Case Study: Good Samaritan Hospital
Hospital Reduces Costs with Patient Friendly Statements

BACKGROUND OF GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL
Good Samaritan Hospital is a community healthcare facility that has been a healthcare leader in Indiana and Illinois for more than 100 years.

CORE BUSINESS PROBLEM
Good Samaritan could not rely on the delivery of its patient statements and was using cumbersome, error-prone processes to accept patient payments.

THE SOLUTION
With InstaMed, Good Samaritan streamlined its patient billing and payment card processing to save time and money.

BUSINESS RESULTS
• Reduced patient statement costs by 25 percent
• Reduced administrative time to process patient card payments by 90 percent
• Ensuring payment without spending time following up with high-deductible patients

“InstaMed enabled us to design the statements ourselves to ensure that our patients easily understand the amount they owe and their payment options.”
- Laura Grove, Patient Accounts Application Analyst, Good Samaritan Hospital

GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL’S STORY: A SERIOUS PROBLEM

Issues with Patient Statements

Print/Mail Statements:
The problems started with patient statements. Good Samaritan began to receive a high volume of complaints from patients who were sent to an outsourced collections company, yet had not received an initial statement from the hospital.

“We started researching the issue,” said Laura Grove, Patient Accounts Application Analyst with Good Samaritan. “We discovered that the wrong query was being used in the statement file, so it failed out of the vendor’s system. They didn’t notify us, so we had no idea our patients weren’t receiving their statements until several hundred patients had been sent to our third-party vendor to collect the payments.”

These issues not only upset patients, they also cost Good Samaritan a high fee for each patient sent to the third-party vendor. If the original statements had gone out as they should have there would have been no need for the third-party vendor intervention. Additionally, if Good Samaritan wanted to modify the statement layout, the statement vendor charged a fee.

eStatements:
In addition to the issues with paper statements, there also were frequent errors with the hospital’s eStatement and online bill pay functionality. When patients went online to view eStatements and pay their bills, the wrong amount would display.

“It was creating more work for our staff because we had to constantly monitor the statement amounts shown on our website,” said Laura.

Payment Card Processing
To process patient card payments, the hospital cashiers used a card reader from a local banking facility to make a carbon copy of each card, and then manually entered the information into a bank terminal. However, the off-site locations, emergency room and back office staff had to fill out a slip of paper with the payment card information to deliver to the cashiers to process the payments later.

“It was so cumbersome that most patients didn’t bother using cards, and we spent a lot of time just training our staff to accept cards,” said Laura. “We frequently would have to track down the payment information from our different offices, so we couldn’t process some payments for days after receiving the information from patients.”

Posting Payments
The hospital cashiers would use a daily report from the bank terminal to manually key the payments into the hospital’s practice management system, QuadraMed Affinity. This process took about an hour each day, and the manual work increased the risk of errors.
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“We especially love the ability to quickly find payments in our system and reprint or email receipts to our patients. It took less than 20 minutes to train my staff on InstaMed.”

- Laura Grove, Patient Accounts Application Analyst, Good Samaritan Hospital

THE PERFECT SOLUTION

When Good Samaritan learned that InstaMed was integrated with QuadraMed, the hospital decided to switch to InstaMed for payment processing and patient billing.

“Patient satisfaction is so important to us, so when we were receiving complaints, it was worth it to go with someone we could count on,” said Laura. “InstaMed’s service is personal and organized. Every time I need to communicate with them, I know without a doubt that they are taking care of us.”

Seamless Patient Billing

With InstaMed’s Patient Billing solution, Good Samaritan was able to design the patient statements to make sure they were easy for patients to understand. The hospital also can make additional design or layout changes without paying a fee.

“When the patients saw our new statements, they thought they were awesome. Now, they can easily see the amount they owe and their payment options,” said Laura.

InstaMed supports address standardization and address correction services as well as mail return management, so Good Samaritan can trust that patients are receiving their statements. This has significantly reduced the number of patients sent to the collections company.

“And if for some reason a statement file doesn’t come through correctly, InstaMed identifies it right away and notifies us,” said Laura. “Our billing process has been seamless since we switched.”

Saving Time with Integrated Payment Card Processing

With InstaMed, Good Samaritan uses integrated card swipe devices in the cashier’s office. Today, staff members securely swipe a patient payment card, and the payment is immediately processed and posted directly into QuadraMed Affinity, eliminating manual work.

“We especially love the ability to quickly find payments in our system and reprint or email receipts to our patients,” said Laura. “This capability has been phenomenal for the patients, and it’s saving us a lot of time.”

Now that card payments are more convenient, patients are using cards to pay their bills more frequently through the Patient Portal, phone or mail, which increases the time savings for Good Samaritan.

Ensuring Payment with Automated Payment Plans

Good Samaritan has solved many of its issues with collecting payments from high-deductible patients by setting up automated payment plans. This saves staff the time spent tracking down payments owed, and it automates upcoming payment notifications to deliver more clarity to patients.

“InstaMed Payment Plans are great because we’re able to collect from patients’ personal accounts, notify them the payment is coming out of their account and get all payments without the interaction of the follow-up staff sending out letters and making numerous phone calls to get the account paid off,” said Laura. “It’s also really easy for staff to modify a payment plan if a patient calls to request a change.”

In addition, Good Samaritan’s customized patient statements clearly display the URL for the InstaMed Patient Portal, where patients easily view eStatements and make payments online.

Business Result: Reduced the administrative time to process card payments by 90%.