Every ASC's revenue cycle is different.
Surgical Notes helps them all.

For an ASC with several ORs and high case volume, outsourcing revenue cycle management is an effective way to streamline a critical aspect of business office operations. For a smaller ASC, outsourcing reduces the potential for staffing challenges that can wreak havoc on performance. **Regardless of your ASC's size, we will customize a revenue cycle solution for you.**

Average Surgical Notes Client KPIs

Charge Lag	Days to Pay
<2 DAYS	<31 DAYS
Denial Rate	**Clean Claim**
<1%	99%+

Complete Revenue Cycle Solutions

SNChart®
Transcription

SNCoder
Coding & Coding Audits

SNBilling
Revenue Cycle Management

Scan Chart ASC
Document Management

Surgical Notes

A Revenue Cycle Transformation

Facility Profile:
A multi-specialty ASC performing 6,000 cases annually was outsourcing their billing services. Facility leadership contacted the SNBilling Team at Surgical Notes to give their billing operations a closer look. After identifying numerous opportunities for improvement, the ASC partnered with Surgical Notes. Within six short months, our team of ASC revenue cycle experts dramatically transformed the center's billing operations, optimizing its revenue cycle. The ASC has maintained its optimal metrics for the past 3 years due to its partnership with Surgical Notes!

Days to Bill

Before Surgical Notes	After 6 Months with Surgical Notes	
10 DAYS	5 DAYS	50% IMPROVEMENT

Days to Pay

Before Surgical Notes	After 6 Months with Surgical Notes	
52 DAYS	28 DAYS	45% IMPROVEMENT

Payments Received for Cases > 90 Days

Before Surgical Notes	After 6 Months with Surgical Notes	
$175K PER MONTH	$880K PER MONTH	403% IMPROVEMENT

AR > 90 Days

Before Surgical Notes	After 6 Months with Surgical Notes	
41% PER MONTH	24% PER MONTH (including workers' comp)	41% IMPROVEMENT

What ASCs outsource their revenue cycle management and why

By Angela Mattioda, Vice President of Revenue Cycle Management Services, Surgical Notes

Whether it's a young, single-specialty ASC trying to get its financials in order; a large, multi-specialty center with years of success under its belt; or any other type of surgery center, all types of ASCs outsource their revenue cycle. And these different ASCs often have varying reasons for why they choose outsourcing over in-house revenue cycle management.

Here are eight categorizations of ASCs and ways each benefit from outsourcing RCM.

1. De Novo

When a new ASC outsources, it achieves upfront savings, reduces the work required to open and better ensures critical steps are not overlooked. Choosing to outsource before designing an ASC will support more effective business office space allocation. Owners can build a smaller facility or pursue a smaller space to rent, saving money on construction, mortgage/rent, utilities and more. Additional savings include reduced expenses associated with recruiting/training staff and purchasing technology.

Staffing a new surgery center is also difficult as volume is typically lower and less predictable in the early months of operation. Outsourcing reduces unnecessary spending on staff, supplies and resources.

With less resources committed to establishing the business office, more attention is focused on initial clinical and operational needs.

2. Mature

When an older ASC moves to outsourcing, this serves to reset and clean up revenue cycle policies and procedures. It provides a fresh look at habitual processes, often replacing them with more effective practices.

Outsourcing provides a mature center with instant cost savings via reduced or eliminated overtime and part-time work or scaled back business office staff. If a key member of the revenue cycle team leaves the ASC, outsourcing serves as an effective succession plan, providing an alternative to replacing the employee. And as a mature ASC undergoes clinical staff changes, outsourcing accommodates subsequent changes to operations (e.g., new physicians and specialties).

3. Struggling

If an ASC's revenue cycle performance takes a turn for the worst, outsourcing can be the solution that rights the ship. The ASC gains access to experts who can pinpoint shortcomings and opportunities. These experts can coordinate their revenue cycle performance assessment and fast-track improvements.

The ASC can also achieve cost savings by scaling back business office staffing. With a reduced administrative workload, focus can shift to other matters, including physician recruitment and inventory management.

As the ASC turns around its business fortunes, it can weigh avenues for growth supported by the outsourcing partner.

4. Successful

A strong-performing ASC can build upon its success with the right outsourcing partner. The ASC can pursue growth opportunities knowing its partner will deliver the services to support expansion.

As the ASC grows, it will not need to worry about adding RCM staff. If growth involves new specialties, outsourcing eliminates finding staff with knowledge of billing intricacies or training staff on rules.

If accommodating growth necessitates clinical expansion, outsourcing can free up business office space. If growth necessitates relocation, the ASC can reduce costs associated with purchasing/renting space and outfitting a business office.

The most successful ASCs benefit from outsourcing. An unbiased perspective sheds light on problems and deficient processes.

5. Large

For an ASC with several operating rooms, many physicians and high volume, outsourcing streamlines a significant aspect of operations. Business office management is simplified. The responsibility to oversee a team of professionals is shifted to the outsourcing partner.

With a reduced business office staff, concerns about turnover, absences and other disruptions are alleviated. Each eliminated business office staff position translates into savings.

If the ASC experiences significant changes to its clinical team and service types, outsourcing accommodates such changes.

6. Small

For an ASC with a smaller operation, outsourcing reduces the potential for challenges that strain performance. Outsourcing allows ASCs to pay for the services it needs when it needs them (i.e., scalability). This can eliminate reliance on part-time business office staff and paying overtime. Outsourcing can reduce excessive staffing expenses when volume shifts.

Outsourcing can also eliminate the need for a dedicated business office manager. A business-savvy administrator, director of nursing and medical director may be all the in-house management necessary.

7. Multi-Specialty

An ASC with multiple specialties benefits from an outsourcing partner with experts in all aspects of ASC operations. Challenges associated with performing cases across specialties include keeping current on coverage requirements and educating staff on rule changes. An outsourcing partner prioritizes staying abreast of revenue-cycle related developments across specialties and payers and ensures its staff is trained.

If a multi-specialty ASC has team members trained in particular specialties, they may struggle if the ASC experiences volume swings that require billing for a "weaker" specialty. An outsourcing partner can quickly adapt to such changes.

8. Single-Specialty

A single-specialty ASC will value how outsourcing reduces internal responsibilities. With less attention required for managing the business office, the ASC can focus on what makes single-specialty centers successful: streamlining patient throughput to maximize volume.

If the ASC chooses to transition to a multi-specialty facility, accommodating the new specialty(s) will be easier since the responsibility for RCM functions will fall to the outsourcing company.

Is outsourcing right for your ASC?

While all types of ASCs can benefit from outsourcing, the questions you should set out to answer are whether your surgery center would benefit and by how much. Worthwhile initial steps to take to begin gathering information are to undergo a revenue cycle audit to gain a better understanding of your performance and speak with outsourcing companies about their services and results delivered to like ASCs. From there, you can decide whether to further pursue outsourcing.

Even if you choose not to outsource right away, this due diligence process should leave you knowing more about outsourcing RCM and the role it may eventually play for your ASC.

Angela Mattioda is vice president of revenue cycle management services for Surgical Notes. Surgical Notes is a nationwide provider of revenue cycle solutions, including, transcription, coding, revenue cycle management (RCM), and document management applications for the ASC and surgical hospital markets. Mattioda oversees the SNBilling RCM service, the fastest-growing component of Surgical Notes' complete, best-in-class revenue cycle solution offering. Contact Mattioda at angela.mattioda@surgicalnotes.com. ■

Improving ASC revenue cycle performance: Q&A with Surgical Notes' Angela Mattioda

Angela Mattioda is vice president of revenue cycle management services for Surgical Notes. Here she answers three RCM-focused questions.

Question: What can all types of ASCs do to gain a better understanding of their revenue cycle performance?

Angela Mattioda: There are a couple of fundamental steps worth taking. First, perform ongoing revenue cycle key performance indicator trending to gain an accurate understanding of their performance and the trend of their performance.

Second, undergo an audit – such as a revenue cycle assessment – conducted by an experienced third party, particularly one with ASC expertise. Such an unbiased audit will take a deep dive into revenue cycle metrics and processes to discover issues negatively affecting cashflow. ASCs are best served by undergoing revenue cycle audits at least annually.

Q: What do ASCs with strong and poor performing revenue cycles tend to have in common?

AM: Strong ASCs tend to have well-defined internal business office processes – regardless of whether they are performing revenue cycle management in-house or via outsourcing. In other words, they have strong management overseeing RCM. That starts with performing insurance verification and case costing to determine whether a case is financially viable; securing the appropriate authorizations, which is the first step to ensuring you are going to get paid; and then ensuring all of the remaining ASC revenue cycle functions are completed properly and efficiently.

Meanwhile, poor-performing ASCs are generally missing this strong management. For such ASCs with in-house RCM, their management often does not have the time to oversee the RCM process effectively. For ASCs outsourcing RCM, they often put too much trust in their outsourcing company and do not obtain their KPIs in a trending format to allow for effective monitoring and evaluation of the outsourcing work being performed.

Q: How difficult is it to change outsourcing vendor partners?

AM: It may seem daunting to transition from one outsourcing company to another. However, there are ways to make the switch a smoother process.

When you are changing vendors, performing your due diligence is critical. Ensure that the new vendor knows what they must do to help make the process as seamless as possible. That includes providing an onboarding plan to check off all of the necessary steps prior to the new vendor go-live date and timeline requirements for the ASC and outsourcing company.

Another step that can help make changing vendors easier is to seek out a true business partner, not just an outsourcing vendor. The right RCM company will approach its relationship with your ASC as a partnership, with the vendor considering itself as an extension of the business office. Such a mentality that emphasizes collaboration can help eliminate roadblocks that have the potential to make changing outsourcing companies much more difficult than it needs to be.

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