KIWI-TEK™
The Coding Authority

3 Steps to Maximize Your HIM Resources

More than a year into COVID-19, we still cannot predict how to best prepare for future HIM needs or what the next evolution in healthcare will be. We do know that significant areas of focus include social determinants of health (SDOH), ICD-11, value-based care, regulatory changes, technological advancements, reimbursement shifts, acquisitions, expanded use of telehealth and new developments in virtual patient care. With all these recent and evolving changes, the accuracy and improvement of clinical documentation and precise coding are crucial to maximize revenue and improve quality of care.

HIM teams must focus on maximizing both accuracy and productivity to support system needs in the revenue cycle. This has become increasingly difficult due to unpredictable fluctuations of patient volumes by type of service, training required for rapidly changing coding guidelines, and adjustment of staff working remotely. A new strategy and process must be embraced.

Here are three key steps to transcend new challenges.

Appoint an HIM project manager to train and manage your HIM resources based on trends in patient admissions and discharges, and reassign coders accordingly.

The project manager must understand the art of quickly matching coders to your volume and service needs. This person can ensure your staff is up to date on coding guidance for every type of patient encounter, help assign coders who are proficient with numerous types of patient encounters, and quickly adapt to volume shifts. When you need coverage in days, not weeks, this is a crucial step.

Make telehealth coding a priority.

Gone are the days when telehealth coding was a seldom-used "want" by clinicians. Telehealth will continue as a major part of patient encounters and should now be a prerequisite for your HIM team to understand, process and code proficiently.

Your entire staff should be well trained and experienced in coding all telemedicine services. Codes and modifiers for telehealth vary significantly by payer and can change frequently. Your coding team must manage these adjustments to meet or exceed revenue cycle benchmarks.

Ensure backup staffing support.

The new quality of care initiatives, patient care trends, staffing challenges, patient shifts, revised guidance and escalated training needs have created challenges for HIM teams striving to meet their performance goals. Proactive measures must be taken to resolve and effectively manage revenue cycle priorities. In addition, HIM teams face escalated issues with denied claims, documentation issues, billing edits and backlogs.

Through careful planning, forecasting and monitoring, your organization can determine the level of third-party support required to maintain revenue cycle goals.

Organizations that embrace remote backup staffing can also gain access to top-notch coders.

KIWI-TEK has the coding expertise you need and can onboard it faster than anyone else. Schedule a time to talk here: **https://kiwi-tek.com/consultation/**