

SA-VIT COLLECTION AGENCY TIPS OF THE MONTH ARCHIVES



September 2008

“The Sky is Falling, The Sky is Falling”

The economic news sounds a bit like Chicken Little. But healthcare is something we all need, in spite of a slowing economy. According to a recent study by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), 22 % of U. S. consumers say they have reduced the number of doctor visits. Rather than reducing your staff, use them to contact patients about their follow-up visits, annual physicals, their medication usage, and show an interest in their general health.

We are hearing of practices asking the billing staff to spend more time attempting to reach patients by telephone about their *past due* accounts. Trying to reach patients that have not paid their share of the bill within 90 days is a waste of one of your most valuable assets, the people in the billing department.

Now is the time to be more efficient in handling the accounts receivables. The NAIC study also says only 5% of consumers have made changes to their policies, which means there are no significant changes in most coverages. Since about 80 per cent of a medical practice's income comes from insurance payments, you should put extra effort into following up claims that have not been paid within 45 days.

Your billing protocol should be competitive with those of other creditors who are billing your patients. Send out “monthly” bills on a four-week cycle, and you will get 13 rather than 12 billing cycles a year. If you have to send more than one statement to get payment be sure to have the words “PAST DUE” and “FINAL NOTICE” on the second and third bills. Be ready to accept incoming telephone from patients regarding their bills. Do not let these calls go to voicemail.

Relax, stay calm, and remember most of your patients have both the insurance coverage and the money to pay for your services.

Questions or comments please email us at info@savit.com. Topic suggested by Susan Vigneault.