

Eli's Rehab Report

READER QUESTIONS: How to Add Another Discipline to Your Hospital Program

Question: I'm in a hospital-based rehab clinic that offers only physical therapy. There's been a recent demand for occupational therapy and speech, so I'm considering adding the other disciplines to our clinic. Is this a major undertaking, or is it something as simple as hiring an OT and SLP and having the hospital's finance department update the chargemaster?

-- South Carolina Subscriber

Answer: The process should be relatively simple. As you mentioned, you need to set up speech and OT charges in your hospital billing system, and of course, hire OT and SLP staff (you may only need to hire one of each to begin with). You'll also want to update your policy & procedure manual so that it covers OT and SLP services (i.e., competencies, scheduling, documentation, billing, etc.)

There aren't any other major requirements unless a specific payer has some or the hospital needs to add SLP and OT to third-party payer contracts.

-- Reader Questions were reviewed by **Rick Gawenda,PT**, director of PM&R for Detroit Receiving Hospital and owner of Gawenda Seminars.