

Outsourced and remote MDS coordinator improves Mansion Nursing and Rehabilitation's reimbursement accuracy

CHALLENGES

- > MDS coordinator turnover
- > Lack of MDS expertise
- > Low reimbursement rates

SOLUTION

- > Outsourced and remote MDS coordinator program

“I attended seminars, and I studied the RAI manual, but it wasn't nearly enough.”

Jack Chopoorian, CEO
Mansion Nursing and Rehabilitation

Mansion Nursing and Rehabilitation has provided short-term rehabilitation and long-term care services for over 60 years. Facing low reimbursement rates, they discovered issues with MDS assessment accuracy and on-site MDS expertise. Mansion made a strategic pivot to Polaris Group's innovative remote MDS coordinator services, which helped them to improve their financial health and operational efficiency.

Challenges in underperformance

Mansion Nursing and Rehabilitation's CEO, Jack Chopoorian, is a real numbers guy, which is why the facility's financial underperformance in late 2022 didn't make sense.

“Our census had recovered from some of the COVID upheaval, and we had higher-acuity residents, but our revenue and our reimbursement rates were low,” explained Chopoorian. After some investigation, he found the root cause—the facility's MDS assessments. “Our MDS nurse wasn't conducting rigorous assessments. She was a capable clinician, but she wasn't up to speed on the MDS.”

Chopoorian explored a few solutions. “Our MDS nurse retired, and we hired a new person, but they also weren't the caliber we needed.” Chopoorian even took it upon himself to support the MDS. “I attended seminars, and I studied the RAI manual, but it wasn't nearly enough.”

An outsourced solution

Chopoorian learned that MatrixCare's partner, Polaris Group, offered outsourced and remote MDS coordinator services. Remote MDS coordinators dramatically improve MDS assessment accuracy because they don't encounter the disruptions or distractions of their on-site counterparts. The remote MDS coordinator model also expands the recruiting pool and raises candidate competition.

“Polaris audited a few of our assessments and presented their findings. Across a few dozen cases there were multiple issues; we were missing this coding, missing that modifier, our notation had gaps. I decided to give the program a try,” said Chopoorian.

It didn't take long for him to feel confident in his choice. “There was a dramatic change to our reimbursement rates almost immediately. I kept thinking, why didn't we do this sooner?”. Chopoorian sat in on early morning meetings and triple-checks with the remote MDS coordinator and could see how she had made such an impact. “We finally had a real expert on board. She asked documentation questions, took ownership over processes—it was incredible. It didn't matter that she was remote. You could tell the team respected her.”

Winning over the clinical staff was no small feat. “At first, our administrator was very against the remote program. She’s passionate about assessment and how it informs care planning.” But, he explained, “Polaris has a similar ethos. I can’t tell you how ingrained our MDS nurse is with the team. She’s brought in new processes and checklists, and she trains our staff. Our administrator is a believer now!”

An impactful transformation

When Polaris began working with Mansion Nursing and Rehabilitation, the facility was a month behind on assessments, and 85% of audited assessments had errors. Mansion’s MDS function has transformed. 100% of assessments were submitted on time and without errors. The facility’s case mix index (CMI) has increased by 12%, which is an achievement that correlates with higher reimbursement. Chopoorian also used Mansion’s MDS assessments to renegotiate its state-managed Medicare reimbursement rates.

“We wouldn’t be where we are today without Polaris,” shared Chopoorian. “It’s like we have this turbocharged MDS geek squad. The processes, the way they’ve set up our MatrixCare system, the staff training, and the numbers in the ledger don’t lie.”

He continued, “The remote MDS program checks all the boxes for me—financial, clinical, and operational. I think facilities should take a hard look at their current MDS assessments and consider it. We love it!”

MatrixCare’s remote MDS coordinator program, in partnership with Polaris Group, leverages the support of MDS coordinators with over 15 years of experience and are well-versed in MatrixCare software, helping improve processes and overall operational success. Fully remote without any on-site distractions and seasoned experts in Medicare, PDPM, and state requirements, they help ensure accurate assessments and reimbursements.

RESULTS TO DATE

- > Achieved 100% on time and accurate MDS assessment submissions
- > Increased case mix index (CMI) by 12%
- > Negotiated better state-managed Medicaid rates based on MDS assessments

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Customer results may vary.

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Jack Chopoorian, CEO
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Before Polaris

On time and error-free:

15%

After Polaris

On time and error-free:

100%

Case mix index (CMI) increase:

12%