

Using RVUs to Calculate Clinical Services Provider Productivity



Monitoring clinical services provider productivity can assist in measuring an agency's financial health. Additionally, in some agencies, productivity is a basis for clinician compensation or bonuses. Some practices opt to measure productivity by using total visit numbers (regardless of the type of visit) Other practices choose to use relative value units (RVUs) of service for Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes. The RVU methodology is more precise because CPT codes indicate the complexity of procedures in relation to other procedures. If using RVUs to calculate productivity, a Title X agency can use just the work component of the RVU or the total CPT RVU. For a better understanding of RVUs and other cost information, see the [Completing a Cost Analysis eLearning course](#).

To calculate clinical services provider productivity using RVUs for individual clinical services providers:

1. Collect data on the number of procedures each clinical services provider has performed by CPT code for a given period of time.
2. Multiply the number of procedures by the total RVUs (or work RVUs only) for each CPT code.
3. Total the products.
4. Divide the total by the full time equivalent (FTE) status of the clinical services provider for the given period of time.

Example:

- a. Clinical services provider A has a total of 4500 RVUs for the fiscal year being measured. He works 40 hours per week ($40/40=1$ FTE). His measure for the year is 4500 ($4500/1=4500$).
- b. Clinical services provider B has a total of 2600 RVUs for the fiscal year being measured. She works 20 hours per week ($20/40 = .5$ FTE). Her measure for the fiscal year is 5200 ($2600/.5=5200$)

Measures are meaningless if they are not compared to a goal or benchmark. Consider the following actions:

- Compare a clinical services provider's total with a benchmark for clinicians in the same specialty. This will indicate if a clinician's productivity is in line with industry peers. Benchmarking data are available for purchase from the Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) in its [Physician Compensation and Production Survey reports](#).
- If an agency has more than one clinical services provider, consider comparing the RVU productivity measures of all providers, and identify top performers.

[RVU values are available free](#) from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).