. What: Resources are needed to meet your stake-holder’s expectations?
3. When: Do you need to look-back to see if you’ve accomplished set goals?
4. Where: Do your stakeholder’s need you to meet them – their level, mutual level, lower level?
5. Why: Are your stakeholder’s expectations fluctuating?
6. How: Can you fulfill your stakeholder’s expectations and primary needs?

STAKEHOLDER EXPECTATION / PRIMARY NEED

Problem Solving and Decision Making

The majority of a Practice Manager’s day is spent solving problems and making decisions. Which comes first, the decision or solving the problem? Both functions are equally important. Our leadership is called upon for host of resolutions: Safety concerns, EMR troubleshooting, staff workflows and complaints. Our timeliness and approach to decisions sets the tone for our organizations success. Making the effort to dissect problems improves our capacity for thoughtful and effective decision making.

*RISK MITIGATION:* We must be masters of being able to stay in the moment as well as think strategically. As we are inundated with daily operational needs, let’s not loose site of vulnerabilities that linger or develop.

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|  | **Initial Assessment** | **Action Plan** |
| Implications of the problem |  |  |
| Consequences of an inappropriate response |  |  |
| Effect on other areas |  |  |
| Identifying who else should be involved in the resolution |  |  |
| Research, investigate, gather facts, verify |  |  |
| Consider all solutions |  |  |
| Think through all solutions prior to implementation |  |  |
| Mitigate future risk by modifying procedures |  |  |
| Notify stakeholders of your conclusions (educate) |  |  |
| Create corrective actions |  |  |
| Retrain and revise Policies & Procedures (revisit & refocus) |  |  |