e4health
Empowering Better Health

CASE STUDY
Revenue Cycle Edit Work Queue Optimization

e4health has recently assisted 8 clients with their EHR (Electronic Health Record) and PAS (Patient Accounting Systems) system conversions. During the conversion and post go-live timeframe, there is inevitably a large number of "edits" that must be worked by an individual to move an encounter to the billing state of the revenue cycle process.

e4health has developed an edit resolution workflow that is not only aimed at resolving the edits, but also at training and educating the client's staff, allowing the client to be self-proficient within 30-60 days from our process implementation.

BACKGROUND

Our client engaged the e4health Revenue Cycle team to return the organization to meeting its pre-conversion metrics. One of the first issues that needed tackling was the large number of edits that were in the system work queues. There were 18,347 encounters in 5 work queues. The work queue with the largest number of encounters was the Incomplete Verifications Summary, with 6,617. The encounters were identified by location. The top 10 locations accounted for 74% (or 4,883 encounters) of the total 6,617 encounters. The location with the single most edits in the work queue had 1,232 encounters.

The client has a decentralized operation for insurance verification, meaning each location is responsible for checking patients in and ensuring the insurance on file is still active and assigned to the appropriate encounter. A decentralized Patient Access (or Registration) operation requires the creation of standard work documents to support ongoing training and education functions. As staff is turned over, new employees must be trained in the same manner as existing staff to ensure consistency in operations.

THE e4health PROCESS

e4health employed Lean Engineering pillars: People, Process and Technology, in creating this Revenue Cycle Edit Work Queue Optimization solution. After observing a spike in work queue volumes of this type following an EHR conversion at many other client sites, and determining this customer lacked the personnel to provide the service, e4health strategically hired people with required skills to perform this work. Over the course of a few months, the core group for this growing team was hired.

e4health's core group possesses an average of 19 years' experience that spans all aspects of the revenue cycle process. As e4health emphasizes quality over quantity, e4health initially began the engagement with two people working the work queues. Our team approach to sharing information and knowledge helped the client quickly understand the skills and training their staff were missing when attempting to clear the encounters from the Incomplete Verifications Summary work queue.

e4health's Revenue Cycle Edit Work Queue Optimization Team met daily with e4health's Patient Access SME, who provided daily training and education to the client staff via webcast. The work queue team provided examples of identified issues to the Patient Access SME, who in turn created custom training using the active Incomplete Verification Summary. Every day, e4health held training sessions with various client locations and shared the feedback from the work queue team.

The training sessions also enabled the employees from client locations to walk through their process with the Patient Access SME to ensure everyone was "on the same page" in terms of the workflow. Additionally, workflow documents were updated to include lessons learned from e4health to prevent the same errors from being made.

As the Lean Engineering operation continued, e4health and the client leveraged the *Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA)* process to modify the training coming from the e4health Patient Access SME to the client locations. As the workflow continued to be retooled with learnings from the client locations, the daily training was enhanced with best practices from what the Work Queue Optimization team was seeing during their reviews.

GETTING BETTER EVERY DAY

e4health also shared weekly progress with the client's revenue cycle executives and stakeholders. A visualization (*pictured, right*) of the operation and summary of the week's work was sent each Friday morning. This messaging reinforced to the client's employees the importance of working the work queues every day, and came to be seen as a reward to the client locations that were making notable progress every week. The client was learning from their mistakes and getting better every day. In less than 30 days, e4health and our

client were able to bring the number of encounters in the Insurance Verification work queue down from 6,617 to 427, which totals less than two days of encounters. **This is a 94% reduction from the starting point.** With improved methodology and tools, the client ramped up quickly to remediate work queue issues and establish new best practices.
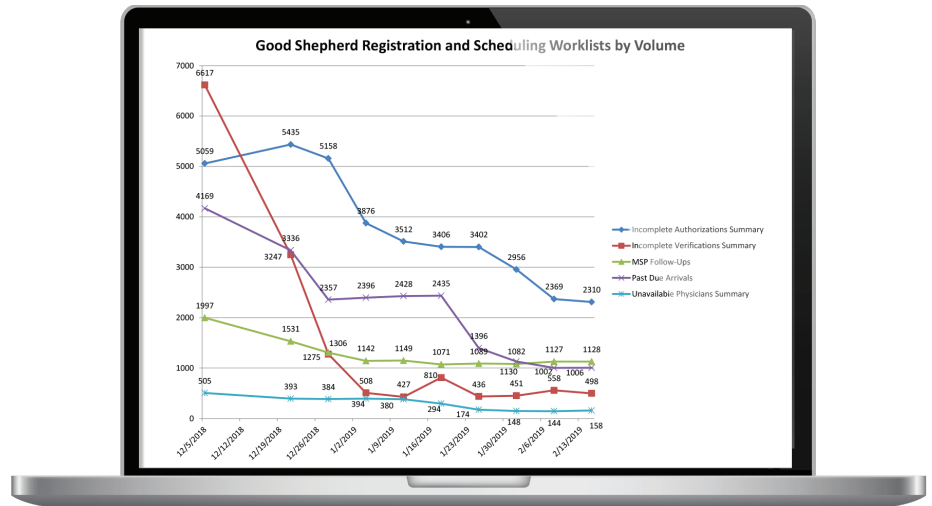
PRODUCTIVITY REDEFINED

e4health utilized the proprietary productivity tool, *e4sight™*, which captures data that enables e4health to offer custom staff augmentation/support services related to revenue cycle operations. Our goal is to provide clients with support services during critical times and get them back to a stable state before ending our engagement.

In analyzing the data and how the work queue performance results were realized, e4health touched 2/3 of the total encounters on the work queue (*pictured, front page*). The remaining one-third of the work queue was worked during the

custom training and education sessions with each client location and, most importantly, by the client themselves as they learned how to be self-sufficient in the work queues.

Through *e4sight™*, users can capture individual performance or productivity by various roles or operations, and adapt operations accordingly (*pictured, left*). e4health Revenue Cycle can also provide the exact turnaround time and target recovery timeframes based on *e4sight™* analytics.

This productivity tool also provides executive summary level dashboard views. **No longer does one need to allocate costly Data Analyst resources to produce baseline productivity reports.** These can now be maintained by e4health's Dashboard Subscription/Maintenance Service, while internal resources can be utilized to work on more complex and targeted reports, or to simply reduce your operational costs.

Services Contact