

Aside from providing higher reimbursement rates, what is the most important thing the Oklahoma Health Care Authority could do to improve the Medicaid program?

1. Adopt the belief that most clinicians are trying to do the best they can to take care of their patients. Don't assume all physicians are trying to abuse the system.
2. Post answers to FAQ on the website.
3. Make it easier to get patients to a specialist.
4. Find a better way of tracking patient's demographics.
5. Impose some type of financial burden on the patient so they do not come in 3 or 4 times a month (e.g. one dollar co-pay).
6. Give patients an incentive to be healthy and stay healthy (e.g. give them more money if they exercise, eat right, get immunizations, etc). Penalize them if they don't.
7. Try to keep patients with their assigned PCP, instead of allowing them to get switched or dropped from eligibility. I know some of that is the responsibility of the patient/parent, but I hear all too often that there was little warning that the benefits were changing or ending. The first of the month is always a challenge. We called five parents today who have appointments tomorrow, but they are no longer eligible.
8. I strongly feel that these patients abuse my already overloaded schedule for concerns that do not require a physician. There is no incentive not to see the doctor for a band-aid on a small cut for example. If there was a co-payment associated with office visits at around 10 dollars and around 20 dollars for ER visits we would see much better utilization of the Medicaid program from the patients. Educating the patient does help but it is not enough!
9. Send reminders to members to come in for wellness exams.
10. Absolutely fix the auto assign mess...it totally discounts the idea of a medical home and the power of continuity. Then improve the pay scheme to sub-specialists...or buy some sub-specialists in pediatric neurology, neurology etc.