

Practice Start-up Checklist¹

Facility

- Decide on ancillaries, if any
- Find location
- Sign lease or mortgage
- Order phone/fax/high-speed Internet access lines
- Design office layout
- Order medical equipment
- Order office equipment
- Order office furniture

Supplies

- Order medical supplies
- Order office supplies
- Order supplies for ancillary services (lab supplies, etc.)
- Order lab coats, staff uniforms, name tags
- Order medical record filing system and charts (unless starting with an EMR)
- Order signage

Financial

- Open business checking account
- Open a lock box, if desired
- Arrange for working capital loan, if needed
- Find an accountant
- Incorporate practice
- Obtain federal tax ID number
- Obtain employer ID number
- Arrange liability insurance, disability insurance, worker's comp insurance, retirement plans, and health insurance
- Set up practice fee schedule
- Request fee schedules from payers. Get Medicare, Medicaid and Worker's Comp fee schedules from public record

Billing

- Become a participating provider with commercial and managed care payers
- Obtain provider numbers from Medicare and Medicaid
- Contact state compensation insurance commission for worker's comp fee schedule and forms
- Obtain DEA number
- Obtain state and federal narcotic license, if needed
- Obtain state medical license
- Order CPT, HCPCS, ICD-9 and Correct Coding Initiative books
- Create practice superbill/charge ticket
- Develop Accounts Receivable systems and policies

¹ Not comprehensive; use as guideline only.

- ❑ Contract with a collections agency
- ❑ Contract with third-party clearinghouse, if needed

Processes

- ❑ Arrange for transcription, if needed
- ❑ Decide which scheduling method to use and program the practice management system
- ❑ Arrange for call coverage, if needed
- ❑ Set up answering/paging service, if needed
- ❑ Establish charge capture system (outpatient and inpatient)
- ❑ Obtain licensure for ancillary services (e.g., CLIA for laboratory)
- ❑ Create/get forms including:
 - HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices
 - HIPAA Business Associate Agreement
 - Consent to Treat (as required by state law)
 - Assignment of benefits
 - Registration form(s)
 - Medical history form(s)
 - Advance beneficiary notice (for Medicare)
 - Financial policy (for patients)

Staff

- ❑ Arrange for payroll services, if needed
- ❑ Write employee policy manual
- ❑ Decide upon and obtain employee benefits (health, life, leave, etc.)
- ❑ Consult Medical Group Management Association benchmarks for staff per FTE physician
- ❑ Hire staff (consider a manager; staff who will handle billing, scheduling, check-in, transcription; and staff who will provide clinical and ancillary support)
- ❑ Implement OSHA requirements

Business development

- ❑ Consider hiring a practice management consultant and healthcare lawyer
- ❑ Review non-compete agreements covering, if applicable, to make sure you are not in violation
- ❑ Create and print business cards and stationery
- ❑ Arrange for hospital privileges
- ❑ Plan for an open house
- ❑ Send press release to local media about new practice
- ❑ Introduce yourself to referring physicians
- ❑ Run newspaper ad
- ❑ Run Yellow Pages ad
- ❑ Create business plan for first two years

Technology

- Select practice management system (billing, scheduling, registration, etc.)
- Select electronic medical record system
- Order servers, terminals, printers as needed
- Adequate faxes and copy machines for optimum efficiency
- Set up Internet service
- Create functioning e-mail account

Other

- Write partnership and/or employment agreement for physicians, including policies for compensation, overhead allocation, call, part-time work, retirement, buy-in requirements, and leave (maternity, military, etc.)