

Foot & Ankle Specialists of the Woodlands Matches Growth with RCM Services

The challenges of growth

Marcin N. Vaclaw, DPM, opened Foot & Ankle Specialists of the Woodlands in 2015. As the sole provider, he chose NextGen® Office as the EHR that would enable him to achieve his operational and clinical goals.

“I found it [NextGen Office] through the American Podiatric Medical Association—it was recommended by the APMA. We were shopping around for an EHR system and since the APMA recommended it, we signed up,” said Dr. Vaclaw.

Over the course of five years, Dr. Vaclaw saw immense growth, adding an additional six full-time providers and three more locations across the greater Houston area. As the practice grew, however, reimbursements struggled to keep pace. Dr. Vaclaw felt he wasn't receiving the results he wanted. He preferred to keep the practice growing to its fullest potential, but was frustrated by the revenue management, billing, and collection services.

“I needed to have a team that was not only capable of the volume, I had to have people who could handle that type of growth,” Dr. Vaclaw explained. “The biggest thing was accounts receivable—being able to go after claims that were initially denied. A lot of rejections or denials would come back that legitimately should have been paid.”

The search for a solution

Dr. Vaclaw tried a range of billing service options, including a single, in-office biller; outsourcing to a local small company; and outsourcing to an even bigger company. The absence of a dependable billing solution inspired Dr. Vaclaw to add NextGen® RCM Services to fill the gap in reimbursement efficiency.

“We shopped around and found out that NextGen offered revenue cycle management, so we investigated it and thought, ‘Alright, let's do it.’ I really liked having everything together—a one-stop shop. That, I think is very appealing,” said Dr. Vaclaw.

Following this decision, Dr. Vaclaw finally got the results he was looking for.

“The billing and collections that NextGen provided has seriously been one of the best decisions I could've made for my practice. We're continuously looking for more products that NextGen offers because our growth is credited in large part to NextGen's ability to adapt and grow with us,” Dr. Vaclaw added.

CLIENT PROFILE

Foot & Ankle Specialists of the Woodlands

Founder: Marcin N. Vaclaw, DPM

Founded: 2015

Location: Four locations across Houston, Texas

Number of Podiatrists: 6

NEXTGEN HEALTHCARE SOLUTIONS

- NextGen® Office
- NextGen® Office Practice Management
- NextGen® Office RCM Services

HIGHLIGHTS



Reduced A/R days from 60–180 to 30 days



Ability to navigate billing complexities, such as home visits



Revenue cycle management and EHR are **integrated**

A partnership a podiatrist can trust

Dr. Vaclaw considers his billing account manager, Chase Cater, one of the most valuable assets to his team, even though Chase lives in a completely different state.

“I can trust him. I can communicate with him. Chase has been very, very consistent. And then, the amount of resources that NextGen has; these team members that help us to integrate new practices and new patient databases. If something happens to one person, there’s another dozen people that can come in. Such great consistency and reliability,” Dr. Vaclaw explained.

Going old school

One service offering that Foot & Ankle Specialists of the Woodlands provides that separates them from the norm are house visits. A large population of the patients they see are elderly—geriatric and hospice patients who cannot travel to office locations conveniently.

“When I started the clinic, I saw eight patients my first day. Well, eight patients in a day is not going to take care of things. Doing the house visits while we were slowly growing has really allowed us to open all of these satellite clinics. Even if the clinic isn’t super busy, there’s plenty of patients that need the house visits,” said Dr. Vaclaw.

Half of their business comes from house visits, which presents billing complexities that would be difficult to manage on their own.

“I don’t think there’s anything I could ask of NextGen that they couldn’t produce or sort out. With most billing companies or billing entities, they kind of go after the low hanging fruit. One thing that the billing side has been able to do is continue to really fight for the money that we’ve earned—to fight for the money that we deserve to receive,” Dr. Vaclaw explained.

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Foot & Ankle Specialists of the Woodlands



Resilience amid COVID-19

When COVID-19 struck Texas, Foot & Ankle Specialists of the Woodlands limited the number of patients they saw each day. If the appointment wasn't emergent or urgent, they asked the patients if they were alright waiting some time to be seen. In addition to this reduction in appointments, Dr. Vaclaw sent half of his staff home to socially distance from those remaining in office. Even though the state mandated shut down has lifted in Texas, they continue to implement those practices.

"I don't think that it's [COVID-19] affected us in a negative way. We stay busy. Again, because of the house visits, a lot of patients who are highly susceptible don't want to leave their home. The doctors in our practice are diligent about keeping themselves and their patients safe while staying busy," said Dr. Vaclaw.

Dr. Vaclaw admits that they've been very blessed to have had record months. Since they typically don't get paid for services until three months later, they were expecting August to be a bit lower reimbursement-wise. Also, they purchased three offices that month and hired four additional doctors. Dr. Vaclaw anticipated the perfect storm for failure, but acknowledged they've been very fortunate and are doing great.

Visible ROI

Since February 2017, a biller from NextGen Office sends an A/R update every week. Their A/R used to be "unbelievably huge" Dr. Vaclaw confessed—anywhere from 60–180 days. Now, the vast majority of their A/R is current, within the last 30 days.

"NextGen really only makes money when we make money. They're highly motivated. They're working hard because that's how they generate their own revenue. Regardless of the size of the practice, whether it's a big multi-group, or more of the mom and pop type of one provider, NextGen is going to help both of those and everything in between," said Dr. Vaclaw.

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Marcin N. Vaclaw, DPM
Foot & Ankle Specialists of the Woodlands

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

Partner with AVS 877-975-9160 or sales@avsmedical.com

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