

## Finding Front-End Success at Health Central

### CHALLENGES :: THE FRONT-END VARIETY

Florida's Health Central was facing a number of front-end challenges, many of which are common in today's "retail-like" revenue cycle where the patient-due portion of the healthcare bill continues to grow:

- Disparate and costly point-of-service systems used for different needs – but none of them "talking" to each other
- Missed opportunities to resolve patient accounts upfront, producing more bad debt, higher days in AR and low cash-collected numbers
- Registrars grappling with incomplete or difficult-to-access information, leaving them unable and/or unwilling to ask for patient-due amounts at point of service
- Inaccurate or inadequate patient contact information being collected pre-registration and point of service, resulting in a high returned mail rate – and lost dollars, as the bills didn't reach the patients
- Difficulty screening and processing charity care and social services assistance in a consistent manner
- Misuse of ER services, resulting in bad debt

### SOLUTION :: A COMPREHENSIVE POINT-OF-SERVICE SYSTEM

Health Central's executive team and patient access managers knew the facility needed to face these challenges head-on in order to ensure Health Central and its patients successfully adjusted to healthcare's retail-like revenue cycle.

In July 2008, Health Central partnered with nTelagent to implement the company's Retail Application for Healthcare. The Retail Application is a comprehensive, automated, point-of-service collection solution that settles all accounts on the front end – regardless of whether the patient is insured, uninsured or charity. Similar to applications used in the retail industry at the point of sale, the Retail Application provides healthcare registrars and financial counselors with real-time scripts, telling them exactly what to do and what to say to each patient at point of service regarding financial responsibilities. Health Central also chose to purchase nTelagent's "Contract Calculator" module. According to Jim Muse, Health Central's director of patient financial services, the Contract Calculator "put the finishing touch" on the information needed at point of service to reduce bad debt and resolve patient accounts.

### RESULTS :: FAST AND DRAMATIC

As with many of nTelagent's clients, Health Central experienced fast and dramatic results after implementing the Retail Application for Healthcare. Just a few notable bottom-line outcomes:

- An immediate increase in upfront cash collected and an **11 percent increase in overall upfront cash collected** since implementation
- A **61 percent decrease in returned mail** due to accurate and adequate contact information collected via nTelagent's address verification module
- A substantial reduction in days in AR
- Significant cost savings for Health Central simply by eliminating the various, disparate systems – this step completely offset the cost of nTelagent's Retail Application
- Decreased bad debt due to streamlined processes in the ER and reduced misuse of ER services

[See next page for more results and information on the Contract Calculator. >>](#)

## RESULTS, CONTINUED

Other important results include:

- Registrars are armed with easy-to-access, real-time resources and scripts, telling them exactly how to handle each patient account – they are no longer afraid or unsure to talk with patients about their financial responsibilities
- Using a comprehensive solution for all Health Central's front-end needs – from insurance verification to automated price transparency – makes patient access staff members' work much easier and more efficient
- Improved patient/customer service – staff members know what payment terms they can offer and whether discounts are available, and they can even print promissory notes right at point of service for the patient to agree to and sign
- Consistent and accurate screening and processing of charity care and social services assistance due to nTelagent's automated system – Health Central's front-end staff are advocates for truly needy patients, helping them to obtain all possible assistance in covering their healthcare costs
- Real-time reporting tools arm Health Central with the information necessary to make sound financial decisions for point-of-service processes

To learn more about nTelagent's Retail Application for Healthcare and the Contract Calculator, or to schedule an online or in-person demonstration, contact us:

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**Health Central**

**ABOUT HEALTH CENTRAL:** [www.healthcentral.org](http://www.healthcentral.org) Serving West Orange County for more than 50 years, Health Central in Ocoee, Florida, is a full-service acute care hospital and comprehensive medical facility that offers convenient on-site and local access to over 400 doctors of all specialties. Health Central is dedicated to the mission of improving the health of the community by providing safe, quality healthcare services in an atmosphere of caring.

**nTELAGENT**

**ABOUT NTELAGENT:** [www.ntelagent.com](http://www.ntelagent.com) nTelagent, Inc.'s Retail Application for Healthcare is the only point-of-service collection solution for the healthcare industry that settles all accounts on the front end – regardless of whether the patient is insured, uninsured or charity. Similar to applications used in the retail industry at the point of sale, the company's Web-based system provides healthcare registrars and financial counselors with real-time scripts, telling them exactly what to do and what to say to each patient at point of service regarding financial responsibilities.

### SPOTLIGHT: CONTRACT CALCULATOR

nTelagent's Contract Calculator consolidates a hospital's individual insurance contracts into one actionable, easy-to-use database. With the Contract Calculator integrated into nTelagent's Retail Application, patient access and registration staff members can instantly and accurately perform some of the most complicated calculations related to patient financial accounts: what the approved charges are and the accurate patient coinsurance. Unlike other solutions, nTelagent's Contract Calculator is built with real charges, real contracts and real fee schedules, and it works on the front end of the revenue cycle, not the back end. With the Contract Calculator, hospitals can:

- Correctly and automatically determine deductible, co-pay and coinsurance amounts based on individual insurance contracts and nTelagent's insurance verification module
- Follow contract exceptions such as maximum approved charges and maximum number of services covered
- Calculate collections at point of service without affecting the billing system
- Reduce small balance write-offs by collecting coinsurance amounts upfront
- Reduce fees paid to early-out vendors
- Enjoy a user-friendly and virtually maintenance-free system (nTelagent performs needed updates)
- Make compliance with PPACA's limitation on charges regulation fast and easy