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## LARGE PRACTICES CAN STAY AFLOAT, EXPAND IN RECESSION

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### Large practices can stay afloat, expand in recession

July 06, 2009 | [Chelsey Ledue](#), Associate Editor

PITTSBURGH, PA – Some large physician practices are looking to save money and possibly expand, even in the current economic climate, says an expert in physician practice operations.

"When you look at some of our clients, they have been weathering this economic debacle fairly well," said Richard Schickler, executive vice president of MED3000's physician services, systems and operations group. "We provide revenue cycle services that help practices collect more money and implement better processes."

Physicians have used the Pittsburgh-based company to streamline their workflow design in order to be more internally efficient and optimize revenue cycle management services.

Schickler tells his physician clients that they should focus on preventative visits first and then jump into chronic care. "It keeps patients out of hospitals and costs down," he noted.

Most practices are under intense reimbursement pressures, particularly in this economic climate.

According to Schickler, physicians are generally conservative in their coding but more aggressive methods could help boost reimbursement.

Information technology is one way to do this. IC-Chart, MED3000's proprietary electronic health record, helps physicians to code more accurately, he said

"MED3000 encourages (physicians) to focus on things that improve processes and cut costs," Schickler said. Process improvements often allow practices to avoid firing staff in order to save money.

By improving what they have, large physician practices are able to demonstrate to health plans that they are providing better care than others in the community, said Schickler. And ultimately, an improvement in quality secures preferential, higher-paying contracts with insurance companies.

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