



Case Study

*Improved Claims Management
and Reporting
Generates New Revenue*

**Shawn Toloui, owner of 1st Care
Medical Clinic, LLC**



athenahealth
there is a better way

Not All Web-Based Systems Created Equally

Shawn Toloui, owner of 1st Care Medical Clinic, LLC, in Phoenix, Arizona, was already sold on the idea of a web-based practice management system. To him, it just made sense.

The problem was that the first time around, he picked the wrong system. It was very, very slow – in terms of claims scrubbing, claims submission, and reporting. But, when the practice signed on with athenaCollector,SM athenahealth's centrally – hosted billing and practice management service in the fall of 2008, all of that changed.

New System Improves Functionality Across the Board

"I truly believe that there isn't anything you can ask athenaCollector to do that it can't do," Toloui said, adding that every single practice operation has significantly improved with the switch to athenaCollector.

Take claims filing. Previously Toloui said, filing a claim was the equivalent of a "Hail Mary" shot. "You shoot it in the air, hope it goes in, and 60 days later you find out if it did or not. Then you have to call to find out why it didn't."

Now, thanks to athenahealth's proprietary payer rules database, a large and growing percentage of the practice's claims go through and get paid on the initial submission. That's an enormous improvement over the earlier system, which caused a huge percentage of the claims to be rejected.

Toloui pointed out, "You can't beat athenahealth's claims submission process. I don't have to think about it anymore. There are people behind the scenes at athenahealth who not only assume responsibility for filing claims correctly, they also take care of following up on denials. Everything is documented in the system's "quick view" so we can see what is happening with each individual claim. Nothing is hidden." He added that, thanks to athenahealth's follow-up, DAR is at 31 days and dropping.

Clearance Feature Protects Database, Gives Manager More Control

He also likes the flexibility of athenahealth's system of limiting clearance to individuals on a practice's staff. Using this feature, the CEO or practice manager can go in and decide by each individual function and by staff member, who has access to what information and who has permission to make changes to the system database. Toloui said this feature has helped protect the integrity of the database and the functionality of the system.

AT A GLANCE

CLIENT

1st Care Medical Clinic, LLC,
Phoenix, AZ

ORGANIZATION

- ▶ 2 physicians, 3 mid-level clinicians
- ▶ 8 employees
- ▶ 933 patient visits a month

ISSUES

- ▶ Billing system slow and inaccurate
- ▶ Reporting function unwieldy and time-consuming
- ▶ High claim denial rate
- ▶ Limited profitability

SOLUTION

athenaCollectorSM
ReminderCallSM

RESULTS

- ▶ Charges and revenue steadily increases
- ▶ Days in accounts receivable (DAR) decreased to under 31 days
- ▶ Denial follow-up brings in new revenue
- ▶ Customer service fast and friendly
- ▶ Reporting function simplifies staff reimbursement, drives productivity
- ▶ ReminderCall brings in new revenue

In addition, he stressed the value provided by athenahealth's Customer Services team, which he described as "unbelievable." "They never seem tired. They never have a bad attitude. In short, they are very professional. They can answer almost any question right away, and, when they can't, they get back to you very quickly."

Reporting Function Improves Productivity and Transparency

But press him to name his number one favorite feature of athenaCollector and he will tell you, hands down, it is the reporting function. "With the system we had previously, I spent hours trying to pull out information and drop it into Excel. It was futile."

That was a huge disadvantage for Toloui, whose job it is to assure that the practice is financially successful. With athenaCollector, he said, reporting "is a beautiful thing to see."

Since the practice bases salaries, in part, on productivity, Toloui needs to be able to see in-depth what each clinician was bringing in to the practice.

For example, the practice bills for several tests that are conducted in-house: ultrasound, hearing, and nerve conduction. Each involves multiple codes and also may have several different clinicians involved at some point in the process: the scheduling provider, the rendering provider, and the billing provider.

Keeping track of this process, plus keeping tabs on how much the practice has actually received from each payer, primary, secondary and tertiary – by provider, by individual code, by groups of codes – had been a daunting task.

Toloui used athenaCollector's reporting function to create a report that provides him with all of this information, whenever he wants to run it – in 15 seconds – with "absolutely no extraneous information," he said.

He has added this report to his athenahealth report file, which contains a complete library of reports created by athenahealth for its clients – all of which can be also be individualized to meet the needs of the practice.

Toloui said the reporting feature alone has made a huge difference in his practice. It has saved countless hours of his time previously spent trying to generate the same information from his old system and, it has made the process transparent to the practice staff.

Patient Reminder System Saves Time and Money

Toloui's newest addition to his suite of athenahealth services is ReminderCall,SM an automated appointment confirmation and reminder service. He reported that he is very pleased with its performance, since it reduces no-shows, increases arrivals, and improves bottom-line revenue.

Would Toloui recommend athenahealth to other practices? "Without a doubt. It has had a very positive impact on my practice and I expect the improvements to continue as we become even more adept at taking advantage of everything it offers."

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– Shawn Toloui, owner of 1st Care Medical Clinic, LLC

At athenahealth, we know that every practice is different.

Contact us to find out how we can help you.



athenahealth

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