



Credentialing/Contracting Defined

We are often asked, "What is the difference between Credentialing and Contracting?"

CREDENTIALING is the process of organizing and verifying your professional records. Your NPI, CAQH, professional licenses, diplomas, certifications, attestations and professional references are your credentialing documents. The process of credentialing is to verify the accuracy and specific data in your documents.

When you apply for privileges at a Hospital, Surgery Center or Physician Organization you are asked to complete an application and allow the credentialing entity to research your professional documents. They will request a copy of your National Provider Databank file and possibly request a credit report and criminal background search. They will do what is called Primary Source Verification, which is the process of requesting and receiving verification of your stated credentials from the College or other entity that issued the diploma.

Hospitals and similar organizations have a legal responsibility to verify provider's identity, education, work experience, malpractice history, professional sanctions and license verifications to protect patients from unqualified providers. There are a number of reasons for this new high level of scrutiny. The Affordable Care Act has substantially increased credentials verification requirements for Medicare and Medicaid enrollment in an effort to reduce fraud and abuse. Insurance plans must meet increased credentialing requirements including periodic re-credentialing and attestation.

It is very important that your documents are accurate and they all match. Problems begin when there are inaccuracies (such as changes of address or practice ownership) and discrepancies between various records. Another problem area can occur when professional references do not respond in a timely manner. (It is a good idea to contact your references before they receive a reference request.)

CONTRACTING is the process of applying for and obtaining participation with insurance plans. Often providers enroll in a plan and then never review the performance of the contract. Years go by and insurers do not update your contract to reflect updated reimbursement rates.

WHO NEEDS CONTRACTING?

- Independent Physicians and Groups
- Urgent Care Centers
- Convenient Care Clinics
- Ancillary Providers

PRACTICE CONTRACTING NEEDS

- Procurement of a New Group contract when several providers join together to start a Group Practice
- Procurement of a new Individual contract when an individual physician is setting up his/her practice
- Adding a New provider to current Group contracts
- Group practice has hired a new provider
- Demographic Updates
 - Changing physical location
 - Changing Billing address
- Medicare/Medicaid application completion
 - Group Enrollment
 - Individual Enrollment
 - Revalidation Completion
- Health Plan Verification
 - Calls are made to ensure all providers are contracted correctly
 - Call findings are documented in a contract matrix
- Fee Schedule
 - Request fee schedules for top 50 codes for top 5 plans
 - Billing company can use fee schedule information to ensure proper payment
- Hospital Privileging
 - Completion of hospital application
 - Add hospitals or privileges
- Ongoing Credentialing and Contracting Maintenance

Does your biller or billing service periodically review contract performance and update your contracts?

Does the staff member or biller submitting your applications understand the regulations – or are they just trying to complete a form?

Thousands of dollars can be lost and payments may be interrupted if there are errors or inconsistencies in your credentialing. Credentialing and Contracting is Catalyst Consulting's specialty. Let us help you organize and manage your credentialing and contracting responsibilities.

Catalyst Consulting has become the outsourced credentialing and contracting department for providers throughout the US. We have been chosen as a trusted solutions provider for Henry Schein. Learn more about how we can help your business today.



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