Using UHIN to Lower Administrative Costs in Healthcare

Chase L. Andreason (Brad Farr MD, PhD)
Department of Biomedical Informatics
University of Utah

The cost of healthcare in America has become more than just a problem; it has become a crisis. The cost of healthcare is rising faster than the gross domestic product (GDP) of America. It is projected that the cost of healthcare will continue to increase nearly three times the rate of inflation. Paying for these rising healthcare costs is a problem that many people are facing.

A large amount of the money people pay for healthcare is spent on administrative costs. Therefore a solution to the dilemma is to reduce those administrative costs. The purpose of this research project was to analyze the procedure of migrating a dental office billing process from a proprietary clearing house to the Utah Health Information Network (UHIN) and to evaluate the cost and savings that resulted from the change. The purpose was also to examine the billing process and find innovative ways to manage it more efficiently. Two key areas were evaluated: How the billing process was done and how much it cost to submit a claim to a patient’s insurance provider. A cost analysis was performed on the original billing process, the process was switched to the Utah Health Information Network, and the cost analysis was examined again for the new billing process.

There were three areas where the office was able to save money: Reduction of time, the reduction of error in the billing process, and the reduction of the cost of submitting claims. This allowed the office to run more efficiently and economically, which in turn could lower the cost of healthcare.