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Rheumatology Updates: Making NORM the Norm

Announcer:

You're listening to Conference Coverage on ReachMD, captured on location at the Congress of Clinical Rheumatology's Annual Meeting in Destin, Florida. Your host is Dr. Madelaine Feldman, Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine at Tulane University Medical School and Vice President of the Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations.

Dr. Feldman:

This is Madelaine Feldman, and I'm at Congress of Clinical Rheumatology and I'm here talking with Andrea Zlatkus. She is the President of the National Organization of Rheumatology Managers, lovingly known as NORM, and I'd like to get a little more history and maybe a little bit of what they're doing these days. Thank you, Andrea.

Ms. Zlatkus:

Thank you, I really enjoy talking with you. We have a long partnership with CSRO. Actually, that's how NORM was founded, through CSRO. We were part of you at one time, and then we kind of grew up and you let us go, so we are always proud of our heritage with you.

Dr. Feldman:

Thank you. So, who actually are the members of NORM?

Ms. Zlatkus:

Our members are the rheumatology practice managers from across the country. We represent... I think we're about 47 states right now, and there are managers, whether they are the practice managers, we have some that are billing managers, we also have some physicians that manage the practices, so that's where our membership comes from.

Dr. Feldman:

I've heard great things in how you're able to help practices around the country. Is there some type of service? Are people linked together? Do they e-mail each other? How do they keep in touch?

Ms. Zlatkus:

We have what we lovingly call the Community Forum. That Community Forum allows them to hit on certain topics. So you can pick a topic such as Novitas, your MAC, and ask questions regarding that. We also have categories, of course, of MIPS and MACRA. What's great about that, you can ask a question, and in that time frame, usually within 24 hours, you have several answers to your situation, so it's a great way to communicate across all of our membership, and you can choose how you want to correspond.

We also have a rich library of resources for your members to use. So as part of your membership, you have part of our educational committee, their webinars. So, we have a disease workbook that talks in the level of your practice managers and the level of your MAs and your front desk staff. So, if you take something like rheumatoid arthritis, what is that disease? What are some of the labs we might be using to diagnose that disease? And then what are some of the drugs and therapies that are used for that disease? But it's in the terms that they can understand. They find that very useful to train other members of your staff.

We also have a workflow analysis that allows you to look at every aspect of running a practice from the front desk to the back billing and what you need to consider in those processes. We also have a rich library of templates that you don't have to recreate all the rules. You can turn around and say, "I need a handbook," and look at some of the best practices that were shared and then implement that into your own practice. So, there are many things there to support the practice managers.

Dr. Feldman:

Wow, you help with the clinical knowledge of the staff working in the office, the business knowledge, and templates for various personnel manuals. How does a practice join? Where can they find more information about NORM and to contact someone about joining?

Ms. Zlatkus:

If you go to our website—it is www.NORMgroup.org—right at the front page, as soon as you log in, there's a place to join for our membership. Our membership is very reasonable. It's \$150 for that membership per year. And there is a lot of history on that page that kind of tells you about NORM, the value of NORM, some information from others that are members or physicians that have been members of NORM and how they have benefitted from their NORM experience, and there's also contact information within the board.

Dr. Feldman:

You can't measure the value that you can get from NORM for private practices around the United States. Thank you so much for talking with me today and keep up the good work.

Ms. Zlatkus:

Thank you. I really appreciate it.

Announcer:

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