

CLARITY HEALTH SERVICES TAKES THE LEGWORK OUT OF REFERRALS

Healthcare coordinated by your neighborhood doctor.

The process of coordinating referrals between offices has never been an easy one, but a pilot of a new referral management service at NPN member practices is producing dramatic results.

Clarity Health Services

NPN partnered with Seattle-based Clarity Health Services to resolve the information breakdowns that frequently occur during the process of a patient referral. Clarity is a business service for existing communities of independent

physicians and operates as a virtual extension of a physician's office. To date, Clarity has successfully completed over 450 referrals from practices participating in the pilot.

The combination of Clarity's live customer service and a secure, Internet-based application allows physicians and their staffs to initiate patient referrals and orders, track their

status, and deliver and review medical reports. It also streamlines the process of obtaining payer authorizations, and sharing that information with consultants and specialists.

Clinic Coordinator Betty Blum, of Federal Way Family Physicians, is a pilot participant who has used Clarity's system since November 2007. With nearly three decades in healthcare, Blum is a trained nurse who moved into managing referrals and coordinating

care. During that period, she has seen referrals become more complicated, with greater authorization and notification rules, which were cumbersome and inconsistent between payers. And like other referral coordinators, Blum faced the daily challenge of time spent on hold waiting to talk to payers, who were often unable to resolve her questions.

While Blum saw that using Clarity saved her time, she also began seeing additional value in some of the service's features. This moment came when she received a call from a specialist regarding missing documentation.

Within seconds of using Clarity's online referral tracking feature, Blum was able to provide the specialist's office with the date and time she sent the fax and the content it contained. Blum saved tremendous time having that information centralized and at her fingertips, which eliminated the need for her to retrieve the patient's chart, dig through it to find the information, and then call the specialist's office back.

An office can begin using the service for referrals in just minutes, with no investment in new hardware, software or implementation services, and no disruption to office procedures. By reducing the administrative hassles of referral coordination, independent practices can improve reimbursement rates, reduce liabilities, and ultimately improve healthcare quality and patient safety.

As for Blum, she is largely pleased with how her workflow has improved and feels that the Clarity service is returning real value. "I was thinking just last night, what will I do if they take it away? I'll have to learn to do my job all over again." With clear confidence and a smile, she declared, "I'd say it's working pretty well." ♦

For further information visit www.npnwa.net/clarity.



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-Betty Blum,
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