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Certified Public Accountants/Business Consultants

Physician Services

10 tech tips for effective multisite management

Managing a practice that encompasses multiple operating sites generates a unique set of challenges.



If you are the manager of a multisite practice, the task of ensuring that acceptable standards of operations are followed is more difficult for you than for the manager of a single-site practice. How can you effectively communicate with staff at various locations and provide a sufficient level of supervision?

Using technology is one way to increase your effectiveness. The improved speed and efficiency of communication can save you valuable time and money. You can avoid the cost of traveling from site to site and the delays caused by miscommunication or by the need to coordinate in-services with multiple staff members.

Computerization, the features and services available on the Internet and the continuing fall of the price of technology allow even a modest budget to take advantage of some of the following tips:

1. **Centralized online ordering** Set up an account for office supplies or medical supplies with a single vendor to take advantage of any bulk discounts that might be offered. Many vendors now offer online ordering, which cuts down on staff phone time. You will enjoy better cost control by selecting the vendor and reviewing the price list yourself rather than having to review separate pricing for multiple vendors chosen by each practice site.
2. **Spreadsheet-based phone list** With this method, maintain a database of the employees at each of your sites simply and effectively. By including names, titles and dates of hire, you can sort the list by multiple criteria. And you will have a single document to update and distribute as changes occur.
3. **Centralized billing** Most billing programs allow for the setup of multiple locations or accounts. Each site should enter the data for patient registrations and superbills. For efficiency, the billing department at your main site can batch and submit your claims, enabling you to compile a more complete list of revenue. Handling billing in this way will allow you to monitor how current each location's billing is through reports without being on site.
4. **E-mail features** Learn to use all of the features available on your e-mail program. For example, most e-mail programs offer calendars for scheduling meetings and posting reminders. And users are able to share calendars. Maintaining calendars online eliminates the need for multiple phone calls and the difficulty of coordinating dates.
5. **Net meetings** It's now a simple process to set up meetings on your intranet and provide more impact than e-mail without the time and expense needed to distribute and present information individually.

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6. **Reports via e-mail** Set up a weekly management report template for important metrics, such as admissions and patient volume. Ask staff to submit e-mail reports. Create reports using a spreadsheet program so individual reports can be consolidated into a single report easily and efficiently.
7. **Folders on your server** Create folders on your intranet server to house forms, policies, etc., to ensure that the latest and most current versions of documents are used. Updates need to be made to the folder on the server only, rather than

to individual folders at each location.

8. **Word document files for templates** Create everyday forms, such as intake forms, history and physicals, as templates within your word processing programs. This will help standardize your clinical records and save transcribing time.

9. **Scanning vs. faxing** Most photocopiers now have a scanning program. By scanning documents and submitting them by e-mail rather than fax, you can cut down on lost faxes and the volume of paper documents. And recipients can save documents within their computer files for future reference.

10. **Online bill paying** By taking advantage of paying bills online, you can save the time and bother of printing out hard copies of checks, stuffing envelopes and paying for postage. Be aware, however, that online bill paying eliminates the safeguard of dual signatures on checks. Ensure that online pay has a review process that prevents unauthorized payments.

Expanding your use of technology to be a more efficient manager doesn't usually require an investment of extra dollars. You simply need to take advantage of the features and benefits available within the technology you already have.

Contact our practice management consultants to learn how to use technology to become a more efficient manager.

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