



HME & Pharmacy Providers  
**Are You  
Struggling with  
Staffing?**

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## Introduction

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Outsourcing has been a well-known staffing option in the home medical equipment (HME) and pharmacy industries for years. Yet, mixed emotions abound on this topic: from fervently supporting outsourcing to solely trusting in-house billing teams. Long gone are the days of only outsourcing IT and printer services. Now, providers have opportunities to strategically outsource their processes to drive down costs, improve quality, and deliver consistent results.

The benefits of outsourcing are especially crucial to providers today. At Prochant, more than 80% of the providers we speak to daily are struggling to hire, train, retain, and manage their reimbursement staff successfully.

In this white paper, Prochant delves into staffing struggles in the HME and pharmacy industries. Joey Graham, Chief Revenue Officer at Prochant, provides an increasingly viable, yet lesser known, solution: strategic process outsourcing.

## Staffing Struggles

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Providers pursue HME and pharmacy careers for various reasons. Yet, their choice likely has little to do with HCPCS and NDC codes or complex billing processes. Providers care deeply for their patients and are committed to serving their referral sources well. They are a key link in post-acute healthcare, ensuring that patients receive their necessary medical supplies, equipment, and prescriptions. Yet, daily staffing struggles take many providers away from these very priorities.



Challenges range from high turnover and quality improvement to retraining and managing staff through absenteeism, vacations, and leaves of absence. Although providers cannot avoid these realities fully, they can eliminate much of the noise with strategic outsourcing.

## A Strategic Solution

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What is strategic process outsourcing? Unlike tactical outsourcing, which is driven by a short-term strategy and used as a gap-fill measure, strategic outsourcing engages an experienced outsourcing partner to manage one (or many) routine business functions. The partner-provider relationship is a long-term one. When providers decide not to hire, train, or retain a full team, their trusted partner handles these important functions.

Providers today may outsource more business functions than ever before. These functions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Intake** involves processing new orders, from management of inbound referrals via fax, web portal, or email to data entry of patients and orders. This process also requires

checking eligibility and verifying that patients are qualified for coverage.

- **Billing and collections** confirm that new orders and prescriptions have been dispensed. This department reviews billing, enables claims transmission, manages front-end rejections, and oversees denials and open A/R balances.
- **Cash posting** matches EOBs and ERNs with funds received in the bank. In addition, this area applies payments, denials, and adjustments against A/R balances. Here, consistency and accuracy are critical.
- **Prior authorization** entails compiling medical records and other key data and submitting it to payors via web portal, fax, or phone. It is crucial to follow up on outstanding requests and resolve denied requests when possible.
- **Eligibility verification** includes gathering financial responsibility information using payer websites, clearinghouses, and phone calls. This area determines whether providers are in or out of network and whether patient deductibles are met. It also examines patient benefits and patient/payer responsibility for orders.
- **Resupply management** involves handling multiple aspects of providers' resupply programs, from patient outreach to the processing of orders, and ensures this key revenue stream remains top-of-mind.
- **Compliance monitoring** is most applicable to PAP compliance but can also extend to other product lines such as ventilators and blood glucose monitors. This area ensures that patients are compliant with therapy.
- **Inbound/outbound call centers** can be used for multiple purposes: phone queues, statement calls, patient updates, referral calls, and more.
- **Lockboxes (daily deposits)** are essentially post-office boxes that banks monitor. Here, checks are deposited automatically, and other correspondence is scanned or forwarded to providers' offices.
- **Deliveries/dropship** options include working with vendors directly or outsourcing orders to local couriers. Although most providers work with vendors, more and more are turning to couriers for certain types of orders, including pickups.
- **Professional employer outsourcing** allows providers to contract out their HR and benefits function. In doing so, they are grouped with hundreds of companies, opening them to preferential benefits, including health insurance.
- **Managed IT and printer services** are alternatives to hiring a full IT team. Many providers work with a third party or supplement a small, in-house team with a vendor to handle network administration and other advanced IT aspects.
- **Executive positions** are key, high-end hires, but are not always affordable. For example, many small businesses cannot hire, and do not need, a full-time CFO. Yet, bringing on fractional, or part-time, executives benefits companies as a whole.



## Conclusion

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Strategic process outsourcing is not an all-or-nothing proposal. Providers can outsource specific payers, products, and/or branches of their business. For example, many providers entrust one vendor to handle Medicare, Medicaid, and third-party A/R, then assign patient pay to another. When specific payers or payer groups are difficult, providers might assign them to a trusted outsourcing partner while their in-house team works on the rest.

The key for providers is finding where their staff struggles most—or where they struggle to hire the right staff. What processes are the most time-consuming? Where can providers free up resources for these processes?

For example, some providers struggle to manage their phone queues, leading to long hold times and mounting patient frustrations. We recommend that providers consider outsourcing their prior authorization or intake processes to free up and transfer valuable internal resources to the phone queue or customer service.

Prochant is the nation's leading reimbursement firm with a dedicated focus on HME and pharmacy. We have a proven track record of helping HME and pharmacy providers meet their financial goals. Our scalable solutions, years of experience, and advanced technology provide best-in-class results to the healthcare community. Headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, our client base includes national HME and pharmacy providers and health systems.

Joey Graham brings nearly 20 years of HME experience to his role as Chief Revenue Officer at Prochant. Here, Graham ensures best-in-class results to clients through scalable solutions and advanced technology. Graham earned his MBA from the University of West Florida and holds a degree in finance.

For more information on Prochant's reimbursement solutions, including Full Service Billing and Process Outsourcing, please visit [prochant.com](http://prochant.com) or contact us via email at [marketing@prochant.com](mailto:marketing@prochant.com).

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