

# First Care Clinic Crushes Regional Financial Benchmarks

As a federally qualified health center and patient-centered medical home in rural Kansas, First Care Clinic (FCC) serves a clinically, demographically, and geographically diverse patient population. For the past seven years, NextGen Enterprise EHR has enabled consolidation of all patient records, including physical, behavioral, and oral health data.

FCC has seen significant growth in the population they serve, currently averaging approximately 20,000 annual encounters—and in the past two years, they’ve ranked in the top 10 percent of health centers for clinical quality data.

## THE CHALLENGE

FCC needed a better strategy to get paid for their services as efficiently as possible. Due to the intricacies of FQHC billing, they sought to improve the way they navigate payer contracts, risk management agreements, practice management improvement workflows, and analysis reporting.

“We want to make sure we take care of people efficiently. We can provide the best services, but if we’re not paid for them, FCC is not going to be here for very long,” said Bryan Brady, CEO of First Care Clinic.



## CLIENT PROFILE

### First Care Clinic

- Federally qualified health center
- **Location:** Hays, Kansas
- **Population served:** 6,000 patients
- **Vision:** All people have access to primary health and dental services
- **Mission:** The region’s premier medical home dedicated to providing access to compassionate, quality care for all

### HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS

- NextGen® Enterprise EHR
- NextGen® Enterprise PM
- NextGen® RCM Services
- NextGen® PXP Portal
- NextGen Virtual Visits™

## HIGHLIGHTS

24

Payment lag **reduced** to 24 days—regional benchmark is 31 days

2

Bill creation lag **reduced** by two days

19

Total days in A/R **reduced** to 19 days—regional benchmark is 22 days

13

Total insurance days in A/R **reduced** to 13 days—regional benchmark is 16 days

94%

of charges **entered** in the same month as the date of service

95%

of claims **processed** at first pass

## THE SOLUTION

It's difficult to retain billing staff in a rural area. FCC desired a vendor who not only offered an integrated medical record, but FQHC billing expertise as well. With this in mind, they decided to expand their relationship with NextGen Healthcare by implementing NextGen RCM Services.

"An important thing for us was to choose a vendor that could do the FQHC billing for us. It is very specialized; there are a lot of intricacies. We needed a partner who was willing to work through that with us," said Brady. "NextGen Healthcare stood out because they provide a fully integrated medical record."

## THE RESULTS

NextGen RCM Services helped FCC establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor their financial performance. These KPIs revealed the following results:

### Payment lag

Payment lag refers to how quickly healthcare service providers are paid once a claim gets out the door. The payment lag regional benchmark for FQHCs in and around FCC's area was 31 days. As of July 2021, FCC has averaged a payment lag of 24 days.

### Bill creation lag time

Bill creation lag time is the time it takes between the date of service and the day those charges are entered and billed. FCC has maximized billing productivity by encouraging clinicians to understand why it's important to close out encounters faster and create bills for the NextGen RCM team to submit. As a result, FCC improved bill creation lag time by two days.

"We've made charges and billing important to our clinicians. It's written in their contracts that charges and bills have to be in within 24 hours of providing the service. Nurses also put in charges for immunizations, lab work, and other services. To give them an incentive, we've implemented an overall bonus program. It's a metric of charges, and on the other side, it's quality measures," said Brady.

### Accounts receivable (A/R)

Brady and his team meet regularly with NextGen RCM Services to review scorecards. NextGen Healthcare's benchmark for total days in A/R in FCC's region is 22 days; however, with the aid of RCM experts, they average 19 days in total A/R. Compared to the regional benchmark of 16 total insurance days in A/R, FCC is at 13 days.

"We educate providers on coding and help staff avoid common pitfalls," said Brady. "It's a lot of work on the front end, but it pays off when we're looking at being paid in 19 days."

FCC continually educates themselves to make sure that their in-house billing staff understand what payers are looking for and then make sure this information gets relayed to the provider.

"With NextGen Healthcare, we have access to community health center expertise that tells us where we are and how we compare to similar organizations—that's extremely helpful."

**Bryan Brady**  
Chief Executive Officer  
First Care Clinic

## Efficient charge entry

NextGen RCM Services track monthly billing charges and dates of service. In other words, “Where is the money coming from, and what date of service is it tied to? Is it the same month that the money came in, or is it three, four, five months later?”

Data shows that FCC enters 94 percent of charges in the same month of service.

“We need to collect on our services as soon as we can. NextGen Healthcare helps further our success by enabling us to get paid in the same month for the majority of our charges,” said Brady.

## Clean claim rate

NextGen RCM Services has their own clearinghouse that gathers data to share with FCC to help reduce errors. FCC’s clean claim rate has been consistently over 95 percent every single month, thus reducing labor burdens related to rejected claim corrections.

Reflecting on the five percent of claims that do not go out clean, Brady said, “NextGen Healthcare has a good system that enables us to exchange information with them. For example, the work log is a communication tool that tracks what’s been done, provides the documentation, and helps get this last five percent out the door.”

He added, “During implementation, NextGen RCM Services presented us with best practices. We used those recommendations as a baseline and modified them to fit our environment. They really helped us out, and that’s one of the things we like about NextGen Healthcare.”

“Our financial success can be attributed to a valued partner who works with us to resolve problems and achieve positive results.”

**Bryan Brady**  
Chief Executive Officer  
First Care Clinic

# HOW CAN WE HELP?

Partner with us at **855-510-6398** or **results@nextgen.com**