



RUSH SURGICENTER: NEW REVENUE CYCLE MANAGEMENT PARTNER BRINGS OVERNIGHT SUCCESS

SNBilling
Revenue Cycle Management

Corporate Profile

Location: Chicago, IL
Multi-Specialty ASC
4 Operating Rooms

 RUSH SurgiCenter, LP

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Director,
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Introduction

The red flags were impossible for Wendy Stark-Riemer to miss: growing accounts receivable (AR), problematic documentation, and slower response to queries, to name a few. And their impact on Rush SurgiCenter in Chicago, where she serves as director, was clear: business performance was suffering.

When efforts to resolve the problems proved fruitless, Stark-Riemer knew it was time for a change. After three years working with a revenue cycle management (RCM) company, the ASC chose not to renew its contract.

“Following a couple years of good work, we started seeing alarming trends with our metrics,” Stark-Riemer says. “These metrics are not only important for monitoring and understanding the performance of our center but also to assess the effectiveness of working with our RCM company partner. Unfortunately, this company was failing to meet our needs and expectations, so we began our search for a new RCM partner.”

This led the ASC to SNBilling, the RCM service from Surgical Notes.

Making an Educated Decision

Rush SurgiCenter is a multi-specialty ASC that provides a wide range of procedures in four operating rooms. The AAAHC-accredited surgery center is affiliated with Rush University System for Health, one of the country’s leading medical institutions that includes Rush University Medical Center, which was ranked #1 for quality of care in 2019 by Vizient.

As Stark-Riemer began her search for a new RCM partner, she was looking for a company that could help reverse her center's downward trending and then deliver consistently high levels of revenue cycle performance and support. Since only a few years had passed since Stark-Riemer performed her initial search for an outsourced RCM partner, she still had her research notes, which included Surgical Notes.

"I remembered them positively from an interview I conducted with them, so I reached out and engaged in further conversations," Stark-Riemer says. She also sought impartial feedback on Surgical Notes and the other companies she was considering from a firm that provides consulting services to Rush SurgiCenter.

When Stark-Riemer completed her due diligence, the choice was easy. "What led me to Surgical Notes was seeing the tools they

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were going to use to deliver the RCM services we were looking for. One such tool was a detailed assessment they completed on our current status of accounts. I was also impressed with the way they were going to structure their team to support our ASC and the responsiveness they pledged to deliver. They knew that I am not shy about exiting a partnership if a company we work with is failing to meet our expectations."

Righting the Ship

Once Surgical Notes was brought on board, Stark-Riemer expected a slow, but steady ramping up period. Much to her surprise and satisfaction, the opposite occurred.

"They had staff ready to go and began working on our account essentially on day one," she says. "It was a much more seamless transition than I expected. On-boarding the Surgical Notes team was fantastic. We didn't miss a beat or experience the slow down one might anticipate when there is a change from one service provider to another. Everyone at Surgical Notes was on point and took the time to get to know our people. This helped make it feel like the Surgical Notes staff was part of our internal team."

While the partnership started off as well as she could have hoped, Stark-Riemer knew success wouldn't come overnight. In fact, she informed her leadership that some of the ASC's metrics would need to get worse before they got better. "People should be prepared to see the performance of their AR and other metrics decline in the early stages. If an RCM company is doing its job right, it will scrutinize the work of the previous company and pull accounts back on to your AR that should not have been closed out. This is what Surgical Notes did, and it helped us capture the money we deserved."

In the months that followed, Rush SurgiCenter experienced across-the-board improvement in its revenue cycle performance. "We started to see our bills get out the door much faster, which was wonderful since the faster they get out, the faster we get paid. Then we saw our days to pay come down. These are really important metrics."

Other metrics that saw noteworthy improvements in the first six months of the partnership included cash collections, payments received for cases over 90 days old, days in AR, AR greater than 90, patient balance AR, and total number of cases in AR.

Measurable improvements achieved in the first six months of the Surgical Notes and Rush SurgiCenter partnership included the following:

- » Days to bill reduced from 10 to 5 days (50% improvement)
- » Days to pay reduced from 52 to 28 days (45% improvement)
- » Payments received for cases over 90 days old increased from \$175,000 per month to \$880,000 per month (more than 400% improvement)
- » AR greater than 90 days reduced from 41% to 24% (41% improvement)

Partnership Still Going Strong

With the partnership between Rush SurgiCenter and Surgical Notes now in its third year, Stark-Riemer says she is pleased with her decision to switch to SNBilling. Performance metrics remain consistently strong. In addition, the ASC is now able to better predict patient financial responsibility prior to surgery.

“When patients have transparency into their expenses, it puts them in better control of their decision-making,” Stark-Riemer says. “We strive to put the patient first, and this is another way we can do so. From the business side, this information helps us collect more of the payment up front since patients are prepared to pay when they come in on the day of their procedure.”

Another significant contributor to the partnership’s success, Stark-Riemer says, is that the Surgical Notes sales team and operations team are strongly aligned. “This may not seem important, but it is very frustrating and a significant problem when someone on the sales side sells you a book of business that its operations team can’t deliver. We

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don’t experience that with Surgical Notes. They will deliver on what they promise, and if there is an issue, they are committed to resolving it.”

The trust that Surgical Notes earned has encouraged Stark-Riemer to expand their partnership, which has included Surgical Notes helping Rush SurgiCenter with staffing. “There was a time when we were short-staffed with insurance verification. We came up with an addendum to our contract that permitted us to bring on someone at Surgical Notes to pick up insurance verification responsibilities. They stepped up and helped us out. It’s great to know that we can count on Surgical Notes.”



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