**Hilo Medical Center Partners with The Wellington Group to Drive Performance**

In 2016, Shari Vincent, Director of Utilization Review for Hilo Medical Center (Hilo), a member of the Eastern Division within the Hawaii Health System Corporation (HHSC), recognized a growing number of inefficiencies were strongly affecting their finances. Per Shari: “We were manually tracking audits and denials on spreadsheets which was time consuming and labor intensive. We were challenged to identify the current statuses and our reporting lacked claim level details to allow various departments to make the necessary changes to their processes.” Being a state-owned facility, Hilo went through a RFP process and selected both AuditNavigatorTM and DenialsNavigatorTM from The Wellington Group based out of the Cleveland, OH area.

Scott Earich, Principal at The Wellington Group, indicates both AuditNavigatorTM and DenialsNavigatorTM are similar products that offer popular features such as: robust workflow engines, appeals library that allow clients to manage their own appeal processes, autonomy to build custom fields and drop- down tables, and ability to exchange various electronic transactions with a large number of payers to significantly reduce manual interventions.

Hilo experienced a immediate impact upon implementation. “We strongly improved overall efficiencies and getting financial and clinical departments more engaged was paramount. We can now track audits and denials by issue, CARC codes, department, and by specific doctor and coder” explained Vincent. As a result, the revenue cycle team was able to identify root causes and payer patterns to implement corrective action plans specific to that issue or payer. In addition, Wellington’s reporting platform allows staff members to identify issues at the claim level which is the granular level we were seeking to get multiple departments involved to take corrective action. Vincent really likes the level of details the reports offer for multiple reasons: We were able to identify a payer that was requesting the same claim multiple times from individual business units within their organization. We shared this information with senior management who then revised the contractual language to only allow the payer to request a specific claim once so we do not have to pull the claim multiple times. In addition, were able to share our results with different teams (clinical, financial, boardroom, etc.) and provide them with real business insights and hard numbers to make necessary changes based upon facts rather than conjecture or feelings.

AuditNavigatorTM and DenialsNavigatorTM improved worker productivity within weeks by providing the revenue cycle team the ability to leverage workflows to track specific issues and correct problems before they became bigger financial issues. For example, Hilo is now able to track retro-eligible payer issues so they can get paid for past claims that they previously wrote-off because they lacked a tracking mechanism. Vincent further explained that the software has allowed them to be ‘more nimble’ to specific situations and involve the right people to initiate changes more quickly which has resulted in saving the organization millions of dollars over the past five years.

Hilo has recently purchased the newest Wellington product, DataNavigator. Per Earich: DataNavigator offers data analytical reports that are built on our business intelligence platform. This platform allows multiple departments within the revenue cycle ecosystem the autonomy to build their own custom reports without have to get the information department involved. Key reports include: Ability to identify not only revenue recoveries and overturn rates (how successful have the nurse auditors and appeal writers been in overturning denials), but also the ability to drill-down into their data to spot trends and patterns in a more timely manner. Vincent is very much looking forward to completing the implementation to provide better business intelligence, more comprehensive dashboards, claim details, and overall better communications amongst multiple departments. Per Vincent: “DataNavigator will allow us to have multiple applications on one platform which will allow us to reduce the number of vendors. We like how Wellington has structured their database which is built upon decades of experience with claim and remittance issues. Their dashboard reports address detailed issues that are being requested by our financial and clinical departments.”

Vincent is very pleased how their relationship with The Wellington Group has evolved over the years. As a result, other Eastern Division hospitals within HHSC are considering replicating the same foundation we have established with Wellington.