

Borgess Health maximizes reimbursement with clinician-to-clinician CDI approach.

Challenge

- Create more clinically accurate documentation
- Improve physician engagement
- Maximize reimbursement
- Elevate quality scores

Solution

- Implement J. A. Thomas' Clinical Documentation Improvement (CDI) solutions, now part of Nuance Communications

Results

- Decreased physician resistance with clinical documentation specialists as 'translators'
- Secured \$9 million in additional reimbursement from improved clinical documentation accuracy
- 25% reduction in predicted mortality

To maximize reimbursement income, Michigan based Borgess Health wanted improved clinical documentation at its point of origin—Physicians at the point of care. Engaging physicians called for the right tool and strategy: J. A. Thomas & Associates' (now part of Nuance) Compliant Documentation Management Program® (CDMP®), and a clinician-to-clinician approach. Part of Ascension Health, the nation's largest Catholic and non-profit health system, Borgess includes five hospitals, a nursing home, ambulatory care facilities, home healthcare, physician practices, a cancer center and an air ambulance service.

BORGESS

“The dramatic improvement in clinical documentation accuracy is the result of J.A. Thomas’ prescriptive process and physician engagement.”

Dr. Robert Hill, Vice President of Medical Affairs
Borgess Health, Kalamazoo, Mich.

Borgess’ new CMO realized reimbursement levels were not commensurate with services provided. In one year alone, Borgess left \$6 million on the table in missed reimbursement. He quickly identified the problem—incomplete clinical documentation—and implemented J. A. Thomas & Associates’ (JATA) Compliant Documentation Management Program (CDMP), a fully managed, end-to-end improvement program that touches all the critical aspects of an institution’s clinical documentation process.

Implementation

After initial assessment of Borgess’ DRG-based records and documentation needs, JATA helped identify clear, measurable CDI program objectives. Using a prescriptive process, JATA managed all aspects of the program, from customizing and integrating technology tools to educating users, focusing particular attention on one group of users—clinical documentation specialists (CDSs).

Putting documentation in its place

“Clinical documentation isn’t a coding issue,” said Dr. Robert Hill, Vice President of Medical Affairs. “When physicians document in the chart, it’s based on care, not codes. We took responsibility out of HIM and put it in the hands of clinicians, where it belongs.” However, because coding determines reimbursement, it was important to capture everything and code everything captured. Borgess needed people with both clinical and coding knowledge to interface with physicians, and help them understand—in their language— how to improve documentation for complete reimbursement. The solution: Turn experienced nurses into CDSs by training them on CDMP.

Improving financial outcomes, proving clinical outcomes

CDSs served as translators, ensuring the right words were in the chart for coding, while preserving clinical accuracy and saving physicians time. In one year, Borgess secured \$9 million in additional revenue. CDMP also allowed Borgess to identify things not being charted, such as severity. Clinical documentation specialists explained the implications of this incomplete coding— such as higher predicted mortality rates—to physicians. When physicians began documenting severity, predicted mortality dropped 25%.

Next steps

To improve clinician workflow further, Borgess plans to expand use of Cerner Care Management. The JATA-Cerner integrated solution automates and supports the CDS workflow within Cerner Millennium® PowerChart® with the embedded CDMP Guide from JATA. It also provides specialized content for modeling more specific working DRGs, streamlining CDS workflow and increasing CDS productivity.

J. A. Thomas is a Nuance company, and CDI is a part of the Clintegrity™ CDI solution.

To learn more about Clintegrity CDI, please contact us at 877-805-5902 or visit nuance.com/healthcare.

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