AKASA™

RCM Innovation Summit

The Tech and Trends Shaping the Future

At the 2023 Annual Meeting of Becker's Hospital Review in Chicago, revenue cycle leaders gathered at the AKASA RCM Innovation Summit to discuss their challenges and how automation can help. In what one attendee called "RCM group therapy," they workshopped strategies on three crucial topics. **Here are the highlights, in their own words.**

SUCCESS PLAN

- **THINK ABOUT PAIN POINTS**
- **PRIORITIZE PROJECTS**
- **START SMALL**
- **EXPAND EFFECTIVELY**
- **REMEMBER THE PATIENT FINANCIAL EXPERIENCE**

Set Your Strategy:
Where To Start and How To Strategically Expand Automation

> Fix the root of the problem, don't just hack at the branches. We tend to do workarounds just to get something to work when we should be looking at what problem we want to fix, the staff and resources we need, and building from there.

> We're upside down. Labor has gone through the roof. Costs are climbing. When looking for an automation partner, find someone who proves that the technology works, improves accuracy, and reduces labor costs.

> Your automation goals need to be focused from front end to back end. Make sure your processes and info are accurate before it ever gets to billing.

> We've all had experiences working with vendors who bring in out-of-the-box offerings that just don't work for our system. We need to partner in such a way that automation can work specifically for our organization, creating value for our distributed decision-making and complexity.

> The goal of automation needs to be elevating our staff so that they can interact with patients sooner in the process and bring value to their experience.

> Pick workflows to automate that involve a lot of touches and can really reduce the number of touches for your staff.

> I like to focus on getting that first small win with automation before expanding. Find something that you can be successful with and get that going. It'll set the tone for the rest of the automation and get your teams on board.

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SUCCESS PLAN

DON'T NEGLECT CHANGE MANAGEMENT

TREAT AUTOMATION AS A NEW TEAM MEMBER

FOCUS ON NEW ROLES + TEAM MOTIVATION

SET GOALS AND KPIS BASED ON POST-CHANGE RESPONSIBILITIES

CONTINUOUSLY MONITOR & GUIDE YOUR TEAM

Change Management:
How To Elevate Your Revenue Cycle Staff

"Get your teams involved early in the process. Help them understand the vision, where things are headed, the goals, the why behind the effort. Then get them involved in actually developing and implementing the solution. Make staff a part of the process so they have ownership of it, want to make it work, and see how it benefits them.

"Encourage ideas from staff and leaders across the front, middle, and back-end. I've found it works best to make everyone part of the conversation.

"Openly discuss fears around job loss. Be clear about whether or not there will be job eliminations. Talk about re-engineering and how you can use people in other areas. Get that out of the way so that you get buy-in and curb fears or anxiety.

"Make sure you're educating patients if they're going to be affected by automation. Our health system didn't do that. Patients were affected and we had to step back and reformat what we had done

"I involve HR from the beginning to create job criteria so people can have an opportunity for career laddering.

"Consistent small conversations versus those big town hall formats are more beneficial for us. Sell leaders on automation and have them help trickle that down to their staff, instead of rolling it out to everybody at once.

"Hire people who know project management. Have them within the organization so they know it, not just consultants coming in from outside. It can help go through a number of different transformations.

"Bring in the unions. Reassure them that their members are stayingYou're going to continue to pay your people so they can pay their union dues. You're not eliminating positions, just changing the way they operate.

"Don't underestimate how challenging it will be for staff to do the harder stuff that is left from automation. Make sure you're training on the new tasks and be prepared for some people to leave.

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SUCCESS PLAN

DEFINE GOALS

BALANCE HARD & SOFT METRICS

COORDINATE WITH IT

WORK WITH YOUR VENDOR

KEEP PATIENTS TOP OF MIND

The future of RCM is automation

The right automation can make all the difference in your revenue cycle journey. See how AKASA and our advanced automation can help bring these strategies to life and streamline your operations.

Chat with an AKASA RCM expert today

Seeing Results:
How To Get the Most Out of Your Automation Investment

"There's too much data available. Too many dashboards, reports, calls, etc. Sift through the noise by discussing key metrics and outcomes with internal stakeholders and your automation vendor. What data is valuable and what frequency do you need it?

"Have someone in IT involved throughout the entire process to ensure you're measuring the right things in the right ways. Then set incremental goals.

"I look for a demonstrated liquidity of automation. Did the automation just help us get denied faster, or did it actually help us lift revenue in some way?

"Compare accounts that are automated against those that aren't (as a control group) to truly measure impact.

"If my staff is struggling with 10k denials and can't get to the 50–100 harder accounts, is automation really helping with that? The numbers a vendor shows me mean nothing. From a reporting perspective, I want to see how automation impacts my staff.

"We look at the soft components of automation, measuring turnover and employee satisfaction. These have significant impact on our P&L.

"Automation success is preventing or resolving a denial without a staff member touching it.

"I like having a daily dashboard where I can see what work the RPA did, what work they need to do — by payer, service line, etc.

"Imagine a future of rev cycle with complete accuracy, 100% collections, no denials, and no more payer shenanigans. That would be success.

"We're not talking about automation anymore. It's just what we do. That's what success looks like. Automation is now part of everyday life.