

CareConnections and SpectraSoft introduce “one-click” outcomes entry for physical therapists

CareConnections is pleased to announce that outcomes system users can now submit data and access the CareConnections Web site directly from SpectraSoft’s DocuPRO rehab documentation software. The “one-click” feature logs the user into the CareConnections system and automatically populates the CareConnections fields with data entered into the SpectraSoft DocuPRO system.

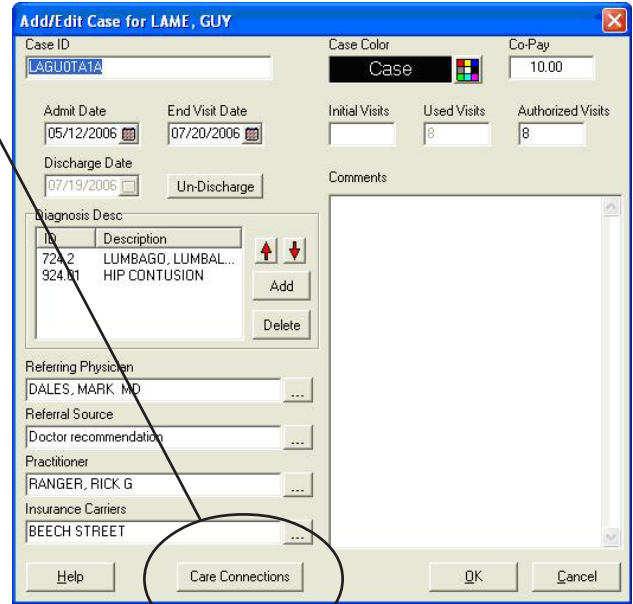
To enter the outcomes data for a case, a therapist using DocuPRO SIMPLY CLICKS AN ICON TO SEND THE DATA TO THE CARECONNECTIONS WEB SITE. DocuPRO automatically generates the outcomes data from the patient’s case file and encrypts the information before sending it to the CareConnections Web site.

DocuPRO assigns a unique ID number to each patient and case, so the patient’s name or other identifying information is never passed through the system.

“DocuPRO is the first physical therapy documentation system I’m aware of that automates the outcomes submission process,” says Steve Petrie, CEO of SpectraSoft.

“When practice owners see how easy it is to use this one-click approach, I think you’ll see many more therapy practices get involved in the outcomes process and attain the benefits of how clinical efficacy data can help them with referral source marketing, payer negotiations, and directing continuing education investment for their staff.”

For more information on DocuPRO and one-click outcomes entry for physical therapy, or SpectraSoft’s medical appointment scheduling software, visit www.spectrasoft.com.



About SpectraSoft

SpectraSoft, Inc. is a leader in simplifying comprehensive appointment scheduling and rehab documentation software, with installations in nearly 4,000 healthcare clinics and hospitals. The company publishes DocuPRO, a template-based documentation system for physical therapy and occupational therapy. SpectraSoft appointment scheduling products include its AppointmentsPRO flagship system; AppointmentsCS for multi-site organizations; and AppointmentsES for hospitals. Founded in 1993, SpectraSoft is located in Tempe, Arizona. For more information call 800-889-0450 or visit www.spectrasoft.com.

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Patient Satisfaction Question Alteration

After receiving feedback at a recent focus group session involving office managers from several physical therapy clinics, CareConnections decided to alter the wording of one of the questions on the Patient Satisfaction Survey.

Since the inception of the Patient Satisfaction Survey in early 2004, we have received a volume of customer feedback on the applicability of the survey questions. Comments and concerns about question 4 came back to us on a regular basis. Question 4 asked for patients to rate the following statement—“Explanation of your benefits and all of the paperwork you filled out.” The term ‘benefits’ created a dilemma for many clinics. Clinics often contact insurance carriers to check eligibility and verify benefits, and they rely upon provider relations personnel at the health plan to provide accurate information. However, even when correct information is obtained from carriers, the complexity of how the benefits apply to therapy care is often difficult for clinic office personnel to convey and is not something they should be held responsible for when claims are ultimately processed by the carrier. For these reasons, many clinics shy away from promising patients how their coverage works. Therefore, we altered the wording to eliminate its insurance related aspects.

The new question 4 will now read, “**Explanation of clinic paperwork and your financial obligations for therapy services.**” The new wording of the question was developed by, discussed by, and decided on by the focus group of office managers and CareConnections staff. We believe the new question will lend itself to better patient understanding and will more accurately reflect the role of the clinic office staff and their interaction with patients.

This revised question will be incorporated into the CareConnections patient satisfaction survey on October 2, 2006.

What does this mean for you? If your clinic uses the bar-coded surveys, each form you print from October 2nd on will have the revised question. If your clinic has not yet begun using the bar-coded surveys, we ask that you please begin as soon as possible.

Your quarterly reports for patient satisfaction will continue to show historical data averages for question 4, but we will eventually stop accepting surveys that have not been updated in order make sure all data reflects the same question set.

If you have questions or concerns about the change, please feel free to contact CareConnections support (support@careconnections.com).

New Patient Satisfaction Collection Method Available

CareConnections will begin beta testing its new Patient Satisfaction kiosk system in 2007. This option will allow clinics to have patients complete their patient satisfaction surveys online. The kiosk eliminates the need for a paper survey and speeds the delivery of patient satisfaction data to the CareConnections system.

Clinics will need a computer with internet access to use the kiosk system. If your clinic has the appropriate equipment and you would like to be involved in the beta process, please contact CareConnections support.

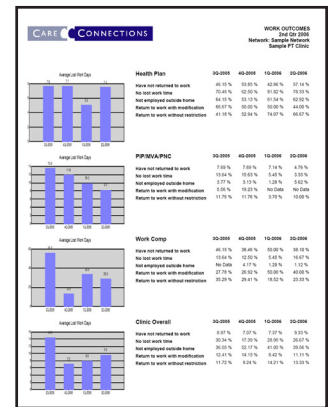
Outcomes and Patient Satisfaction Reports Revised and Explained

Reports for the outcomes system will undergo a significant revision beginning with 3rd Quarter 2006 reports. The most significant change is the revision of comparison groups. **COMPARATIVE REPORTS THAT SHOW CUMULATIVE AVERAGES FOR NETWORK AND NATIONAL HAVE BEEN REVISED FROM QUARTERLY AVERAGES TO A ROLLING YEAR AVERAGE.** A rolling year average captures data from the past 12 months so that you see a much larger pool of data represented in the average. Rolling year averages help to smooth the averages and remove quarterly bias from your comparison groups. In addition, we have added a new column to the comparative reports that shows a rolling year average for your clinic. In the same vein, therapist reports will also show a rolling average for therapists. For some clinics this will eliminate the need for year-end custom reports.

In addition to these revisions, the **WORK OUTCOMES REPORT HAS RECEIVED A FACELIFT.** In addition to the work status chart and the lost work graph, you will now receive 3 additional charts and graphs that show work status and lost work days broken down by insurance type. Insurance types covered in the breakdown will be PIP/MVA/PNC, Health Plan, and Work Comp.

To help our customers keep up with all the recent changes, we will post a link to a “Report Glossary” that gives a description of all the different elements of the reports. The new link is located on the Quarterly Reports page. The glossary page will contain individual links for outcomes and patient satisfaction terms. Patient satisfaction reports were revised in early 2006, so no additional changes have been made to those reports. If you have questions or concerns about the changes to your reports, please feel free to contact CareConnections support.

Facility 2Q-2006	Facility Rolling Year	Network Rolling Year	National Rolling Year
226	757	19581	84453
41.15 %	44.78 %	39.62 %	37.59 %
58.85 %	55.22 %	60.34 %	62.39 %



CareConnections Outcomes Forms Translated to Russian

Over the years we have received numerous requests for various language translations of the CareConnections outcomes worksheets. When there is significant demand, and where large concentrations of a particular ethnic group exist, we consider the costs and benefits of getting the forms translated.

Spanish was the first language we translated our forms to, and now we are proud to announce a Russian translation. Though not as widespread as the Spanish speaking population, Russian has been a commonly requested language for the past two years. The newly translated forms will be available to subscribers beginning October 2nd, 2006.

If you have questions about the new forms, please feel free to contact CareConnections support.

Introducing the Functional Calculator

[T]he Functional Calculator...will allow for quick and easy calculation of functional scores from the patient worksheet.

Beginning October 2, 2006, CareConnections will implement a new tool for clinics to use in tracking patient outcomes. This tool, dubbed the Functional Calculator, will be available during the data entry process and will allow for quick and easy calculation of functional scores from the patient worksheet. Using this feature will not be required, but it will offer you an alternative method of data entry. Rather than figuring out point values for each question and calculating function for yourself, the Functional Calculator will now do the work for you.

So, how does it work?

After you select a problem area, note the headings **Initial Function** and **Final Function** now appear as links.

Click on the appropriate link (Initial or Final) and an ONLINE VERSION OF THE FUNCTIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE SELECTED PROBLEM AREA will come up. Now all you have to do is select the responses marked by the patient on their patient worksheet. Once you complete all of the questions, click on the Calculate button. Your internet browser will return to the data intake screen and your functional index score will be complete.

An additional bonus to using this feature is that score values for each question on the patient worksheet will be saved in the CareConnections' system. Once enough people adopt this method of scoring function, we will be able to supply reports that drill down to the level of the individual functional question. This kind of reporting will be dependent on the amount of data received, so we do not anticipate reporting this until late 2007 or early 2008. In the meantime, we encourage you to try this new feature and let us know if it saves you time.