

3M Health Information Systems

Case study: Not-for-profit integrated health delivery system saves more than \$400,000 annually with outsourced coding.



Snapshot of the integrated health delivery system

3M products used by this health system:

- 3M™ CodeAssistSM System
- 3M™ CodeCompleteSM Services

More than a century ago, this integrated health delivery system located on the West Coast began as a community of independent health care providers. Today, this not-for-profit network supports its local communities by reinvesting resources back into the community and providing high quality, affordable care in one of the most diverse regions of the U.S.

The challenge

In early 2014, the integrated health delivery system acquired a radiological association, which provides radiation oncology and diagnostic imaging services. Nearly 800 employees, including the 60 doctors who owned the radiology business, joined the staff of about 650 doctors at the health system. The expanded team of clinicians enabled a comprehensive range of services to better serve patients.

Major increase in patient volume leads to coding challenge



An expanded team of clinicians enabled a comprehensive range of services to better serve patients but the sudden increase in patient volume left the organization with a major coding capacity challenge.

Before the acquisition, the health system owned and operated five imaging centers, after the acquisition that number grew almost overnight to 40 imaging centers, six radiation oncology centers and one interventional radiology center.

The regional director of imaging services for the health system only had one medical coder on the team prior to the acquisition. This coder was now responsible for coding every patient encounter across the new imaging and radiology centers in addition to maintaining previous responsibilities. Meeting these demands while maintaining compliance was an overwhelming challenge to solve. With limited time, the health system knew it would need a scalable solution that empowered team flexibility, growth and coding compliance.

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After the acquisition, the health system had:



The solution

After reviewing multiple outsourced coding solutions, the health system selected the **3M™ CodeAssist™ System** and **3M™ CodeComplete™ Services**. This flexible solution allowed the health system to meet the overnight growth without requiring a full onsite team or dealing with the pressure to hire, train and manage an entirely new team of coders in such a short time frame.

After several years of success with 3M, a medical coder at the organization said, “The 3M CodeComplete team has been a great support. With the increase in volume we would not have been able to meet production. It wasn’t until we partnered with 3M that we had the flexibility to scale and help in other areas like edits and billing denials.”

With 3M CodeComplete, the health system has the option to include additional services such as assigning quality measures, auditing, custom reporting and provider documentation feedback.

“The reports have enhanced our visibility and accelerated team performance” said a medical coder at the organization, “We’ve been able to utilize many of the reports to set targets for the team and for auditing purposes.”

The results

With 3M, the health system has maintained coding compliance and productivity, resulting in an improved bottom line. To achieve these outcomes, the 3M CodeComplete team adheres to a coding compliant workflow and leverages 3M natural language processing (NLP) technology in 3M CodeAssist to support physician documentation review and medical code assignment. NLP is more consistent in its identification of medical facts than human coders and can also help medical coders provide more consistent coding results.

A recent ROI analysis at the health system in 2019 revealed more than \$163,000 in saved costs from notes coded by the 3M CodeComplete team versus having full time employees at the health system to perform the coding. With 3M CodeComplete the health system only pays per note when the work is done.

Additionally, the health system saved more than \$257,000 with notes that went direct to bill—no human contact—with 3M CodeAssist versus having full time employees at the health system to perform the coding.



The 3M benefit

3M CodeComplete services provide a full service, outsourced coding solution comprised of a talented team of certified coders who perform medical coding for professional fee services across all specialties.

With CodeComplete, health care organizations can have, on average, a 48-72 hour turnaround time for coding records, based on client workflow. In addition to improved coder productivity, clients also typically save through reductions in turnaround time, denials and days in A/R.

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The total savings from 3M, resulted in more than \$420,000 in 2019. The analysis also discovered that the health system could potentially save an additional \$157,000 by moving all radiology and surgery notes to 3M CodeComplete coders.

Beyond the results

Aside from improving productivity and the bottom line, 3M empowered the health system to easily scale down the 3M CodeComplete team when patient volumes dropped in March 2020, during the COVID-19 global pandemic. This flexibility enabled the health system to avoid furloughing staff and allowed leadership to confidently scale back up when patient volumes returned to previous levels. In an era of uncertainty, flexible staffing can help future proof teams and protect the bottom line.

Why 3M?



Avoid staffing shortages, turnover and backlog



Access 3M's up-to-date coding resources



Maintain HIPAA compliance



Receive dedicated account management and customer support



Reduce coding staff management and training



Leverage coders that have completed 3M training and development

Call today

For more information on how 3M software and services can assist your organization, contact your 3M sales representative, call us toll-free at 800-367-2447, or visit us online at www.3M.com/his.



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Published 4/21
70-2011-9423-3