

Improving the Business Process: A Solution to Reduce AR Days and FTEs

Children's Hospital & Medical Center chose SSI's ClickON® Technology including ClickON® Secondary Billing and ClickON® Claims Editor (billing module) with transmission through SSI's EHNAC-accredited clearinghouse.



Case Study

Children's Hospital & Medical Center is part of Children's Healthcare Services, an integrated system of pediatric healthcare services, which also includes Children's Home Healthcare, Children's Home Healthcare's World, Children's Family Support Center, Children's Health Network, Children's Hospital Foundation, Children's Urgent Care Centers and Children's Physicians.

The Children's Patient Accounting staff is made up of five primary team members that handle the hands-on billing and posting work daily. Claims volumes are largely Medicaid, representing about 30 percent of the volume; Blue Cross/Blue Shield, United Healthcare and Coventry represent about 50 percent; and miscellaneous payers make up the remaining 20 percent. Daily claims volume averages between 400 and 500.

"ClickON® helps us utilize our staff in other areas because we don't have to spend time identifying and working lost claims."

Ramona Witte, Children's Hospital Patient Accounting supervisor
Children's Hospital - Omaha, Neb.

Children's Hospital and many other healthcare facilities in Nebraska had been using Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska as a healthcare claims clearinghouse. They decided that it would cease clearinghouse operations except for its own plans, giving Children's only five months to find a claims vendor and go live on a new system.

"The search for a new claims vendor had to be accelerated. There were only a few weeks to evaluate solutions and make a decision," said Ramona Witte, Children's Hospital patient accounting supervisor. "We evaluated four vendors capable of addressing our needs."



About Children's Hospital & Medical Center

Children's Hospital & Medical Center, located in Omaha, Neb., is a 145-bed non-profit organization caring for children since 1948. It is the only full-service pediatric specialty health care center in Nebraska. Patients are referred from throughout the region for the treatment of complex or unusual diseases in addition to pediatric primary care.

Children's chose ClickON® Technology from The SSI Group, Inc. (SSI). The SSI solutions included ClickON® Claims Editor (billing module) with transmission through SSI's EHNAC-accredited clearinghouse and ClickON® Secondary Billing.

ClickON® Claims Editor provided an automated solution to the healthcare billing process. Claims were validated against system/generic edits, payer edits and provider-specific edits then transmitted to payers after they were translated from the hospital's mainframe system if they were "clean." Claims not validated during translation could be queued by different criteria for review and correction if needed.

ClickON® Secondary Billing offered the ability to produce secondary and tertiary claims, along with a one-page Explanation of Benefits (EOB) attachment, by posting electronic remittance files to claims in the ClickON® Claims Editor. Claims could be updated with remittance information and secondary and/or tertiary bills for professional and institutional claims to be produced.

SSI's ClickON® Technology facilitated HIPAA transactions for claims (837I&P), eligibility request / inquiry (270/271), claim status request/inquiry (276/277), remittance advice (835) and precertification / authorization (278). Through ClickON® Technology, an extensive payer offering is available with more than 800 available payers, representing thousands of health plans. Payer connectivity includes a wide variety of commercial and government healthcare payers, including Medicare.

Children's Hospital also purchased SSI's ClickON® Remit/Cash Posting technology. As part of the claims processing back-end process, ClickON® Remit/Cash Posting automated the posting of remits back to the accounts receivable system. Prior to going live with this solution, the Children's Patient Accounting department manually posted remits.

ClickON® Products Used

- *ClickON® Claims Editor*
- *ClickON® Secondary Billing*
- *ClickON® Remit/Cash Posting*

"Implementation went extremely well," said Linda Wittmann, Children's lead reimbursement specialist. "SSI's implementation staff was open to listening to our needs. They wanted to understand how our operations functioned, and then they implemented the products based on that knowledge."

According to Children's lead biller, Melissa Gagliolio, the response of the implementation staff to addressing System Support Requests (SSRs) was quick and helped bring the products live. "Training went well also," she said. "We worked with four different SSI trainers who were all knowledgeable and experienced on the products."

The Result

After going live, the billing staff noticed that the ClickON® Claims Editor was easy to use and improved identification of missing claims. "ClickON® helped us utilize our staff in other areas because we didn't have to spend time identifying and working lost claims. It also eliminated the need to hire more staff," Witte said. "The system enabled us to better utilize our billers because of the edits in the system. Each biller is now able to bill any type of claim."

The payer-specific edits available in the Claims Editor augmented the billing process by increasing validation rates. The process to add or build edits after request to SSI's Client Services team enhanced the overall process because of the quick turnaround provided by SSI. Reporting was also improved, Stacy Koehler, lead Medicaid specialist, added. "The combination of the confirmation reports and the 997 functional acknowledgements has benefited our daily processes," she said.

Because of the flexibility within ClickON® Technology, Children's Hospital Patient Accounting staff has been able to address special areas that are primarily tied to issues associated with children's medical billing. For instance, long-term care patients like infants in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) often have a change in insurance payers during their stay. ClickON® Claims Editor helped with the interim billing process of these patients in mid-treatment by being able to more fully adjust claims from one payer to the next.

Because of the complexity of working with the different insurance payers, dynamic technology and ever-changing regulations, customer support is vital, Gagliolio added. "SSI's Client Services staff was always extremely responsive," she said. "Utilization of the WebEx support solution helped to quickly address and resolve issues. The release of the Web-based SSR system helped our staff track requests and know where they were in the process."

The implementation of ClickON® Remit Cash Posting provided an immediate result in the reduction of an hour of the daily remit posting process with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska. Additional payers have been added to further improve the cash/remit posting process. This solution also helped Children's to put patient statements online.

"With the implementation of a new billing system and electronic medical record on the clinical side, we have been able to drive down our cost to collect from around a 4 percent to 5 percent cost to 2 percent and consistently maintain days in accounts receivable in the 23 days to 25 days range. Also, we were able to decrease days in AIR for anesthesia professional services from the 80 range to the low 40s. This was all accomplished through workflow revision and integrating clinical and financial data"

David Mier, Chief Revenue Officer
Children's Hospital - Omaha, Neb.

Since choosing to implement ClickON® Technology from SSI, Children's Hospital has improved business processes, enhanced reporting and advanced claims tracking capabilities. Combined with the support received by SSI, Children's Hospital has a powerful clearinghouse and a money-saving claims processing solution.

About The SSI Group, Inc.

The SSI Group, Inc. (SSI) is a national, diversified information technology company established in 1988. It maintains corporate headquarters in Mobile, Ala., and branch facilities in Clearwater, Fla.; Denver, Colo. and Chesapeake, Va. With approximately 385 employees and 2,200-plus clients nationwide, SSI leads the healthcare field in healthcare claims management technology, EDI platforms and networking. ClickON® technology has more than 200,000 built-in edits, delivers HIPAA-certified transactions from Claredi, is EHNAC certified and has 800 payer connections. As a testament to the company's leadership, the company's technology processes 250 million transactions annually, totaling in excess of \$458 billion. The company offers a wide range of provider/payer/physician services and technologies for managing the revenue cycle - claims processing (ASP/Direct/Clearinghouse), document management and business office outsourcing for paper claims. For more information about SSI, please visit www.thessigroup.com.

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