Interview with Sheila Conant: On Designing COREmatica, a Breakthrough Incentive Payment System

COREmatica, is a proven "breakthrough" incentive payment system. It calculates incentive-based pay (including RVU base pay) for hospitals, hospitalist, physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners. COREmatica automates the design, administration and analysis of incentive-based compensation programs for hospitals and emergency department practice groups.

It is always refreshing when you come across someone who loves what they do and have worked hard enough and long enough at it to be labeled an expert. Sheila Conant is one of those people.   For the last 15 years, she has spent approximately 10,000 hours creating and maintaining software that calculates incentive based pay. "I love my work. In fact, work is one of my favorite hobbies," said Conant.

"At the end of the day, pay matters a lot," said Conant. "We all want to be paid fairly for what we do, and it is a proven fact that when you offer an incentive for certain behaviors, you can improve operational effectiveness. Many industries pay with incentives, but they cannot be very sophisticated if they are doing manual calculations or using spreadsheets. That is why I'm so excited about my work. Many industries, including healthcare, are poorly automated, and we can help them."

In 1982, Conant graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in computer science. For the next 11 years, she worked in programming and management positions with various technology companies before starting her own consulting firm. Her consulting clients included healthcare organizations, one of whom asked her to design an incentive-based compensation system for their use. The system she designed has been in production for fifteen years. It reliably calculates pay for hundreds of providers each month in more than 25 states.

When asked what kinds of incentives COREmatica pays, Conant said, "If it can be measured, COREmatica can pay on it. We can develop payment rules for anything that can be measured." COREmatica currently has the capability to pay incentive compensation about 150 different ways. These different payment strategies are intended to motivate or reward hospitalists and providers (including physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners) for the following:

Working a night or other undesirable shift	Working an unscheduled shift
Working faster or more efficiently	Supervising a PA
Reducing door-to-doc times	Working single coverage on a shift
Working a weekend shift	Working during a particularly busy time
Finishing/turning in charts in a timely manner	Working during a particularly slow time
Being on call	Working a holiday shift
Documenting charts more thoroughly	Reducing overhead
Working more shifts	Reducing the length of stay (LOS) for patients
Seeing more patients per hour	Reducing the number of left without being seen (LWBS) patients

Just to name a few…

One of the benefits of paying providers using incentives is the ability to improve documentation. If some aspect of the providers' pay is dependent on the chart being processed, there is motivation to complete charts accurately and efficiently. However, it is inevitable that some charts will come in late due to a variety of reasons, and late charts may affect pay outcomes. The complexity of paying late charts keeps many provider groups from implementing much-needed incentive compensation plans using a chart-based payment method.

Conant explained how COREmatica handles this problem: "COREmatica is designed to handle late charts automatically. Each pay period, when a provider's statement is calculated, the system looks back, picks up any late charts, recalculates the pay period and pays the provider the additional income. There are two tremendous benefits with this feature. First, it saves the payroll staff countless hours of tedious calculations, and second it gives providers confidence that they are being paid correctly."

About COREmatica:

COREmatica is the leading developer of compensation management software specializing in performance-based payroll for health care providers. Headquartered in Ann Arbor, Michigan, COREmatica works with hospitals and large health care provider groups to implement effective incentive-based compensation plans to drive productivity and keep costs aligned with revenue objectives. Our software product, COREmatica®, is used nationwide to calculate pay for thousands of clinicians in more than 25 states.

Founded in 2007, COREmatica is a Health IT company staffed by information technology experts with over 30+ years of experience developing software products for the healthcare industry. We are degreed professionals and have over 15 years of experience working with incentive-based pay. We take pride in helping our customers implement the best, most effective compensation plan for their clinicians. With COREmatica, you'll have a proven solution quicker than you can develop a custom solution, saving you time and money.

"If you can say it, we can pay it!"