

Show Me the Value!

A Step-By-Step Guide to Track Costs and Present to Stakeholders

By Scott Mullett, M.A., AT, CEFE

Overview

The healthcare industry is under significant pressure to reduce costs and more efficiently manage resources while improving patient care.¹ In addition, rising rates of chronic disease, aging populations, and changing consumer expectations about how they want to purchase and receive care are rapidly becoming the status quo in America’s healthcare system.



With the evaluation of healthcare underway, medical professions like athletic training will be in greater demand as the aging population will need more care. According to the American Medical Student Association, the population of individuals over the age of 65 will increase by 73 percent between 2010 and 2030, meaning one in five Americans will be a senior citizen.² With that, a more proactive, preventative approach to medicine, where value-based outcomes are a driving force to the success for the growing need of aging individuals. Therefore, athletic trainers must diversify their skill set to work with a geriatric population, but also embrace the idea of a private practice model.

In order to achieve goals and seek new opportunities, it is essential to track the value we produce. To get you started, AT Efficiency has developed a step-by-step procedure to assist you in developing your own methods to track, record, and report your value.

Procedures

Step 1: Utilize an Excel spreadsheet to track referral revenue data (note: make sure your spreadsheet is protected with a password and that you’re following all HIPAA guidelines).

Step 2: Identify CPT codes that are commonly be used in physical medicine and rehabilitation. These codes include, but are not limited to:

Evaluation

97161 – New Evaluation Low Complexity; 20 mins.	97162 – New Evaluation Moderate Complexity; 30 mins	97163 – New Evaluation High Complexity; 45 mins.	96116 – Neurobehavioral Status Exam (concussion evaluation)	97164 – Re-Evaluation est. Plan Care
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Modalities

97022 – Whirlpool Therapy	97032 – Electrical Stimulation, manual, each 15 minute	97034 – Contrast Bath Therapy, each 15 minutes	97035 – Ultrasound Therapy, each 15 minutes
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Exercises and Manual Therapy

97110 – Therapeutic Exercises	97530 – Therapeutic Activities, each 15 minutes; use of dynamic activities to improve functional performance	97140 – Manual Therapy 1/> regions
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Step 3: Look up these codes on: [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services](#) and follow the procedures below to access the codes:

- Accept terms
- Select current year (note: keep an eye out for the year selected, prices change per year).
- Select pricing information
- Select preferred HCPCS criteria
- Select specific locality
- Enter preferred code(s)
- Select all modifiers
- Select your specific locality
 - Note: when looking at a specific pricing point to utilize, reference the non-facility price. The interventions we perform are outside of a hospital or doctor's office. This is theoretically based off if the patient's insurance was being billed.

Step 4: Create a formula in your spreadsheet to easily track your interventions.

Step 5: Take the monthly or quarterly costs and compile in a short report, present to stakeholders.

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Presenting to Stakeholders

Step 1: Identify key stakeholders who would have the most interest in reviewing your data. Programs will vary, but a school board, principal, or athletic director is a good start. Generally, start with your direct supervisor.

Step 2: Compose a report which includes charts and graphs, get to the main point; the shorter the report the better (1-2 pages).

Step 3: Keep it consistent. Continue tracking your value and present to key stakeholders on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Discussion

Tracking this data on an Excel spreadsheet does not replace a protected EMR software; this should be considered an addendum to your current practice. Also, the information provided in this document can influence all settings of the athletic training profession, but as a frame of reference, the secondary school setting is the focus.

The information identified in this document is not to discredit our colleagues who work in other branches of medicine, but to bring awareness of the value and importance athletic training services provide to many communities, school districts, companies, and organizations across the country. The collaboration we have with other healthcare providers is essential for the strength and continued growth as a profession.

Conclusion

Other methods and CPT codes may also be utilized when tracking data. Breaking numbers down into specific sport, injury, and treatment are also plausible procedures to utilize. Keep in mind, tracking AT value utilizing CPT codes is the first step in understanding the true value of an athletic training services. Using resources available will help guide us in a new direction, this is just the starting point.

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About the Author



Scott Mullett is the founder and owner of AT Efficiency. Scott received both his bachelor's and master's degree from Kent State University. Scott has worked in the secondary school setting, and currently holds a position within the industrial/occupational sector. Scott's goal is to advocate the value of the athletic trainer in all settings.

For more information, or to continue the value of athletic training discussion, contact Scott at:

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¹ "Data-Driven Healthcare Organizations Use Big Data Analytics for Big Gains." *IBM*. 2013. https://www-03.ibm.com/industries/ca/en/healthcare/documents/Data_driven_healthcare_organizations

² "How Baby Boomers Will Affect the Health Care Industry In The U.S." *Carrington College*. 2014. <https://carrington.edu/blog/medical/baby-boomers-will-affect-health-care-industry-u-s/>.