MGMA Member Survey Reveals Strategies to Improve Patient Billing, Payments, Satisfaction

Study underscores trends in digital billing and payment best practices, including credit card on file, electronic statements and patient cost estimation

Atlanta, September 27, 2017- Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) today announced findings from its first Digital Payment Progress Report™, completed in partnership with Navicure®, a provider of integrated cloud-based medical claims management, patient payment and healthcare data analytics solutions. MGMA and Navicure fielded the national survey among MGMA member organizations in May 2017 to understand billing and payment preferences and behaviors among providers. The survey showed similar findings to Navicure’s Patient Payment Check-Up™, a survey conducted in January 2017 by HIMSS Analytics to assess differences in attitudes and behavior between those billing for healthcare in hospital and office-based settings, and those paying for it.

Both surveys reveal several current billing and payment advantages in physician practices versus hospitals, including:

- **More ambulatory organizations can provide a cost estimate than hospitals.** Seventy-nine percent of ambulatory organization respondents can generate a cost estimate upon request, while only 69 percent of hospital respondents can complete this task. With more than half (56 percent) of patients planning to request a cost estimate in the future, this reveals a competitive advantage for physician practices to better respond to patient billing preferences. Hospitals have the same opportunity to yield high patient satisfaction by using the same solutions used by practices.

- **More group practices than hospitals believe patients are comfortable providing their contact information.** Sixty-four percent of group practice respondents reported patients are comfortable sharing their email address, while only 56 percent of hospital respondents think patients feel this way. In actuality, 79 percent of patients report feeling comfortable providing their email address. This represents an opportunity to leverage email addresses to deliver bills electronically, saving the industry millions of dollars in cost, environmental waste and days in A/R.

- **Patients are more likely to pay their physician practice bill faster.** More than a quarter of hospital respondents (26 percent) report it takes patients longer than six months to pay their balance in full, while only 13 percent of practice respondents report it takes this long, perhaps as a result of the frequently lower cost of services at group practices.

“Our analysis finds group practices are more advanced than hospitals in offering advanced electronic payment solutions that patients want to use,” said Mariann Lowery, qualitative analyst at MGMA. “However, provider organizations in general still track far behind patient
preferences. Patients are used to allowing other service providers to use their email address and credit card number to receive and pay their bills. Just look at the explosion of e-commerce. Healthcare organizations of any size have the opportunity to be just as safe and convenient, and provide a better patient experience.”

Another key finding of the Digital Payment Progress Report was the fact that an overwhelming majority of MGMA respondents (77 percent) still send paper bills despite a majority of patients’ preference for electronic billing (52 percent). The survey also presented evidence that keeping a credit card on file (CCOF) to pay small balances less than $200 can be beneficial in alleviating several revenue cycle challenges, such as reducing patient bad debt/write off (36 percent), days in patient A/R (34 percent) and cost of collections (34 percent).

“A comparison of our recent studies indicates a strong need for digital payment options to improve patient collections processes and increase patient satisfaction,” said Phil Dolan, chief marketing officer of Navicure. “The organizations that can fully embrace digital payment options, such as credit card on file, automated payment plans and patient cost estimation, stand to benefit the most as healthcare consumerism continues to impact the industry.”

Join Mariann Lowery and Phil Dolan for a presentation of the Digital Payment Progress Report findings during the MGMA 2017 Annual Conference, in Anaheim, Calif. The presentation, “Billing and Payment Check-Up: What Providers and Patients Really Think,” will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 10 in room 205 from 7-8 a.m. PDT.

To view the complete survey results and analysis, visit www.navicure.com/digitalsurvey.

**About Survey Respondents**

Deployed between January and May 2017 as a combination of three quantitative surveys, research assessed both patients and providers.

- **All patient survey participants** receive care from a healthcare provider at least once per year. Respondents represented a broad range of education levels, employment statuses, annual household incomes, locales and ages. Notably, 45 percent of patient respondents have an annual household income of less than $61,000, 62 percent are 35 to 74 years old and 36 percent are millennials.
- **MGMA provider survey respondents** include practice administrators/office managers (61 percent) and C-level executives (28 percent). Additionally, 63 percent have had responsibility for revenue management operations and/or results for more than 10 years.
- A large percentage of **provider respondents within the survey conducted by HIMSS Analytics** are physicians or other healthcare providers (75 percent), practice administrators (12 percent) and C-suite executives (8 percent). Participants are employed by varying organization types and specialties: 45 percent work in an acute inpatient hospital or healthcare network and 55 percent work in an ambulatory organization.

**About Navicure**

Navicure® is a provider of integrated cloud-based medical claims management and patient payment solutions that enable healthcare organizations of all sizes to increase revenue, accelerate cash flow, and reduce the cost and effort of managing claims, patient billing and payments, and healthcare data analytics. Serving more than 100,000 providers nationwide,
Navicure’s solutions integrate with industry-leading practice management systems and open software as a service (SaaS) companies. Navicure’s complete healthcare revenue cycle management platform, Navicure® Total RCM Platform™, combines payer medical claims processing and patient billing with an advanced healthcare business intelligence dashboard utilizing real-time data to continually optimize operational workflow and financial results. Navicure’s unique 3-Ring® service supports every client with trained, experienced analysts who guarantee that every call will be answered within three rings.

Navicure is the exclusive claims clearinghouse and patient payments solution of the MGMA Executive Partner network. The company received the 2017 Best in KLAS® ranking for the claims and clearinghouse (over 20 physician) segment. Navicure was also the top-ranked end-to-end revenue cycle leader in multiple categories of the 2016 and 2017 Black Book™ RCM Surveys. For more information, please visit www.navicure.com, or follow @Navicure on Twitter.

About MGMA

Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) is the premier association for professionals who lead medical practice. Since 1926, through data, people, insights, and advocacy, MGMA empowers medical group practices to innovate and create meaningful change in healthcare. With a membership of more than 40,000 medical practice administrators, executives, and leaders, MGMA represents more than 12,500 organizations of all sizes, types, structures and specialties that deliver almost half of the healthcare in the United States. www.mgma.com

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