



Group Executive Perspective

If there is any constant, it is that we will all experience change. In health care and specifically the realm of Physician Practice Management this seems to be true on a minute-by-minute bases. We experience this mostly thru new Federal regulations, reimbursement and coding changes, new technology – for office and medical use, and even in the faces we see on a daily bases throughout the practice. We are all familiar with Spencer Johnson’s admonition in Who Moved My Cheese- to enjoy change. In our field, the most onerous changes are obviously those with which we have the least control. The changes we can control often are ones where WE make the decision or have the choice. Certainly the choice of LTD policies for our physician staff falls in this category. Changes in the current Physician LTD market place, I believe, have the potential to be rather unsettling for the group practice administrator. At renewal time we deal with potential changes- but ones we can control. In this arena we expect stability. Our physicians deserve stability.

One important consideration in selling the Group a particular product is the strength and “character” of a carrier. By this I mean the financial stability, the commitment to the product, the ability to stand behind the product via claims administration and servicing, and a fair number of years experience offering LTD. The broker to the administrator expresses confidence in the Insurance Company. The practice executive echoes this confidence to the physicians. A mid year change- one that we were not aware of does raise questions about the executive’s ability to perform due diligence. And, in turn, the advisability of selecting the broker. An important consideration in choosing a carrier is confidence in that carrier’s stability. The fact that the company is strong, is viable and will be there when coverage is needed is very important to each physician.

Another important aspect of selecting a carrier relates to servicing –what is the track record and expectation that we can get the contract serviced- that we will not sue the carrier or fight with the claims department is crucial. A history of strong claims administration and servicing can be demonstrated and should be emphasized. A change in carriers has the potential for changing this dynamic- will the new carrier be as responsive or should we anticipate a problem.

Change outside of the Group Executives control is an everyday phenomena- but, if you will, the idea of “who moved my Carrier “ is one I suggest will never be enjoyed.

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