

“Patients are waiting in the emergency room because their diagnosis is delayed.”

According Dr. ID, near patient testing enables early diagnosis and treatment, which can help the patient avoid a medical emergency.

“I see patients in the emergency room because they have a diagnosis that is delayed.” **This leads to “increased cost of care** because you did not know sooner” also creating increased hospitalization and ER visits...” and then we “wonder why we didn’t take care of it during their office visit.”

For elderly patients, access to on-site laboratory testing is beneficial because they have mobility and transportation challenges. Physicians reduce these challenges by providing testing in the practice.

The availability of on-site laboratory testing is also a matter of patient safety because physicians are able to find a potential problem while a patient is in the office and can address it directly.

Furthermore, when making treatment decisions, **laboratory test results at the time of the patient visit serve as evidence for making treatment decisions and lab results might completely change the treatment.**

One thing that stood out as important is Dr. ID’s emphasis on the point that laboratory test results lessen the chances of misdiagnosis.

According to Dr. ID, combining laboratory information with a physician evaluation of symptoms and a physical exam strengthens the accuracy of the diagnosis and improves outcomes.

As an example, Dr. ID described a case of an elderly patient who came to the clinic without any signs of anemia. Access to immediate, on-site CBC testing helped Dr. ID better understand what was happening with the patient.

Dr. ID made it clear that this practice’s clinical laboratory services have been impacted by reimbursement policies.

This has led the practice to significantly utilize reference laboratory services. Dr. ID believes there are now other costs that should be considered. For example, reduced and limited access to near patient testing, leads to delays in patient care, increased hospitalization, and visits to the emergency room by the clinic’s patients.

Dr. ID also shared that when sending tests out to reference labs “there is no payment for the time involved” in the testing process.

Dr. ID makes an important point. “I think Medicare took that position to save money but in the end, it may be more costly.”



We need to keep the big picture in mind.