

Financial counseling quiz

Circle the correct answer:

- Financial counseling includes all the following activities except
 - explaining the provider's financial policies
 - determining the patient's liability
 - obtaining an advance beneficiary notice (ABN) after service is provided
 - making payment arrangements
- A financial counselor only needs to verify a patient's eligibility for insurance benefits to calculate the patient's liability.
 - True
 - False
- A patient has met his deductible for the year. The annual coinsurance limit is \$5,000, of which \$4,829 has been met. The total charge for the MRI scan is \$1,450. There is no contract between the hospital and insurance plan. What will he owe?
 - \$290
 - \$171
 - \$450
 - None of the above
- To identify the price for a specific outpatient procedure, the provider may compute an average price using procedure-specific pricing data from the medical records system.
 - True
 - False
- The average charge for an inpatient stay is \$8,460. The insurance plan's contract includes a 15% discount on inpatient services, applied to gross charges. The patient's plan includes a deductible, which has been met. Thereafter, the plan pays 80/20 to a lifetime maximum of \$2 million; only \$50,780 of the lifetime maximum has been used. The patient's liability is
 - \$1,692
 - \$253.80
 - \$1,353.60
 - \$1,438.20
- The main purpose of financial counseling is to establish payment plans.
 - True
 - False
- The purpose of charity screening is to determine the patient's
 - insurance coverage
 - ability to pay
 - willingness to pay
 - none of the above
- If a patient has Medicare A and B and a supplemental plan, the patient will owe nothing.
 - True
 - False
 - Unknown
- A patient presents with an order for a chest (PA and lateral), a western blot, and an OT eval. Charges for these services will be found under the chargemaster sections for which of the following departments:
 - Physical therapy and radiology
 - Laboratory, radiology, and speech therapy
 - Occupational therapy, radiology, and laboratory
 - Radiology, oncology, and laboratory
- When locating the price for a CT scan, it's not necessary to know whether contrast has been ordered.
 - True
 - False

For the manager:

Financial counselors need to understand contracts, insurance eligibility and benefits, medical terminology, and charity screening as parts of providing service to patients. They must also be excellent communicators and skilled negotiators to achieve the appropriate financial resolution of each account.

Contracts provide the details of the discounting scheme between the insurance payer and the provider. Terms will vary from simple percentage discounts to complex combinations of per diems, package prices, stop loss clauses, carve-outs, etc. Each contract must be reviewed annually with the financial counselors to ensure correct application of the terms when calculating patient liabilities.

Verifying insurance includes determining whether the patient is enrolled (eligibility) as well as the specific coverages (benefits) applicable to the visit. Both eligibility and benefits are essential for complete financial counseling.

Providers use various approaches to identify pricing for specific services. The system used should be a look-up system, one that is easily used, sorted, and updated. This approach ensures that your organization provides consistent pricing information to patients.

Once contract terms, benefits, and pricing are known, calculating the patient's liability is basic math.

Financial resolution is the goal of all financial counseling activity. Determining the patient's ability to pay (charity screening) is an essential first part of this service. Charity screening allows the financial counselor to propose the most appropriate resolution action for the patient. Whether the patient pays at time of service, upon receipt of the first bill, or on a payment plan schedule is an outcome that your organization should develop with each patient.

Answer key:

1. c. obtaining an ABN after service is provided
2. b. False
3. b. \$171
4. a. True
5. d. \$1,438.20
6. b. False
7. b. ability to pay
8. c. Unknown
9. c. Occupational therapy, radiology, and laboratory
10. b. False

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