

CodeCorrect Helps San Antonio Community Hospital Reduce Write-Offs and Increase Compliance

San Antonio Community Hospital in Upland, California has been using CodeCorrect ABN Notifier (*editor's note: now called ABN Manager*[®]) for a little over a year with 100 users of the online service in registration, lab, and radiology. A 329-bed hospital with a 28 percent Medicare population, San Antonio Community Hospital wanted to automate its manual method of checking for ABNs to decrease patient frustration with long wait times and decrease the risk of non-compliance with Medicare.

"We did not want to compromise patient satisfaction, but at the same time we wanted to be 100 percent compliant with Medicare," says Monica Lenahan, Coding Manager.

They chose to pilot CodeCorrect's new service because the service they were using was not working. "Our other system wasn't Web-based, couldn't keep up with updates, and took constant intervention," explains Lenahan. After a difficult implementation process they quickly found the service didn't meet their needs and decided to look elsewhere. "We felt comfortable piloting the ABN product because our experience with CodeCorrect APC was so positive and because the price was very reasonable," explains Craig Stumpfenhorst, Assistant Director of Business Services.

Shorter Waits, Better Accuracy

"CodeCorrect has helped us streamline the registration process. We've been able to reduce patient wait time an average of 75 percent and increase our accuracy 10-fold," says Stumpfenhorst.

Before ABN Notifier, the hospital was not always able to provide the necessary ABNs. "Prior to... ABN Notifier the hospital was dedicating a large amount of resources and time to the review of outpatient lab services. After implementation, our errors went from 35 percent to less than five percent," notes Susan Schroeder, Outpatient Revenue Coordinator.

"Before ABN Notifier, the registration staff had to manually check lists we had put together from Medicare for certain codes," explains Schroeder. "It was a very time consuming process, they weren't happy about it, and patients were made to wait." One of hospital's concerns was accuracy. "Registration clerks are not coders, and you really need to have some coding experience to check for ABNs manually. We were expecting them to make judgment calls, and it was unrealistic."

The ABN process has changed significantly. Instead of manually checking paper lists, registration staff logs onto CodeCorrect in the morning to use when necessary. "We've built in our most common diagnosis codes, so the front desk staff can very easily check on the relevant codes, and not as much judgment is needed. It's very easy for them to use – they just have to point and click. It's a huge time savings for them to be able to check codes online," says Schroeder.

Easy Customization, Easy Use

San Antonio Community Hospital tailored ABN Notifier to the specific needs of the facility and to their doctors. "Since ABN Notifier is customizable, it provides all the documentation you need. You can print an ABN with complete information, including the name of the test and the price, without going to other sources. It's not just drop and play. You can customize it for your facility," said Craig.

The online service has proven easy to use and intuitive for the front line staff at San Antonio Community Hospital. "The training was so easy, and we don't have to worry about the program going down. We haven't had any problem getting into CodeCorrect," notes Schroeder. "The front line staff was excited about it. We got a very positive response when we introduced ABN Notifier to the staff. The ABN Notifier has been proven to be a very easy to use tool for staff at all levels."