



MGMA CONSULTING

BAY PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATES ACHIEVES SUCCESSFUL MIPS SCORE OF ABOVE 70 WITH BONUS CAPABILITY

CLIENT PROFILE

Bay Psychiatric Associates has been providing mental health services to the San Francisco Bay Area since 1994 with the mission to provide the highest quality of psychiatric care. Its members have multiple areas of expertise, including treatment-resistant depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), personality disorders, alternative medicine, aging, substance abuse, child and adolescent issues, eating disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), forensics and women's issues. Physicians provide inpatient services, partial hospital and intensive outpatient services, and outpatient services.

CHALLENGE

Bay Psychiatric Associates had a significant number of Medicare patients and realized payment change was inevitable. The practice sought to better understand the payment method and identify how its internal processes needed to change to meet the new payment requirements.

SOLUTION

Pamela Ballou-Nelson, RN, MSPH, PhD, CMPE, principal consultant, MGMA Consulting, initiated this project by first working with Bay Psychiatric Associates to ensure its EHR system accurately documented patient encounters. She then assisted in the collaboration between Bay Psychiatric Associates and the American Psychiatric Association registry to identify Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) reporting psychiatry measures and worked with the client on adjusting internal processes to meet the new requirements.

RESULTS

Bay Psychiatric Associates' goal was to achieve standardization within the practice for the designated chosen measures and to submit these measures through the registry to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to receive an upward adjustment. The practice achieved a successful MIPS score of above 70, putting it in the bonus capability category.





MACRA/MIPS REPORTING PROGRAM

December 2017 was the closure of the first year for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015/ Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MACRA/MIPS) reporting program. It was a challenging year for many practices to select and track their quality measures as well as collaborate with their EHR vendors to report and submit their measures. Practices like Bay Psychiatric Associates that sought to proactively understand the payment method changes and improve their internal processes at the beginning of 2017 were in a better position to achieve a successful MIPS score at the end of the year.

Bay Psychiatric Associates collaborates with MGMA to ensure MACRA/MIPS compliance

Bay Psychiatric Associates, based in Berkeley, Calif., was treating a significant number of Medicare patients and knew that payment change was inevitable with the continued MACRA/MIPS policy shifts. The practice wanted to not only better understand these changes, but also get a clear understanding of how to adapt its internal processes and how to select the appropriate quality measures to achieve a successful MIPS score.

The practice reached out to MGMA for expert advice and assistance in redefining its payment methods. Pamela Ballou-Nelson, RN, MSPH, PhD, CMPE, principal consultant, MGMA Consulting, initiated the project by putting together a comprehensive project timeline outlining key milestones.

The first task at hand was to bring Bay Psychiatric Associates' EHR documentation system up to speed by ensuring that data from all patient encounters was captured effectively and accurately. Once that was complete, Pam and Bay Psychiatric Associates worked with the American Psychiatric Association registry to identify the appropriate MIPS reporting measures. Pam then worked with Bay Psychiatric Associates to adjust its internal processes to achieve standardization within the practice for the designated measures.

THE RESULTS

With Pam's assistance, Bay Psychiatric Associates exceeded its peers in the category of MIPS/MACRA compliance and received an upward adjustment in its Medicare payments for the measurement year. The practice achieved a successful MIPS score of above 70, putting it in the bonus capability category.

Bay Psychiatric Associates' experience with MGMA

Pam met with Bay Psychiatric Associates once every two weeks to guide leaders through the process and answer all of their questions along the way.

"Pam is incredibly knowledgeable and helpful. She guided us through the complexities of MIPS/MACRA step by step and explained the logic behind each step so that we knew what we were doing and why we were doing it," said John M. Cruz, MD, Bay Psychiatric Associates. "We couldn't have navigated the complexities of MIPS/MACRA without her extensive help. Pam seems to know more about MIPS/MACRA than anyone we have encountered."

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

"As Medicare continues to update its MIPS/MACRA policies, Pam continues to update us on these changes to make sure that we continue to adjust our processes in keeping with these changes," Cruz said. "Pam's ongoing CMS updates and guidance in how to adjust our processes far exceed the costs."

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