How to Incorporate Virtual Technology to Overcome Medicaid Enrollment Barriers and Increase Completed Medicaid Applications

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OUR THESIS

Many hospitals have seen a drop-off in completed Medicaid applications since the start of the pandemic due to a variety of critical factors, such as:

- Hospital census declines
- Loss of staff
- Inability to hire new staff/onboarding time for new hires
- Changing work and life routines for hospital workers and patients
- Hospital COVID policies
- Governmental incentives/reimbursement during COVID
OUR THESIS

Even as the environment returns to a more “normal” one, the previous way of completing Medicaid applications will no longer suffice. There have been too many changes in the patterns of healthcare delivery to return to the former status quo.
OUR THESIS

There are technological solutions that can help maintain and increase completed Medicaid applications. If your organization doesn’t adapt and utilize this technology, your hospital’s success in enrolling patients into these crucial federal and state programs will decline, as will your organization’s associated revenue with these cases.
OUR THESIS

Without utilizing this new technology for Medicaid eligibility:

- You will not be helping your patients to the same degree.
- You will also not be helping your hospital’s bottom line.

But there are solutions out there that can help!
A BRIEF HISTORY OF WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY DURING THE PANDEMIC

We’ve been providing onsite Medicaid Eligibility since 1999 in numerous states across the country.

Once the pandemic hit, our access to provide onsite Medicaid eligibility services was curtailed in many if not most facilities. This affected:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bedside visits</th>
<th>Follow-up patient appointments at the hospital</th>
<th>Workflow meetings with hospital staff and administrators</th>
<th>Hospital drop boxes for completed applications</th>
<th>Our office space at our facilities</th>
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But the work still needed to get done. We had to find another way.
A BRIEF HISTORY OF WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY DURING THE PANDEMIC

We needed to get in touch with patients, and we had to find a way to enroll qualified patients into Medicaid despite these hindrances.

We needed to devise a new solution

One thing we realized is that despite the hardships that many within this patient population face, almost everyone had a smartphone. And if they didn’t, a relative or a guardian certainly did.

Thus, our solution needed to work on a mobile platform. If there was a smartphone, there could be an answer.
A BRIEF HISTORY OF WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY DURING THE PANDEMIC

Now we don’t want to spend this presentation telling you how great we are, but we’re very proud that our virtual Medicaid eligibility solution improved completed applications by 10-15% at our facilities. That’s real money for our clients.

What we’re more interested in detailing today is explaining why incorporating virtual technology is essential in the Medicaid eligibility process and what elements are needed for your organization to have a successful virtual solution.
WHAT VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY IS AND ISN’T FOR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

A definition we will use for today. Virtual Technology for Medicaid eligibility is utilizing virtual means to complete and/or support the Medicaid application process, and by this we mean the entire Medicaid application process.

Your organization’s goal should be to provide the same level of assistance in completing Medicaid applications whether patients are onsite or offsite. The results should be the same, only the process may differ. Without this end result of completed Medicaid applications, all other software or technological enhancements are meaningless.

It should be about doing right by your patients and improving your organization’s performance.
WHAT VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY IS AND ISN’T FOR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

Here’s what virtual Medicaid eligibility technology isn’t:

A Kiosk
WHAT VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY IS AND ISN’T FOR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

Here’s what virtual Medicaid eligibility technology isn’t:

A solitary link: 
Download this form
Here’s what virtual Medicaid eligibility technology is:
WHAT VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY IS AND ISN'T FOR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

Wait a minute!
Was that a person?
WHAT VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY IS AND ISN’T FOR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

It was!!!
WHAT VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY IS AND ISN’T FOR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

What you must realize is that the process for completing Medicaid applications depends on your people to provide assistance for your patients.

It doesn’t matter what bells and whistles you may have with technology. Without trained professionals who understand the Medicaid application process, your efforts in acquiring and employing virtual technology will fail.
YOUR PATIENTS HAVE ENROLLMENT BARRIERS: THEY NEED YOUR HELP

Patients face many barriers to enrolling in Medicaid. Here are some of them:

- Language barriers
- Transportation issues
- No paid time off in their jobs
- Technology limitations
- Immigrations status concerns
- Difficult family situations
- The application forms are not easy to understand
- In the hospital or recovering from hospitalization/major procedures
YOUR PATIENTS HAVE ENROLLMENT BARRIERS

THEY NEED YOUR HELP

Think about the process of detailing the financial assets needed for Medicaid and SSI applications.

If you haven’t looked at one of these applications in a while, you should. They can be nasty.

Now imagine if English isn’t your first language. Imagine if you are trying to gather needed financial information for a sick parent or relative.

And what if you have a job or family situation that doesn’t allow you to get to a hospital to receive assistance with your application? What do you do then?
IS YOUR EXISTING ELIGIBILITY PROCESS WORKING?

Can You Service Your Patients Without Virtual Technology?

We’d like you to answer the following questions:

Are your patients allowed to come to the hospital like they did before the pandemic for assistance with their Medicaid applications?

If they are allowed, are your patients coming back to the hospital in similar numbers as they did before the pandemic?

Do you have the same amount of staffing available to help patients with Medicaid eligibility as you did before the pandemic?

For those patients that haven’t come back to the hospital, are you frequently reaching out to them for follow up appointments regarding their Medicaid applications?

If you answered no to the any of those questions, there probably is a decline in your organization’s ability to qualify patients for Medicaid eligibility, or one is certainly on the way.

It’s time to investigate how virtual technology can increase your organization’s completed Medicaid applications, which will help your patients and your organization’s Medicaid revenue.

Or, if you have an existing process, is it functional? Is it providing the level of service required to improve your organization’s performance?
COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM FOR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

1. People with expertise in Medicaid enrollment
   - Are your staffing levels vis-à-vis Medicaid enrollment consistent with pre-pandemic levels?
   - Are your Medicaid experts contacting patients who don’t return to the hospital?
   - Do you have dedicated staff to enrolling patients in Medicaid? Is this their primary function, or have they been given other functions and responsibilities within your organization?
   - Can your staff communicate in the languages of your patient population?
   - What happens when your organization loses a dedicated Medicaid counselor? What if your organization loses two?
2. Scheduling Follow Up Appointments Online

- To connect with hard-to-reach patients you need to give them more flexibility and convenience. Providing them with a means to schedule follow up appointments through their phone or computer will make a major difference in your organization’s efforts. With this function, you have made their ability to start and complete a Medicaid application substantially easier.
Components of a Successful Virtual Technology Program for Medicaid Eligibility
COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM FOR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

3. Face-to-Face Virtual Meetings

- There is no substitute for face-to-face meetings with patients. The ability for patients to ask questions of your experts in real time is paramount. The virtual Medicaid counselor is a resource for patients and can remind them of the additional benefits that can accrue to them once enrolled in Medicaid (e.g., rental assistance, food stamps, etc.) and anticipate issues with getting their application completed.

- There are a number of virtual meetings platforms that can work, but it’s imperative that they are staffed at times that are convenient for patients, not just when your business office is open. This will help grow your completed Medicaid application numbers.
COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM FOR MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

4. Document Submission

- Offering patients the ability to submit their required documentation securely through an online portal can eliminate several steps, making it easier to complete Medicaid applications and faster.

- The documentation submission needs to work in both directions. Medicaid counselors can review materials and also must be able to send them back to patients on an as-needed basis.

- Documentation security is paramount and must be set up with your hospital’s IT department to ensure that both parties can submit vital documentation in a compliant manner.

- In addition, work queues and email notifications must be set up to ensure that documents are reviewed in a timely fashion. An online portal only works if it’s being attended to properly.
HOW TO USE YOUR VIRTUAL MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGY

Once you’ve built or developed your own virtual technology for Medicaid eligibility, how can you utilize it most effectively? Well, it depends. There are a number of ways where it can improve results:

- As a primary tool for your inpatient admissions who have been determined to be eligible for Medicaid
- Outpatients – these patients are often very difficult to get a hold of and/or get back to the hospital. Virtual technology can be very helpful with them
- Complicated cases – such as SSI, out-of-state patients or Emergency Medicaid
- Supplemental Staffing – use it when normal business hours are closed, but when many patients are available
Because of how work and life have changed, hospitals need to ensure that their Medicaid eligibility enrollment processes reflect these changes.

Technology is out there than can increase the number of completed applications, but the technology is only part of the equation.

Completing Medicaid applications remains a people business. It is your experts that are ultimately going to determine the success of these new initiatives, irrespective of a software platform.

The goal of this new technology isn’t like most industries, where they have minimized or removed the human element of customer service. New technology for Medicaid technology can expand your Medicaid counselors’ level of service. Now they can reach more people and be more effective.
SUMMARY

The four crucial elements of a successful virtual technology program for Medicaid eligibility are:

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<th>People</th>
<th>Virtual Scheduling</th>
<th>Virtual Face-to-Face Meetings</th>
<th>Secure Document Submission Portals</th>
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This virtual technology can be resource and labor-intensive to implement on your own, but the benefits are significant, and the downside of inaction is real.

What would a **10-15%** drop in completed Medicaid applications mean to your organization?

What would a **10-15%** gain in completed Medicaid applications mean to your organization? There’s much to think about and consider.
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