



Dardanelle Community Hospital

Increasing Cash Flow and Competitiveness with ABILITY CHOICE Eligibility

A 25-bed, critical access facility located in Arkansas, Dardanelle Community Hospital was in need of a system to help them verify patient insurance eligibility. An ABILITY Network customer since 2008 for Medicare claims submission, with ABILITY CHOICE Claims and for DDE access with ABILITY NOW, Dardanelle again called on ABILITY to assist.

“We had been successfully using ABILITY’S Medicare products and in the process, discovered that they had added a new system to check insurance eligibility information.”

Sondra Wear, Dardanelle CFO

Opportunity

Prior to installing the ABILITY CHOICE Eligibility product, the precertification process involved admissions personnel making time-consuming phone calls to the individual insurance companies. Often, particularly in emergency and other unscheduled circumstances, staff were prevented from making these calls prior to patient admittance. So, if patients didn’t have insurance or presented inaccurate or outdated information, for instance, Dardanelle billers would file claims and they could be rejected, delaying the payment collection process. This caused significant delays in cash flow, when timely cash flow is a necessity for a small facility like Dardanelle.

Implementation

All that changed in January, 2011, when Dardanelle became an early adopter of ABILITY CHOICE Eligibility and completed the implementation of the newly released product. Training on the intuitive and user-friendly system was just a few hours and “go-live” occurred without a hitch. The result: what was once a very time consuming and therefore, in many cases, a neglected process, insurance verification is now a routine and quickly completed part of the process. As with ABILITY’s core Medicare products, it was again a positive experience, both in terms of the benefits delivered to both the staff and the hospital’s financial bottom line.

“With a small staff and limited resources, the process of eligibility verification at Dardanelle would many times occur after patients had been admitted,” explained Wear. “If there were errors with the insurer information provided, or if there was no coverage available, we were faced with the unfortunate fact that payment would be significantly delayed or not received at all.”

Results

Now with the help of ABILITY CHOICE Eligibility, instead of limiting insurance verification to just surgery pre-admissions because of the advanced time associated with them, Dardanelle staff are able to quickly and easily verify eligibility for all admissions, saving time and improving cash flow. Instead of long and tedious phone calls, with just a few clicks, the online system is able to provide all necessary information.

The system also provides benefits for patients. Because the verification is now routinely done in advance of a procedure (except in emergency situations), personnel can help patients understand their coverage and the amount of their deductible - or in some cases even if coverage has been discontinued - so there are no surprises when bills arrive following treatment. Because the system can also be used to check Medicare, being able to check on the front end really helps since many patients going to Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans are confused and don't know what their coverage is.

“ABILITY CHOICE Eligibility is delivering as promised and is a win for the staff, the hospital and the patients we care for. For a small critical access hospital, we can be more competitive now by having the same tools that larger facilities have.”

Sondra Wear, Dardanelle CFO



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About ABILITY

ABILITY works to save lives by facilitating information exchange and knowledge sharing among every participant within the healthcare spectrum – hospitals, physician practices, home care providers, DMEs, and private and government payers. More than 3,000 hospitals across the country use ABILITY network to promote care coordination and collaboration, reduce record fragmentation, participate in new care models, streamline administrative workflow and access the Direct Project network and state and community-based Health Information Exchanges.