

# Collecting From Patients

*The Struggle is Real*



## The Issue is Escalating

### Rising Debt

A 2016 survey from Physicians Foundation found that 40% of patients have medical debt.



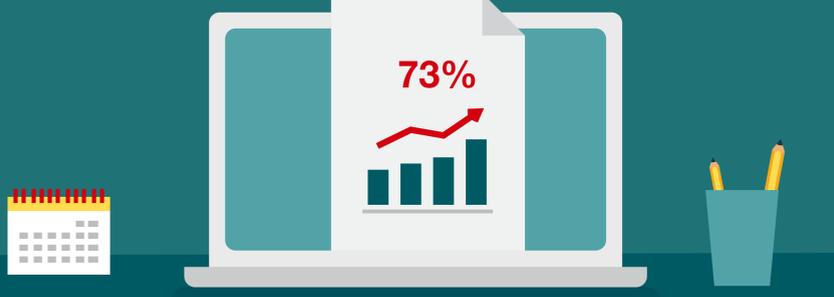
### Uncollected Patient Balances

According to a report from TransUnion, approximately 68% of patients with bills of \$500 or less during 2016 did not pay the full statement balance within the calendar year.



## Lengthy Collection Process

According to InstaMed's Trends in Patient Payment, 73% of providers report that it takes one month or longer to collect from a patient.



## Best Practices for Patient Collections

- Collect on balances due (current and past) at the time of service.
- Keep a secure credit card on file for all patients.
- Provide a variety of payment options, including online.
- Check eligibility before a patient's appointment.
- Inform patients of their financial responsibility up front.
- Schedule payment plans with automated deductions from the patient's bank account.
- Consider not scheduling patients for future visits until their prior balances are resolved.

## How Can I Improve Collections in My Practice?



### 1. Know Your Numbers

You must have tools in place (like an analytics solution) to monitor your key performance indicators (KPIs):

- Days in AR
- Net Collections Rate
- Clean Claim Rates
- First Pass Denial Rate
- Contractual Variance
- Collections per Visit

### 2. Rethink Your Front-end Processes

We can no longer rely on sending a bill and collecting on the back-end. Your collections efforts prior to and during the visit have become essential.

Your staff should be dedicated to the front-end work, like:

- **checking eligibility,**
- **providing treatment estimates** and
- **collecting balances** up-front or at the time of service.



### 3. Get Paid

The BEST option is to collect the patient's balance while they are in the office, but if that is not possible:

- Offer a payment plan over a reasonable period of time based on the total outstanding balance.
- Use a credit card on file solution that gives you the option to auto debit that card each month.
- Provide access to healthcare financial institutions, like CareCredit®.



### 4. Consider Outsourcing

If you are not in a position to hire the staff to provide this extra dedication to the front-end work, you may want to consider outsourcing some back-end revenue cycle work.

