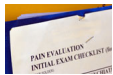


Medical Billing Service

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An aging population combined with the increasing regulation of the medical claims industry has massively increased the work load on doctors and their practices. A medical billing service handles all aspects of the medical billing process for doctors, from billing and tracking to filing insurance claims and answering patient's questions. If you're looking for a skilled and dynamic work at home job that is mostly done online and has the potential to be highly profitable, this is for you.

* (Please note this article is made up of mostly U.S specific details, that is not to say that the industry doesn't exist elsewhere in the world or that the general principles of starting this job don't apply)

Before The Start-Up, Let's Not Get Ahead Of Ourselves

Medical billing makes use of rather complex and ever changing codes, if you've never worked in the industry before you'll need to start out with a short course in coding and billing at your local college. These courses range from \$800 to \$1500 (USD).

Make sure the course you choose includes the following topics in its curriculum.

- Basic medical terminology
- The insurance claims process
- Processing forms
- National diagnostic and procedural system
- Training for medical billing software
- Methods to handle denied claims
- Soft collection techniques
- CPT codes

The Start-Up

Once you've taken a course its time to setup your office. You'll need a work space and a fast computer. Long hours in front of a computer can mean sore eyes so consider getting a LCD screen, your eyes will thank you later. Most of your work will be done online or on the phone so a high speed internet connection is essential, also consider reducing your phone bill by purchasing a VOIP (Voice Over IP) service such a Vonage.

Next you'll need to purchase medical billing software, expect to pay around \$500 for an average package. Do careful research on each package in your price range before making a purchase. Pay close attention to the specific features offered by each package. Look out for packages that restrict the amount of clients you can have or charge exorbitant fees to expand your business. Do research on forums and look for any negative comments about the package you are considering. Finally find out the level of support that comes with each package, some might offer free phone support while others might only offer email support, this might prove the deciding factor between two closely matched packages.

Making It Work

To become profitable you'll need to be in the employ of at least six practices. The initial start-up period will be challenging, it will take time and persistence to get your first six practices. Be patient, maintain excellent attention to detail, stay current with changing medical aid policy and network whenever possible.

Marketing

The wonderful thing about this job is that it only requires an initial burst of marketing; once your work load is full there is no need to seek out new clients. Use direct mail, mailers, cold calling and personal visits to market your new business initially. Be sure to get a referral from the first practice that hires you. With a referral to add to your resume it will become easier to get new clients.

Don't Forget

Beware of scams, the massive growth in this industry has spawned countless firms looking to make quick money off unsuspecting entrepreneurs. Use this rule of thumb, if it sounds too good to be true it usually is. Look out for companies that promise you a list of clients or maintain that no experience or training is necessary. Do careful research before purchasing software or any related packages. Use the internet to find any forum threads about the company in question; user reviews are always the best feedback you can get on a company.