

RAC: How Good Samaritan Hospital
Medical Center
Achieved a High Success Rate on
Appeals

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Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center

A Member of Catholic Health Services
of Long Island

A High Acuity High Occupancy
Community Teaching Hospital with
437 Beds

8600 Medicare discharges in 2008

Medical Necessity Denials

Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center	Total
# of Medical Necessity Denials	113
No Appeal	8
# of Appeals at 1 st Level (F.I.)	105
Upheld	28
Overtured	77
# of Appeals at 2 nd Level (QIC)	28
Upheld	23
Overtured	5

Medical Necessity Denials

(cont'd)

# of Appeals at 3 rd Level (ALJ)	23
Upheld	4
Overtured	19
# of Appeals at 4 th Level (MAC)	4
Upheld	3
Pending	1
Overall Medical Necessity Win Rate	88%

Appeal Strategies

- Experienced Denial Management Team
- Partnering with Physicians
- Database Management

Building a Successful Appeals Team

Hire the Right People for the Right Job



Building a Successful Appeals Team

Appeal Nurses:

- Strong Clinical Experience
- Knowledge of Insurance and/or Hospital Case Management
- Good Organizational Skills
- Great Critical Thinking Skills
- Highly Motivated to Meet Deadlines
- Strong Analytical Skills
- Ability to Work in a Team Atmosphere
- Efficient Computer Skills

Building a Successful Appeals Team

Physician Advisors:

- Excellent Interpersonal Skills
- Clear & Concise Written Skills
- Strong Clinical Experience
- Good Organizational Skills
- Urgency to Meet Deadlines
- Understands Denial Data
- Ability to Work in a Team Atmosphere
- Computer Skills
- Participates in UM Committee
- Ongoing Communication with Peers Internally/Externally
- Education of Attending Physicians



Building a Successful Appeals Team

Appeals Support Staff:

- Insurance and/or Hospital/Medical Experience
- Detail-Oriented and Strong Organizational Skills
- Up-to-Date Computer Skills
- Good Interpersonal/Communication Skills
- Ability to Work in a Team Atmosphere

How We Decide What to Appeal

Daily Meeting:

- Denial Management Team meets to discuss all new denials

Team members include:

- Appeals Team
- Physician Advisors
- Care Management Directors
- Corporate Denials Team
- Social Work Supervisor
- Business Office Representatives

How We Decide What to Appeal

(Cont'd)

- All RAC denials are reviewed by the Denials Management Team to establish that Medicare guidelines for inpatient care were met
- Previously appealed RAC denials are discussed to determine the next appropriate course of action

The Appeal

- Time is of the Essence: All Denials are Appealed Within the Required Timeframes
- Diligent Follow-up and Communication Are Essential Throughout All Levels of the Appeal Process
- All Appeals From QIC Level & Above are Written with the Physician Advisor and the Attending Physician
- Physician Advisor and Attending Physician Actively Participate in All ALJ Hearings

Database Management

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- Maintaining the Database is Critical to Ensure that Timeframes for the Appeals are Met
- The RAC Database Allows Reporting of How the Hospital is Impacted Financially.
- Denial Reasons are Tracked and Trended

Case Example

82 Year old male admitted for Elective Implanted Defibrillator

Complex medical history included:

- NYS Class III Congestive Heart Failure
- Prior Myocardial Infarction
- Ischemic Cardiomyopathy
- Left Ventricular Systolic Dysfunction

FI/QI Level was Denied with Rationale: “The management received was appropriate but did not rise to the level of inpatient.”

Case Example (Cont'd)

ALJ Level of Appeal: Reversed Denial

How We Won the Appeal

- The Comprehensive Brief was submitted two weeks prior to the hearing (reiteration of medical record). Highlighted exhibits from the chart were included with the brief:
 - Documentation of Evidence Based Practice i.e.. Literature
 - ASA Class
 - Nurse Safety Sheet
 - History & Physical from the Cardiologist
 - Denial Letter from QIC
 - Morbidity Rate for the Procedure
- The Interventional Radiologist and the Physician Advisor attended the hearing
 - They presented a concise presentation of what was in the brief and answered all of the questions asked by the judge

QUESTIONS?

