

Neurosurgical Associates of San Antonio

THE ORGANIZATION: San Antonio-based neurosurgical group with 11 physicians

THE CHALLENGE: Maximizing performance of payer contracts generating 3,300 claims and \$1 million in revenues per month

THE SOLUTION: MPV Contract Management identifies line-item contractual underpayments and provides insight into payer performance

THE RESULTS: Recovered more than \$3.9 million in contractual underpayments; negotiated more favorable contract terms; increased up-front collection of co-pays and deductibles

Large neurosurgery group strengthens bottom line with MPV

'MPV has exceeded our expectations from the beginning'

Situation

As a premier neurosurgery and spine surgery practice in south central Texas, Neurosurgical Associates of San Antonio participated with most insurance plans. The practice grew steadily, but as the volume of managed care contracts and the complexity of their terms grew, so did denials and underpayments. "We were having the same problem everyone sees — our payers were not paying according to the contracts," said Rosa Tealer, business office coordinator at Neurosurgical Associates of San Antonio.

Challenge

Detecting individual payment errors and assessing overall contract performance became overwhelming for the practice. With more than 110 managed care contracts — each with their own payment schedule, global service bundles and billing rules — practice staff had to manually go through stacks of EOBs [explanation of benefits] each day. This cumbersome task consumed a great deal of staff time and also caused the group to miss a significant amount of underpayments.

Solution

In 1999, Neurosurgical Associates of San Antonio partnered with MPV to automate and streamline its payer contract management processes. MPV Contract Management allows the practice to check for denials and underpayments, identify payment trends and stay on top of constantly changing payment rules. "Even though some may think the number of appeals will go down once you start to monitor your payments, our appeals are actually increasing," said Tealer. "Our payers are continually initiating new bundling procedures, and MPV helps us manage these claims."

With MPV data, Neurosurgical Associates of San Antonio has identified and eliminated overlapping and underperforming contracts, reducing the total number of contracts it manages from 110 to 26. Now, both commercial and government contracts are modeled in MPV Contract Management and all of the practice's claims volume flows through the application. "To me, it's more of a management tool," Tealer said. "I can determine which payers are compliant and which are not."

"MPV has raised the level of expectation for effectively auditing and recovering payments."

*— Karl Swann, M.D.,
Neurosurgical Associates of
San Antonio*



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Plus, MPV Contract Management empowers staff during their interactions with payers. “When we are appealing over the phone, we can bring up comparisons of allowables and read verbatim from our contracts,” Tealer said. “We have the data to back up our case.” The practice also uses the system to evaluate proposed contract terms and to secure more favorable rates during re-negotiations with payers.

In addition, having payer contracts modeled in MPV Contract Management has allowed the group’s pre-surgery department to estimate a patient’s portion of the bill prior to the procedure. As a result, Neurosurgical Associates of San Antonio can collect these revenues before treatment and minimize billing expenses. “We give our patients their payment options upfront, and they welcome the opportunity to know what their insurance is paying. It’s a great education tool for us.”

Results and ROI

Since implementing MPV Contract Management, Neurosurgical Associates of San Antonio has been pleased with the service it’s received. “MPV service is characterized by integrity, efficiency and accountability,” said Karl Swann, M.D., Neurosurgical Associates of San Antonio.

Through its partnership with MPV, the group has realized the following benefits:

- **Cleaner claims** – MPV Contract Management helps staff identify registration and posting mistakes as well as data entry errors, minimizing the need to re-submit claims and improving cash flow.
- **Improved patient collections** – Ability to provide patient estimates before the time of service increases average monthly cash collections and reduces the risk of non-payment following treatment.
- **Increased revenue** – MPV helps the practice monitor the accuracy of its reimbursement, effectively appeal underpaid claims and better address the growth of self-funded insurance plans, such as health savings accounts.
- **Enhanced contract analysis** – The data stored in MPV Contract Management helps staff negotiate increased payment rates and maximize revenue.

MPV adds more than \$3.9 million

Neurosurgical Associates of San Antonio, January 2000-January 2010

Recoveries from successful appeals	\$3,993,000
Annual underallowance variance	4.4%

About MPV

MPV helps medical groups to maximize practice revenue and meet the demands of healthcare consumers by combining technology and consultative services to fully automate eligibility and insurance verification; reduce patient write-offs; monitor payer contract compliance; recover underpayments; and negotiate better contracts.

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