

Case Study: EliteBill

IU Health - Bloomington Hospital increases control, flexibility, speed with the EliteBill document processing solution.

Summary

Challenge: Replace IU Health - Bloomington Hospital's current statement processing solution with one that significantly increases the hospital's control over statement format and content, provides efficient statement personalization and slashes time-in-transit.

Solution: Use the EliteBill document processing solution to increase statement flexibility and responsiveness and provide patients with a simple, accurate, easy-to-understand bill.

Results: With help from Elite, the hospital was able to substantially improve key patient accounts metrics: reducing average days in accounts receivable, increasing collections and reducing overall patient confusion and frustration with the billing process.

Introduction

IU Health - Bloomington Hospital knows all about high-quality patient care. As one of the largest full-service healthcare facilities in the State of Indiana, the hospital serves over 413,000 people spread over ten counties, admitting more than 13,500 patients each year.

Continually staying true to its mission of high quality, cost effective and caring services has enabled the hospital to experience impressive growth over its century-plus history: moving from a ten-bed facility to one that today boasts a medical staff of more than 300 physicians practicing 31 medical specialties and an ever-expanding offering of forward-thinking patient services.

A key driver of IU Health - Bloomington's continued success is its strong commitment to satisfying patients. Part of maintaining that commitment is, of course, providing exemplary, patient-friendly care. But the hospital also recognizes that every point in the treatment process, from registration through balance payment, is a chance to shape the patient's experience in a positive way. Which is why it places the utmost importance on its patient financial documents. Its statements are not only an essential part of the payment process, but are also counted on to augment the patient's satisfaction with the care they receive, leaving a lasting, positive impression.

Realizing that its current statement vendor couldn't provide the level of flexibility and dedicated customer support that they needed, IU Health - Bloomington was in the market for a new approach. Which led the organization to the EliteBill bill processing solution.

The Challenge

Having the ability to respond quickly and efficiently to shifting conditions is indispensable in today's fast-moving healthcare marketplace. But prior to its relationship with Elite, IU Health - Bloomington had little flexibility to change its patient statements.

Rigid requirements imposed by its previous vendor meant that the hospital wasn't able to alter or enhance billing documents in any meaningful way to better communicate with patients. To further complicate matters, the hospital's base statement was the same generic, standardized bill that their processing vendor used for each hospital it worked with, offering little potential for relevant customization beyond simple cosmetic features.

This greatly limited bill readability and effectiveness, affording hospital revenue cycle leaders little input into, or control over, what information was and was not included on the statement and the manner in which it was produced. To truly optimize bill performance, the hospital needed a solution that went beyond simple statement customization: providing a level of personalization that would enable messages to be individually tailored based upon the patient (with personalized Patient Accounts contact information) or bill type (with special messages for accounts that were past-due or being prepared for collections).

And finally, from a revenue cycle performance standpoint, hospital revenue cycle leaders also wanted to reduce the several day statement time-in-transit delays that resulted from partnering with an out-of-state processing vendor.



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The Solution: IU Health - Bloomington Hospital Chooses Elite

After conducting a thorough vendor search, IU Health - Bloomington Hospital found Elite to be the best option to address its statement processing needs. Elite worked closely with the hospital's Patient Accounts staff to develop a processing program that would suitably address its glaring flexibility issues.

“We most appreciate Elite’s excellent customer service. Elite has worked with us to develop a process and statement that works for us, and we couldn’t be more pleased. Everyone has been great to work with in all aspects. We really appreciate all they do.”

Geri Geringer, Director of Patient Accounts
IU Health - Bloomington Hospital

With ground-level insight and key feedback from hospital revenue cycle leadership, Elite put their flexible design approach into action: building a unique, fully customized statement that presented patients with an easy-to-understand format and a simple description of the account information most relevant to the payment process (what is owed, for what services and by when).

In addition, Elite was able to meet IU Health - Bloomington Hospital's need for increased statement personalization. Using advanced imaging technology, Elite enabled the hospital to add a unique message to each patient's statement based upon its account status: a greeting from the CEO on the initial statement, a reminder from the CFO on past-due balances, and an announcement from Patient Accounts on accounts that were about to be turned over to collections. Additional personalized contact information on each statement lets patients know exactly who to call should a billing question or issue arise.

Partnering with a dedicated vendor that has a strong local presence also paid big dividends. Statements now spend less time in the mail, ensuring faster document delivery and patient action. And because Elite built its reputation on statement flexibility, its responsive development team makes requested modifications quickly and efficiently (often completing new changes prior to the next statement cycle). With Elite's document processing knowledge and consistently-lofty customer service standards, the hospital's statement delivery system has truly become a collaborative process: providing the organization with the control, responsiveness and flexibility that it was searching for.

The Bottom Line: Elite Results

Following an initial project implementation period, IU Health - Bloomington Hospital has experienced significant improvement in Patient Accounts performance, including:

- With EliteBill, IU Health - Bloomington Hospital's patient statements are mailed from a site in the state, slashing several days off bill time in transit. So statements are in the hands of patients quicker and payments are received in a much timelier manner.
- Elite worked with IU Health - Bloomington Hospital to calculate the hospital's Prompt Pay Discount for the first statement that each patient receives. With the help of this initiative, the hospital has seen an increase in the number of patients paying with the first statement.
- IU Health - Bloomington Hospital has been afforded the flexibility it needed to develop a results-driven base patient statement. Their fully customized, built-from-the-ground-up statement has helped enhance readability and reduce patient bill confusion.
- IU Health - Bloomington Hospital has received the statement-by-statement personalization that it needs to better communicate with its distinct patient base.
- Elite's customer service has consistently surpassed the high standards of IU Health - Bloomington Hospital, providing prompt, hassle-free statement modification and issue-resolution that saves time and money. The Elite staff has worked hand-in-hand with hospital staff to develop a process and a statement that fit their needs. In fact, the partnership has been so successful that IU Health - Bloomington Hospital recently tapped Elite to provide patients with Internet access to their statements and billing documents.