

Case Study: Southern Oregon Orthopedics



Overcoming Practice Skepticism about Bringing Orthotics & DME In-House

Challenge

Southern Oregon Orthopedics' previous experience running an unsuccessful ancillary service left them convinced it wouldn't work, hindering them from providing complete patient care.

Solution

The CEO, Director of Clinical Services, and a few of the most skeptical physicians took advantage of Breg's site visit reference program enabling Southern Oregon Orthopedics to learn about another practice's experiences first hand.

Results

A successful site visit instilled confidence that partnering with Breg makes the difference between a viable and a non-viable program.

- The practice's in-house bracing service line fosters closer patient relationships, an integral part of Southern Oregon Orthopedics' patient-focused care.
- Profitable ancillary service within three months of implementation with continuing year-over-year growth.
- Better monitoring and control of inventory, and more efficient patient workflow with Breg Vision® software.

Since 1970, Southern Oregon Orthopedics in Medford, Oregon, has provided orthopedic care for over 3,800 residents in southern Oregon and northern California. The 12-physician practice conducts 6,300 surgeries annually. Southern Oregon Orthopedics sponsors local festivals and events, including the Hearts & Vines Foundation, dedicated to funding community-based youth and family programs focused on eliminating domestic violence in the region.

Years ago, Southern Oregon Orthopedics had its own in-house bracing program. It didn't fulfill its promise: the practice did not see any time efficiency or cost savings. The program was not tightly monitored, there was no organized process and no billing or collecting. The service line lost money. Because of this experience, the practice held the belief that an in-house orthotics and DME program did not work.

"After that experience, we partnered with a stock and bill provider," said Sherri Battles, RN, Director of Clinical Services for Southern Oregon Orthopedics. "That relationship worked okay," she added, "but it wasn't wholly our program. We still referred our patients to someone else for bracing." The practice believes in nurturing lasting relationships with patients and their families, and working closely with them to provide the best possible orthopedic care. Referring patients to a third party for bracing put a barrier between clinic providers and patients. "Once you send patients to another provider, you no longer have control over that patient's care. It just didn't make sense given the type of full-service care we wanted to provide."

Then one of the physician partners spoke with a doctor from another practice who had brought orthotics & DME in-house using Breg Impact consulting and Breg Vision patient workflow management software. With this new information, the practice started to

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Sherri Battles, RN
Director of Clinical Services

discuss moving away from the stock and bill and began looking at Breg Impact's offering. Because of the practice's previous experience, there was a lot of skepticism on the part of the management team.

Sherri took advantage of Breg's offer to connect the practice with a group in Central Oregon having great success with the program. The Southern Oregon Orthopedics team traveled to Bend, Oregon for a site visit, and by talking to the orthopedic group, the management team became convinced they could implement a successful in-office bracing program by partnering with Breg. "The site visit really made the difference," Sherri said.

This time the practice took all the right steps in setting up a DME ancillary service. In addition to the partnership with Breg, Sherri says one of the biggest differences was hiring a dedicated coordinator to manage the program. The coordinator "owns" the program, monitors inventory with Breg's Vision software, coordinates the patient's care, and is solely focused on the service line's success.

And the program has been successful. Since implementing Breg Impact in November 2014, Southern Oregon Orthopedics' ancillary program has been profitable, with growth every year. "Even more importantly," Sherri says, "by partnering with Breg to bring DME in-house, we now know exactly what happens to our patients when we order a brace for them. They get the exact product the doctor prescribes, and they are fit on the spot by our own experienced fitter who has access to the physician if there are any questions or concerns at the time of fitting. Patients leave our practice feeling completely cared for."

Sherri also relies on her Breg sales representatives. "They are amazing," she said. "They are our partner and a terrific resource. Anything we need, they provide—no other program does that."