

THIS MONTH: EFFECTIVE INVOICING

CASH FLOW is fundamental to any business, not least in the early stages of establishing a private practice, writes Alison Ryan.

As a consequence, the invoicing process needs to be thorough, well organised and quick. The better the process, the more likely you are to receive correct payment on time.

Below are some simple rules which, when followed, should go a long way to ensuring a healthy cash flow:

- Ensure that both the date and location of each treatment is clearly stated on the invoice.
- If pre-authorisation has been received from the insurer, ensure that this is stated clearly.
- Always state the insurance scheme membership number of the patient, their home address and their date of birth.
- If multiple consultations have taken place, always ensure that you invoice each one of them individually.
- Make sure that the new CCSD treatment codes are used systematically.
- If bespoke charges are to be applied, always get pre-authorisation, so as not to incur surprise

shortfalls for the patient.

- Always inform patients that insurance companies pay for treatments at different rates and that there may be a shortfall to be billed accordingly.
- Be aware that some insurance companies do not enter invoice numbers, only treatment codes and dates, so payments will be made accordingly.
- Insurance companies tend to make payments on certain days of the month, so send invoices as soon as possible after treatment, as the processing of invoices can be rather long-winded and payment can take as long as eight weeks.
- Finally, request that payments are made to you by BACS. Most insurers settle more quickly this way.

Alison Ryan is client relationship manager at private practice management specialist PHF. Call 0870 190 9391 or view www.phf.uk.com

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