

INTEGRIS Health centralizes coding and HIM functions with single platform

Nuance Clintegrity Coding and Compliance helps reduce denials.

Challenge

- Enable centralized and remote coding teams
- Support health system expansion with rapid deployment of healthcare technologies
- Engender high level of coder retention, satisfaction, and productivity
- Enhance transparency to manage enterprise coding, compliance, and denial management functions
- Create ability to pinpoint coder educational opportunities and provide guidance and feedback

Solution

- Nuance Clintegrity Coding and Compliance

Results

- New campus deployment within 30 days
- Reduced A/R to 0.5 days and reduced denials and billing rework
- Improved coding compliance accuracy for complex compliance cases to 99.89%, averaging 97% DRG accuracy across all campuses
- Optimized workflow and ability to focus on high-risk cases
- Automated management oversight for the remote coding team and improved overall coder satisfaction

INTEGRIS Health, Oklahoma's largest not-for-profit healthcare system, shoulders the responsibility for improving the health and well-being of Oklahoma's citizens. This growing organization, with hospitals and clinics throughout the state, recently added a new facility to its system. Through this expansion, standardizing and centralizing healthcare technologies have been of primary importance to the team.

INTEGRIS

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Kati Beisel, Administrative Director of Health Information Management, INTEGRIS

Expanding, growing health system needs standardized technologies

A registered nurse for 18 years, Emily Vollmeier, system director hospital coding/CDI, has found her home in coding and clinical documentation improvement (CDI). In fact, she says, “When I moved into this role about eight years ago, I discovered I had a passion for it. As healthcare evolves, we’re realizing there’s a strong stake in the game for coding and CDI. And at our organization, those teams are married.”

Already a Nuance Clintegrity Coding and Compliance user, INTEGRIS turned to the Nuance team for support and rapid deployment through this most recent expansion. Nuance Clintegrity Coding and Compliance helps organizations like INTEGRIS improve the quality and accuracy of coded data, helping to identify potential areas of noncompliance, which also serve as educational opportunities for the INTEGRIS team. “We hired four new coders for the new site and needed to get them fully trained in the Nuance solution as quickly as possible so we could stay afloat through the process,” explains Kati Beisel, administrative director of health information management for INTEGRIS.

The entire INTEGRIS organization had recently implemented Epic, which changed a number of processes for Beisel and her team. For example, INTEGRIS and Nuance worked together to streamline the payer and physician data flow from Epic—initially and on a regular basis. “There was configuration that needed to be completed, and the Nuance team was great at guiding us through the process in order to timely meet our milestones. We have had a great rapport and partnership with the Nuance team. The rollouts and go-lives were seamless,” says Beisel.

Vollmeier concurs. “We could not have navigated those transitions as smoothly if we didn’t have the support from Nuance. It was a lifesaver.”

Allaying risk of audits and errors with Nuance Clintegrity Coding and Compliance

As a large healthcare system, INTEGRIS experiences a number of DRG and coding audits, and Nuance Clintegrity Coding and Compliance has become a core component of INTEGRIS’ denial prevention strategy. According to Vollmeier, the INTEGRIS team relies on the Nuance solution as part of its daily management oversight, focusing its attention on conditions that are more prone to errors and audits. “We conduct a prebill review for those conditions and look for query opportunities that will help us allay the risk of audit and financial loss,” she notes.

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Emily Vollmeier, System Director Hospital Coding/CDI, INTEGRIS

INTEGRIS has worked with Nuance to create approximately 40 custom rules targeted for those specific conditions to automatically identify, for example, potential gaps in documentation and risk points based upon their specific focus areas. From there, the coding and compliance team works through a prebill review process to improve the accuracy and specificity of those accounts. By combining these efforts with provider and coder education, CDI opportunities, and real-time feedback for coders, Vollmeier says, “We are getting it right before claims go out the door; we’re not doing the work on the back end, when it’s more difficult.”

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She continues, “It used to be that compliance was the piece of coding that you worked at occasionally. But we have found that, as we build the rules within the Nuance solution, compliance is where it’s at.”

Transparency motivates INTEGRIS to stretch its coding and compliance goals

With Nuance Clintegrity Coding and Compliance, organizations like INTEGRIS receive custom-built compliance reports as well as productivity reports. Beisel says, “The coders love getting these reports. They are great learning opportunities, allowing team members to see the changes that have been made through prebill compliance reviews and providing case-specific feedback.”

This level of transparency into compliance reviews has sparked INTEGRIS to stretch its already impressive goals for its coding and compliance team. Says Vollmeier, “Typically the goal is to have Coding A/R days to be around one day. But with the Nuance solution combined with the transition to Epic, we can now benchmark our performance against similar organizations, so it motivated us to stretch and reach for goals. Today, our Coding A/R averages about 0.5 days.”

The Nuance reports also provide INTEGRIS with insight into how many claims are held for review, how many edits are made, and so on. As a result, Beisel notes, much more of the quality work has been accomplished up front, meaning that the team receives fewer queries from the quality department on a monthly basis. Additionally, “Our goal for DRG accuracy was to be greater than 95%,” says Beisel. “But we’re pushing 97% every month now across all of our campuses.”

INTEGRIS finds Nuance’s ongoing training, support, and resources valuable

“We don’t just view Nuance as a vendor; they’re truly our partner. They know us, understand our needs and operations, and deliver on their promises. The long-term partnership is valuable,” says Beisel. Continuing support as the INTEGRIS coding team grows and new coders learn the functionality of Nuance Clintegrity Coding and Compliance has been especially appreciated.

As for coders with more tenure, “Receiving the Nuance newsletters is great, and the content is so good. Same with the webinars; they love them and sign up for all of them. And who doesn’t love free CEUs?” asks Vollmeier, who concludes by saying, “We can’t speak highly enough about the Nuance team and their tremendous support.”

INTEGRIS is the largest Oklahoma-owned not-for-profit health system in the state with hospitals, rehabilitation centers, physician clinics, mental health facilities, home health and hospice services, as well as eHealth capabilities. The organization is known for innovation and unparalleled quality offering advanced treatment options and specialties found nowhere else in the region. INTEGRIS is a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network. For more information, visit integrisok.com.

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