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## Self-Help Tools for Providers

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*This article is authored by guest blogger, Mike McKinley, director of product development at Coventry, a part of Mitchell | Genex | Coventry.*

For hundreds of years medical providers have taken an oath or vow derived from [The Hippocratic Oath](#), which champions the ethical and humane treatment of the sick. Health, healing, and prevention are paramount. Today, in the practice of caring for patients, providers are challenged with increased patient volumes, the use of electronic health record (EHR) software and regulatory requirements, to name a few. More time is spent on administrative tasks, rather than one on one patient care.

Typically, to wrestle back precious time to focus on health and healing, providers increase front-office and back-office staff to manage administrative tasks as patient volumes increase. Even so, antiquated billing processes, systems, and complexities results in a significant amount of time, money and administrative effort. Lessening this overhead improves patient satisfaction.

Ideally, online access to information (otherwise known as a provider portal) should help improve front and back office efficiency. Without such access, billing is otherwise known as “drop and pray” – drop the bill in the mail and pray payment comes soon. Portal access allows users to view bill status, access repricing information, and Explanation of Reviews (EORs) when complete. In providing fast and easy online access to repricing and remittance information, office staff can easily get the answers they need without wasting time making phone calls and possibly wait on hold. Furthermore, it is difficult to be on the phone while interacting with patients.

[As we've mentioned before](#), live chat is also a handy feature that is widely utilized in various types of online portals. Live chat in a provider portal allows provider staff to request assistance in real-time, cutting down on wait and processing times resulting in quicker payment. Other features a high-quality provider portal should offer include access to contract rate exhibits, determining network participation, and access to pertinent news, articles, provider manuals, and announcements. The best portals should release new features frequently to improve the experience and efficiency for providers and their office staff.

The Coventry Provider Portal, launched in January of 2020, has implemented a number of updates and new features in its short one year since go-live. In return, we've seen a growth rate of 125% in usage as provider offices recognize the benefits of using the portal.



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