



## Can You Track the Return on Your Rehab Dollars? Focus on Long-term Results Rather than Short-term Savings

Bargain-hunting is big in today's economic slump as people look for ways to cut down on spending. Likewise, you may be tempted to reduce your outpatient rehab costs by using providers with the lowest per-visit rate or by slashing the number of allowed visits.

But without careful evaluation, those decisions may come back to haunt you later — in the form of poor patient outcomes and higher overall costs — replacing any short-term financial gains with higher costs in the long term.

The fact is that trying to save money by going with the lowest-priced providers may actually backfire. In low-cost provider offices, it is more likely that patients will be treated by low-level staff — aides and assistants — that are not properly supervised. In addition, those “cheaper” therapists may make up for lost revenue with overutilization.

On the other hand, if you arbitrarily limit patient visits, therapy may be ended too soon, compromising quality of care and causing the following problems:

- Bouncebacks for more rehabilitation to treat the original condition.
- Increased absenteeism/reduced productivity for patients whose conditions are not properly treated.
- Increased patient dissatisfaction.

### **Make sure every dollar goes to achieving the best results**

So how can you ensure that rehab therapists deliver the appropriate type and amount of treatment that patients need to get better? And how can you direct patients to the best providers?

You'll find answers by taking a look at the following big picture issues that impact the quality and real value of rehab services.

- Outcomes data
- Quality assurance
- Rapid appointment setting
- Health & wellness programs

**= The best return on your rehab dollar**

### **1) Outcomes data shows where and how providers excel**

Any provider can claim to get patients better faster. But who can prove it? The best way to demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of provider treatment is through a scientifically valid, third-party outcomes system. The system should:

- Consider patients' individual risk factors.
- Track patient progress throughout treatment.
- Compare provider performance to nationally recognized benchmarks.

### **2) Quality assurance acts as your watchdog**

Do you know if your rehab providers meet the highest credentialing and quality of care standards? A therapy network's Quality Assurance Program should monitor such areas as care delivery guidelines, documentation standards, and patient safety. An effective Credentialing Program incorporates onsite inspections of therapy offices on a regular basis and exceeds NCQA requirements.

### **3) Streamlined appointment-setting promptly directs patients to rehab**

Directing patients to therapy as quickly as possible will boost your bottom line. Research has shown that

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placing patients in physical therapy early in the course of treatment is linked to fewer doctor visits and a more timely return to work.<sup>1</sup>

#### **4) Focusing on health and wellness keeps people fit, reduces costs**

“Companies can no longer wait for their employees to become sick,” says the director of University of Michigan’s Health Management Research Center, Dee Edington, PhD. He notes, “Companies need to realize that keeping people healthy adds value on both sides: Costs related to disease are lower while productivity increases.”<sup>2</sup>

By partnering with a rehab network that offers health and wellness services to keep people fit and active, at less risk of injury and illness, you’ll get another way to reduce medical costs.

***PTPN is a true value at a time when every dollar counts.***

- You pay no fees to access our network of outpatient rehab therapists.
- PTPN providers participate in our industry-leading Outcomes, Credentialing and Quality Assurance programs.
- PTPN AccessPoint streamlines appointment setting



PTPN is the nation's first and largest network of independent rehabilitation practitioners. For more insights, please visit [ptpn.com](http://ptpn.com) and click on Payers Enter.

## **In This Issue: CAN YOU TRACK THE RETURN ON YOUR REHAB DOLLARS?**

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To find out how PTPN delivers true value, contact Stephen Moore at [smoore@ptpn.com](mailto:smoore@ptpn.com) or 800-766-PTPN.

<sup>1</sup> Zigenfus G., Yin J., Giang G., et al, "Effectiveness of early physical therapy in the treatment of acute low back musculoskeletal disorders," Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, January 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Edington, Dee, "Zero Trends: Health as a Serious Economic Strategy," University of Michigan Health Management Research Center, 2009.

***This information is provided by PTPN, the nation's first and largest outpatient rehabilitation network. All PTPN providers must be independent practitioners who own their own practices. PTPN's network includes more than 1,200 therapist offices throughout the United States. PTPN is the first national therapy network to mandate an independent outcomes measurement program.***

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