



RehabExpertise
EXECUTIVE BRIEF SERIES

Leading the Way:

10 Ways to Grow Your Rehab Business

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Executive Summary

According to a 2010 report published by *Health Affairs*, 10.9 million community and 1.8 million nursing center residents need rehabilitative services in the United States each year. Rehabilitation services have long been an integral part of nursing centers and are a growing interest as more sub-acute services transition to the long-term care setting.

Despite the overwhelming support for the value of rehabilitation services to our sub-acute population, significant changes are on the horizon. Industry analysts project that reforms related to declining Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement could result in the loss of significant revenue for facilities. That is prompting some long-term care facilities to put key programs on hold.

However, there are opportunities to proactively prepare for changes and anticipate positive clinical and business outcomes. Rehabilitation programs present an immediate opportunity to achieve increased operational excellence in providing quality outcomes in a cost effective setting.

Assistant Secretary for Aging Kathy Greenlee gave the closing address at the 25th National Home and Community Based Services Conference in September 2009. She discussed her agenda, which included building partnerships from the community level to the federal level in light of budget cuts that are ravaging state agencies. While shrinking government reimbursements are a challenge in many states, proactive efforts to build and maintain strong Medicare rehabilitation services, such as those offered by providers like RehabCare, can position your business to be stronger than before.

The Bottom Line

As a result of the reform and regulatory issues currently impacting the market, facilities need to view the role of the rehabilitation provider in a different light than in the past. This means moving beyond evaluating the “what” and focusing on the “how” to grow the rehab portion of the overall business.

What It Means

Most rehabilitation providers can deliver the baseline skills of therapy (the “what”) but it is the “how” that becomes important when considering a partnership. High performing rehabilitation providers provide not only staffing services, but they anticipate and prepare with their nursing center partners for the changes that impact business.

The Steps to Success

The following grid summarizes the essential elements to grow your rehab census. Your rehabilitation team needs to be an integral partner in planning, implementing and measuring the progress of your program. Best practice teams are composed of caring professionals and operators who focus on quality patient care, measuring progress and outcomes, and promoting your value propositions to customers.

10 Essential Steps to Grow Your Rehab Business



10 Steps	Essential Elements
1 Build your rehabilitation program around quality people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire and retain therapy professionals with appropriate qualifications • Identify and leverage the specialized skill sets of each therapist • Invest in ongoing education, leadership development, and mentoring initiatives
2 Invest in the professionalism of the therapy department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a professional, well organized and clean gym environment • Ensure the availability of equipment to meet patient needs
3 Develop specialized rehabilitation programs that meet the needs of the facility and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the needs of the resident population and community • Provide a variety of clinical programs that support clinical outcomes and business growth • Develop and market programs not readily available in your market
4 Excellent therapy management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site rehab management provides leadership beyond staffing and scheduling, including effective implementation of these 10 steps • Establish collaborative approach with interdisciplinary and operations team • Leverage expertise with best practice strategies and tool kits
5 Know the rules and follow them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine changes in state and federal regulations requires constant attendance and oversight • Documentation competency, audits and multi-level oversight provides support for business growth
6 Know your customers and market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand your market and competition • Develop customer profiles and track referrals • Use a menu of approaches for establishing excellent customer relations • Promote services and collaborate with facility on community education to local organizations • Utilize hospital discharge data to understand opportunities for partnerships
7 Strategically approach census development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop referral relations strategies • Establish pre-call planning goals • Provide reliable clinical outcome data for physicians and referral sources • Differentiate your services and ask for business with confidence
8 Make it easy for your customers to admit to your center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the pathway of least resistance – keep the admission process simple
9 Manage the rehab stay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate anticipated clinical pathways from time of admission and throughout the stay • Manage expectations related to the length of stay and rehab potential from admission to discharge
10 Keep your customers happy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep physicians current with therapy progress • Don't assume your customers know what you are doing well; inform them on a regular basis • Share patient satisfaction results with referral sources



About RehabCare

RehabCare is the leading provider of rehabilitation services, including physical, occupational and speech-language therapies, to over 2,000 hospitals and long-term care facilities in 46 states. We are the premier provider of rehab throughout the full continuum of care, including long-term acute care hospitals, nursing and rehabilitation centers, inpatient acute rehab units, independent rehabilitation facilities and hospice and home care locations.

Our vast network enables you to access best practices and geographic market knowledge that will take your rehab department to the next level. We are a trusted industry expert, and a true strategic partner. And at RehabCare, we are passionate about recovery: working to improve patient outcomes and quality of life.

Have Questions?

To learn more about how RehabCare can optimize the performance of your rehab department, call us at:

800.545.0749, ext. 7640

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