



St. Mary's Healthcare Decreases A/R Days by 26%, Creates Sustainable Revenue Cycle Foundation With Expanse

Introduction

After breaking away from a larger health system, St. Mary's Healthcare faced a critical juncture: The organization needed a strong, sustainable revenue cycle foundation to maintain its independence and ensure long-term success. A mid-size, independent hospital with several outpatient clinics, St. Mary's carries a Disproportionate Share Hospital status. This classification — due to a high Medicare/Medicaid percentage of approximately 80% — presents unique collection challenges within its low-income, vulnerable community.

"We recognized that modernizing our processes and technology was essential to navigate these financial complexities," said Director of Patient Accounting Grant Norton, MBA, of St. Mary's. "Moving to MEDITECH's Expanse EHR and its integrated Revenue Cycle solution was a strategic decision aimed at creating a streamlined, sustainable revenue cycle foundation."

St. Mary's new approach focused on leveraging automation to simplify processes, accelerate cashflow, and enhance patient communication, ultimately leading to greater patient satisfaction.

SNAPSHOT

Opportunity

St. Mary's Healthcare sought to improve cash flow and operational efficiency by simplifying workflows, leveraging automation, and focusing on patient-friendly processes.

Solution

Implementing new billing and patient engagement strategies coupled with Expanse Revenue Cycle.

Benefits

- Reduced manual workload for staff
- Accelerated cash collections
- Reduced its A/R days
- Improved communications with patients
- Created sustainable operations

Profile

St. Mary's Healthcare (Amsterdam, NY), an independent organization with deep roots in the Fulton-Montgomery region, employs over 1,600 team members and operates a 130-bed hospital. It provides a comprehensive range of inpatient and outpatient services.

Addressing operational and financial challenges

Before implementing Expanse, St. Mary's faced several obstacles that hindered cash flow and operational efficiency. Outdated and inefficient back-end processes that relied on legacy systems created bottlenecks, slowing down the entire billing and collections workflow.

Patient billing was a source of difficulty often due to frequent and confusing statements that showed unresolved insurance balances. This lack of clarity increased patient calls and delayed payments. Furthermore, St. Mary's used different EHRs in their ambulatory and acute settings; the absence of integrated system data hindered the ability to identify root causes for issues, resulting in high suspense days and collection problems caused by significant lag times in the collection process. The collection of co-pays and deductibles was also a substantial challenge, especially among Medicare or Medicaid beneficiaries, given the financial struggles many face. The organization urgently needed a simplified, effective method to accurately distinguish between patients genuinely requiring financial assistance and those who were nonpaying for other reasons.

Leveraging technology and new processes

St. Mary's tackled these challenges by consolidating most of its outpatient practices, alongside the acute hospital system, onto a single Expanse EHR. This integration allowed the organization to deploy a modern, integrated revenue cycle solution.

"One of the most unique and impactful process changes was leveraging Expanse to switch our Medicare reimbursement method," said Norton. "We moved from the optional billing Method Two back to Method One, the standard approach. This shift significantly contributed to financial improvements because it allowed professional fees to be billed out on their own separate account within our ambulatory solution, speeding up cash collections and freeing coders to focus on facility billing."

Norton noted that the shift from Method Two to Method One generated a 148% initial growth in self-pay collections when comparing self-pay collections from July 2023 (\$360,000) to July 2024 (\$501,000).



MEDITECH Expanse helped automate the revenue cycle and make data actionable, enabling St. Mary's to:

- ▶ Scale without increasing staff. Automation was implemented not to downsize FTEs, but to handle increased volume — specifically the addition of 60+ providers in two years. Claims grew from 35,500 per month to 45,000 per month, a rise of 26.76%, which the existing staff could absorb without growing the billing team.
- ▶ Minimize manual processes. St. Mary's leveraged over 100 MEDITECH and clearinghouse rules to streamline account checks and ensure clean claims. Incorporating these rules minimized manual claim touching and successfully reduced billing edits within its clearinghouse from 10,049 in June 2024 to 5,095 in November 2025.
- ▶ Proactively monitor its fiscal health. By using Expanse Revenue Cycle's interactive Financial Status Desktop as part of their daily workflow, staff review receivables and cash flow in real time, drill into individual account details, and identify the root cause of issues.

Improving patient statements and communication

St. Mary's Healthcare made significant, patient-friendly changes to its revenue cycle operations as part of a strategic initiative to boost cash flow and enhance the patient experience. The following

four changes were key to improving transparency, simplifying the payment process, and creating a more positive financial experience for patients:

1. **Statement redesign:** Patient statements were redesigned to be easier to understand, grouping charges like "room and board" instead of using lengthy descriptions. Clarification has helped reduce patient calls and speed up payments.
2. **Payment automation and access:** Expanse Revenue Cycle automates payment uploads from a third-party vendor every morning to ensure timely and accurate posting to patient accounts. Patient payment options have improved through an online bill pay portal and third-party AI-generated payment plans.
3. **Mandatory statement hold:** St. Mary's implemented a mandatory five-day hold after insurance payment before sending a self-pay statement. This ensures the entire insurance balance is fully resolved and contractualized so the patient is billed the correct amount the first time.
4. **Presumptive eligibility:** The organization adopted a presumptive eligibility process using a third-party vendor that scrubs self-pay accounts, proactively identifying patients below 200% of the federal poverty level for charity adjustments. An AI-generated predictive model estimates household income, improving workflow and expediting financial assistance.



Transforming processes creates significant gains

St. Mary's transition to Expanse and its revenue cycle solution yielded dramatic and measurable improvements in financial health and operational efficiency, setting the stage for long-term sustainability.

Key Metric	Pre-Optimization Baseline (January 2024)	Post-Optimization (as of November 2025)	Improvements Realized
A/R over 180 days	33% (January 2024)	3% (February 2025)	90% decrease
A/R days	53.6	39.6	26% decrease
Self-pay collections growth	\$360,000 (July 2023)	\$501,000 (July 2024)	40% subsequent increase from initial 148%
Clean claim rate	84%	93%	9% increase
First pass yield	56.27%	78.6% (as of October 2025)	Benchmarking top quartile nationally
Time to send patient statement	98 days	53 days	45 days faster
Credit liability	\$1.48 million (April 2024)	Under \$600,000	>59% reduction

Conclusion

St. Mary's Healthcare's financial performance has improved significantly. Using Expanse, the organization has simplified workflows, automated manual processes, and created a patient-friendly experience. These changes have resulted in faster cash collections and a substantial reduction in A/R days.

“Transitioning to an intelligent EHR gave us the proper technology to modernize our healthcare delivery,” said Norton. “Automating our revenue cycle processes specifically eliminated manual tasks, making it easier to reduce errors and delays.”





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