

Optimization of the Research Revenue Cycle

UCHealth is one of the premier research institutions in the country. Providing patient-centric education and cutting-edge research opportunities are important parts of our health system mission. The UCHealth Research Administration team supports research studies in 13 hospitals and numerous clinics across Colorado, southern Wyoming, and western Nebraska. Research Administration enhances research across UCHealth by improving processes, increasing efficiencies and ensuring robust compliance with regulatory requirements.

EHR-CTMS Integration

UCHealth, in collaboration with the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, adopted the OnCore Enterprise Research System as the Clinical Trials Management System (CTMS) in 2017. OnCore is a streamlines research operations to manage clinical research and facilitate fiscal and regulatory compliance.

It is paramount for UCHealth to not only improve patient satisfaction with transparent billing, but to continue to comply with changing federal and state rules and regulations. OnCore captures the complete calendar of research events, billing designations, and contract parameters thereby providing research teams with the ability to invoice sponsors directly, in turn increasing efficiency. A Medicare Coverage Analysis (MCA) console documents the billing designations and facilitates compliance with current rules and regulations. These billing designations dictate which charges and services are allowable to be billed to third party and which charges and services must be covered by the research study.

In November 2018, OnCore was integrated with Epic, UCHealth's Electronic Health Record (EHR). The Retrieve Protocol for Execution (RPE) integration sends instantaneous updates on subject enrollment information from the CTMS to the EHR to maintain patient safety. Up to date subject enrollments provide streamlined notifications in the EHR to both clinical care providers and research teams.

In February 2019, the Clinical Research Process Content (CRPC) interface profile was implemented to support and streamline billing compliance between research administration,

research study teams, health system registration and financial teams.

The key to compliant billing is an efficient exchange of information. Documenting the MCA directly in the CTMS provided the capability to streamline and interface billing requirements from the CTMS to the EHR without duplication of effort or documentation. The CRPC interface transfers the protocol billing grid from the CTMS to Epic to create the patient timeline. The protocol billing grid documentation includes which charges and services are expected to be performed on each treatment day and where those services must be billed. The Patient Timeline in Epic is a framework that will route those expected research charges based on the billing designations at the time the charges are triggered.

Research Revenue Cycle Optimization

Our centralized Research Administration team is responsible for the MCA documentation and the charge adjudication within the research revenue cycle. Each transaction related to a research encounter must be reviewed for billing compliance within 24 hours of receiving the account to review. At UCHealth, a centralized research billing office reviews more than 500,000 transactions monthly for more than 1,200 studies with billable services across more than 56 clinical units.

In the 12 months after the implementation of the CRPC integration, transactions were automatically and appropriately routed with 93.86% accuracy. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, with staffing changes and a shift to virtual care, the centralized teams maintained automated charge routing accuracy of 94.35%.

The high level of accuracy in automation has allowed us to restructure the department and strengthen our billing compliance processes. Our billing compliance program includes a first patient review to improve the MCA and review of accounts impacted by amendments.

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