Out-Source Billing Considerations

When weighting the advantages to the disadvantages of out-sourcing your billing consider these things:

- Typically a billing company will charge a percentage of collections.
    - Will that percentage include charges from the clearinghouse for claim submission, eligibility verification, electronic remittance advices, electronic patient statements, etc.?
    - How does the overall cost compare to keeping billing in-house
- Will you need to change your current billing system?
- Will the account data be real-time or will there be a lag?
- Will the clinic/practice be entering charges or will the billing company?
- Will all payments continue to come to the clinic/practice?
- How is data exchanged?
- What levels to billing services are offered and included with:
    - Claim management
    - Patient statements
    - Insurance account receivable follow-up and appeals
    - Patient account receivable follow-up, e.g. letters, calls and collections
    - Charge entry
    - Payment posting, mail, ERA/EFT
    - Patient calls
    - Payer contracts
    - Credentialing
    - Credit card reconciliation
- Is the company HIPAA compliant?
- What is the number of staff that will be assigned to your account?
- Is the staff appropriately trained to handle your accounts?
- Check references
    - Does the company have the expertise and experience
    - What is their client's average collection ratio
    - Check with the Better Business Bureau
    - Call at least three of their current clients with a similar size and type of practice/clinic as yours
    - Search the internet for negative feedback
- Review the contract:
    - Is there a no-risk trail period

- How long is the contract commitment, renewal dates
- What would it take to disengage from the contract
- What happens to the account data if you decide to disengage? Will there be charge to get your data if it is not stored in-house? In what format and what time-line can you expect to receive your data?
- How is the old account receivables worked through?