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Latest Consumer Research Finds Hospital Billing Processes Linked to Patient Loyalty and Future Clinical Utilization and Recommendation Patterns

Patients highly-satisfied with billing process are twice as likely to choose the hospital for non-emergent care compared to those who are less than satisfied, according to the 2012 Connance Consumer Impact Study

Waltham, MA —October 24, 2012—Connance (<http://www.connance.com>), a provider of revenue cycle productivity solutions, today announced that according to its third annual Connance Consumer Impact Study, a survey of Americans who received hospital services within the last two years, 25% of patients gave billing processes a fully satisfied score and more than 18% continue to be dissatisfied. While low, the satisfaction ratings are an improvement relative to prior years. One-third of respondents said that their interactions with hospital billing groups changed whether or not they would recommend the hospital to a friend.

The Connance Consumer Impact Study reaffirms the role business office processes can have on patient loyalty and hospital revenue growth as consumers increasingly have financial responsibility as a result of rapid growth in insurance plans with co-payments, deductibles and coinsurance. According to the January 2012 annual census by America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) of U.S. health insurance carriers, 13.5 million people were covered by high deductible or health savings account plans, an increase of 18% from the 2011 survey. According to AHIP, this currently constitutes 7.8% of lives under age 65 enrolled in commercial health plans.

The 2012 Study surveyed 500 healthcare consumers from 45 different states, 12% of whom were uninsured and 88% of whom were insured. Among the insured respondents, 32% had high deductible plans. Highlights from the August 2012 online survey included:

- Among respondents, 25% gave billing processes a top score of "5" (on a 1-5 scale). Among respondents, 59% rated billing processes "3" or less. These results are better than in 2010 and 2011 when top box percentages were 20% and 21% respectively.
- Among respondents with responsibility after insurance, top box satisfaction is better at 27%.
- Of consumers with balances due of greater than \$100 who gave business office processes a top score, 79% paid their hospital bills in full. Among less than satisfied consumers, only 31% paid their bills in full.

- Among respondents giving billing processes a top score, 81% would recommend the hospital to their friends and only 4% would suggest their friends to go elsewhere. Among respondents giving billing processes less than satisfied scores, 64% would suggest their friends to seek service elsewhere and only 8% would recommend the facility.
- When asked if they would return to the same hospital for a future elective service, among those giving billing process a top box score, 100% reported they would, compared to 36% among those ranking the billing process very dissatisfying.

Business Office Has Important Role in Patient Relationship Management

“It is clear that the experience patients have with the revenue cycle team has lasting impressions around future utilization and recommendations to friends. Consumers pay attention when it impacts their wallet,” said Steve Levin, Chief Executive Officer of Connance. “In many situations, business office representatives are the first and last contacts consumers have with the hospital, weeks before and after treatment. These seemingly small interactions create lasting impressions, casting positive or negative shadows over clinical events.”

The linkage between billing activities and patient referral and utilization patterns is a powerful lever for healthcare executives to recognize. The emerging model of clinical reimbursement being tied to consumers staying healthy makes it essential that hospitals use every available avenue to stay engaged with their patients outside of the facility. Business office interactions are demonstrably one communication connection in place today that consumers recognize and value when done well. From the provider perspective, when a business office representative talks with a patient this could be an opportunity to shape the patient’s engagement with health management at a time when they are away from the facility.

Levin will be presenting the 2012 Connance Consumer Impact Study survey data in a complimentary webinar on Wednesday, November 14, 2012 at 12:00 p.m. EST. He will discuss how CFOs can start to build their organizational competencies to improve billing processes. Please [click here to register](#) or visit <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/905935342>.

Please [click here](#) or visit <http://info.connance.com/PatientInfographic10-24-12.html> to view and download the accompanying 2012 Consumer Impact Study infographic that Connance released today. Interested parties have permission to embed and share the 2012 Consumer Impact Study infographic on their websites or blogs with attribution.

About the Survey and Methodology

The Connance Consumer Impact Study focused on understanding patient behavior, satisfaction, attitudes and perceptions towards healthcare bills. The survey was conducted via an internet survey in August 2012 with 500 adults across the U.S. who had recently received hospital services. The survey sampling quotas were designed to be representative of US adults ages 26 and above who do and do not have health insurance. The data has a tolerance of +/- 4.4%.

About Connance, Inc.

Every healthcare organization has the opportunity to get more from their revenue cycle. Connance solutions help hospitals, physician groups and third-party revenue cycle operations lower costs and increase productivity. Connance revenue cycle productivity solutions combine predictive analytics and insights from hundreds of clinical settings with a user-driven technology platform to improve managed care billing processes recoveries, raise performance of outsourced operations and transform self-pay and charity efforts. With clients like Geisinger Health System, Centura Health and Florida Hospital, Connance is changing expectations of revenue cycle executives. Connance is headquartered in Waltham, MA. For more information visit <http://www.connance.com> or call (781) 577-5000.

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