

Case study

Health system reduces uncompensated care while supporting patients with Eligibility and Enrollment Services

Customer

Community health system in the Southeast

Challenge

Ensuring enhanced care and financial programs for surrounding community, including large indigent population

Product

Eligibility and Enrollment Services

Results

- Patients connected with funding sources
- Reduction in uncompensated care
- Increase in patient satisfaction

> "We believe, as the community health care leader, that we need to serve all consumers, regardless of payer source, look for programs and solutions that aid our population and make sure we're providing superior services to anyone who comes through our doors."
>
> Health system director of patient financial services

Optum

The customer

This community health system consists of a tertiary hospital, community hospitals, an urgent care center and a Level II trauma center. It also offers a host of specialty health care services. The organization's vision is to be the community health care leader through exceptional talent and superior patient-centered service delivered in a financially sustainable manner.

The challenge: Securing financial assistance for patients

As part of its mission to be the community health care leader for its surrounding counties, this health system is dedicated to providing service to all consumers — regardless of ability to pay. Achieving this goal in a fiscally sustainable manner has proven challenging. The health system covers a large geographic area with a considerable indigent population and treats close to 60,000 emergency department cases annually. These factors, along with escalating patient financial responsibility, resulted in substantial uncompensated care.

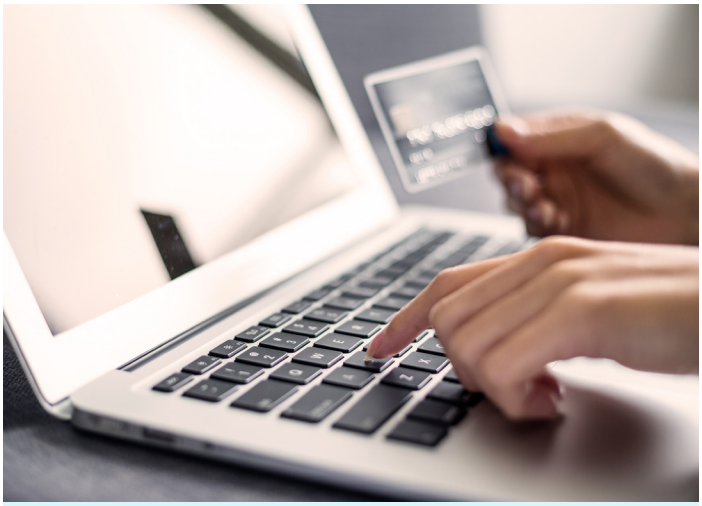
The health system needed to help put community members on a path to payment that would boost patient satisfaction and ensure appropriate revenue.

The solution: On-site services to help identify coverage sources and reduce uncompensated care

To reduce uncompensated care while improving the patient financial experience — in the hospital and beyond — the health system turned to Optum® Eligibility and Enrollment Services.

The Optum Eligibility and Enrollment Services team works hand-in-hand with the health system, to provide local-, state- and federal-specific expertise and experience in assessing patients for coverage. The Optum team helps alleviate patients' financial stress by identifying assistance through Medicare/Medicaid, Disability/SSI, third-party liability, commercial insurance, state and county programs, social programs and charity.

The Eligibility and Enrollment team engages with patients shortly after they enter the facility and are stable. They conduct in-person interviews to determine coverage and provide real-time enrollment assistance in financial programs. They digitally upload patient data, documentation and all associated forms with a bedside tablet equipped with a proprietary workflow system. While Optum team members embedded as part of hospital staff typically provide this service in person, remote options are available, as well.



Eligibility and Enrollment Services

These self-pay coverage identification and enrollment services assist hospitals and health systems in helping patients find appropriate funding sources for medical bills. As a result, facilities decrease uncompensated care and reduce bad debt.

- Multi-year Best in KLAS award winner for Eligibility Enrollment Services
- 30-plus years of experience in securing coverage, with strong relationships at state and federal levels
- Work closely with governmental agencies to support accurate assessment and timely approval of applications
- Comprehensive communications designed by behavioral science experts to facilitate understanding of patient financial responsibility
- Increase patient satisfaction by helping to reduce out-of-pocket expenses

The result: More patients enrolled in coverage, decreased uncompensated care, increased patient satisfaction

The Optum Eligibility and Enrollment team's ability to get patients approved for Medicaid and disability services has helped this health system decrease uncompensated care. It has also moved patients out of the self-pay category and into insurance and financial assistance programs.

The Eligibility and Enrollment team's efforts on behalf of patients has produced additional benefits that extend far beyond the health system's walls. Not only can the resulting health coverage be applied outside of this health system, but many patients have gained access to disability income that they otherwise would not have received.

> "The Optum Eligibility and Enrollment team gives a benefit to our patients not only here at our organization but also by helping them obtain financial assistance and access programs that can be used throughout the community."
>
> Health system patient access manager



Learn more about how to reduce uncompensated care and increase patient satisfaction with Eligibility and Enrollment Services.

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