

Cleveland Clinic

The Cleveland Clinic realized that its highly complex bills were the source of tremendous frustration to patients and the cause of outstanding and bad debts to the hospital. Our challenge was to simplify and redesign billing statements to provide patients with a clear, comprehensive view of their medical charges and payments.

We quickly learned that monthly account balances fluctuated wildly as physicians and hospital divisions input charges at different times and insurance payments were applied. To bring order to this chaos of charges, we created two documents: a Billing Notice, sent only once, that explains the upcoming billing process, confirms insurance coverage, and informs patients that they will receive monthly Billing Statements once insurance claims have been resolved; and the Billing Statement itself, which requests payment for charges not covered by insurance. Detailed charges are categorized by What you owe now and What you may owe later—clarifying which charges are still pending with insurance and allowing patients to better anticipate future billing.

The response from patients was overwhelmingly positive, as was the impact on The Cleveland Clinic's bottom line. Faster payments and a sharp drop in bad debts translated to \$1 million per month in additional revenue. Paper and printing costs also dropped, due to a decrease in average bill length. Now, only 10% of bills are four pages or longer, down from 50%.



