The holidays are a distant memory and we are a month into the new year. I thought I would start the year off with a recap of some best practices that you can implement in your office in 2015 if you have not already.

Collection Tip of the Month

1.) Make sure you have a field for both the patient's employment and their spouses. This is important information because in the State of Illinois if a couple were married at the time of the debt, both are responsible. If we have to collect the debt through litigation, we want to sue the one with the highest paid job.

2.) Start asking for email addresses. There is technology that can securely send medical bills and collection letters via email. The beauty of email is that you will be able to verify if a patient received the email. No more excuses that they never received it. From a financial perspective, emailing cost about 1/4 of the current practice of mailing statements/letters. Also, when people move they change their physical address, but rarely change their email address.

3.) Review your financial policy. In Illinois, you can add collection fees, attorney fees, interest, and missed appointment fees. But you need a signed financial policy for it to hold up in court.

4.) Have your patients sign a consent form that gives permission for you and your agents (me) to contact them via email, cell phone, texting, etc... and allows pre-recorded voice messaging delivered by an automatic telephone dialing system or emailing system.

5. Start having financial discussions with your patients from the moment they set an appointment. Train your scheduler to set financial expectations (co-pays

due and self-pay balance estimates) so patients are not surprised on the date of service. Update your website with your financial policy and patient forms. Encourage patients to visit your website and bring completed forms with them. If you do not have a website, send a welcome package with the same information. Review their insurance prior to their appointment. There are software companies (NaviCare and Instamed) that provide real-time estimates of the patient's insurance coverage and self-pay responsibility. If a patient needs a follow-up procedure, give them an estimate of how much the procedure costs, what their insurance will cover, and their self-pay responsibility. No surprises!!

As always, Dave and I are available anytime to help implement any of the above best practices in your office. Just give us a call.

Independent Physicians Advisors Meeting:

Reputation Management: How To Leverage Social Media

The IPA is a group of independent physicians that meet on a monthly basis to discuss various healthcare issues. It is a great way to network with your peers who are facing same issues that

you are. The goal of the IPA is to improve core business operations for independent healthcare providers through shared learning and support. Their members provide key strategy and operational services that foster sustainable growth and enable the physician and practice owners to focus on patient care. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 19, starting at 7:30 a.m. Location is the Redstone American Grill in Oakbrook Terrace. The topic is: **Reputation Management: How To Leverage The Power of Social Media & Reviews.** You will learn how to develop a website, best practices on broadcasting your message, building positive ratings, and measuring your social media impact. You can sign up by clicking on the following link: http://www.ipamd.com/seminars.php . If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

Associate Spotlight

This month's associate spotlight feature's our employee's that participated in our "most interesting Christmas hat" contest held at our Christmas Party in December. It was such a close contest that we could not pick a clear winner. Everyone who participated received a gift from Santa!!

How Can I Earn CEU's By Attending a CDA Seminar?

Many of you belong to various professional medical office management associations and are looking for industry professionals to conduct a seminar at your local or state meetings. CDA is now offering a free seminar called "9 Red Hot Ingredients to Fire Up you're A/R Collections in Just 30 Minutes a Week?" for your medical or office managers association. We will be conducting a seminar for the American Association of Professional Coders in February and they will received 2.0 CEU's towards their professional certification for attending. Also, we were approved by the American Academy of Medical Administrators are allowing their members 1.5 CEU's for attending a live seminar or webinar.

You can view a short video on the seminar by going to https://www.cdac.biz/spiceitup

If you are interested in learning more about how you can bring our seminar to your association, please call Dave or Tony.

Thank You For Your Trust!!

We are looking to help more clients like you. The greatest form of flattery is when one of our clients refers us to one of their colleagues. If you know someone that can benefit from our services, let us know and we will be glad to follow up.

Chef Dave's Kitchen

Tony's On A Diet Turkey Chili

1 1/2 lbs ground turkey

3-4 celery stalks (chopped)

2-3 carrots (chopped)

1 Sweet Onion (diced)

Garlic to taste

2-3 green or red peppers

24 oz of diced tomatoes (I use low sodium canned)

16 oz organic chicken broth

Chili powder or store bought Chili seasoning packet

Brown the ground turkey. Saute' the celery, carrots, onion, garlic, and peppers in Extra Virgin Olive Oil until soft. In a large pot, mix the turkey, vegetables, chicken broth, diced tomatoes, and chili powder (to taste) or pre-mixed Chili seasoning packet (mild or hot to taste). Bring to a boil. Simmer for 2 hours. Low cal, low fat, and loaded with metabolism boosting ingredients. Makes about 6 meals.

All the best,

Tony Muscato, VP of Sales

www.CDAC.biz