

THE EVERGREEN CONNECTION

WHAMA

WASHINGTON HEALTHCARE ACCESS MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

A Joint Publication of WHAMA and the Evergreen Chapter of AAHAM

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Summer 2007

Collecting on CPAT!

by Jae Hines, CPAT, Medicare Coordinator &
Heather Pashley, CPAT, Medicaid Patient Account Rep

Many staff at OHSU's Patient Business Services initially felt apprehensive about the CPAT program, often expressing their fears about taking a *test*. People were uncertain what the test would be like, and weren't quite sure how to prepare. There was so much information in the study guide, it felt overwhelming. Only a few volunteers were willing to step forward and begin the certification process, which was introduced as a requirement for most positions in the office. After a few guinea pigs had taken and passed the test, more focused study tools were developed and a study group began meeting weekly to ease the anxiety of future test takers. People felt more comfortable and supported learning with this collaborative approach.

Now that the vast majority of staff are CPAT certified, we've seen many benefits come to fruition. The most exciting reward is the differential that certified employees earn. This motivates staff and recognizes them for their demonstrated knowledge of our field. The certification requirement aids in recruitment by offering the



advancement opportunity of an employer-funded training course that will not only enhance their resume, but also their paychecks.

The CPAT designation is a morale booster in our office, building the confidence of our staff. People feel better equipped to perform their job duties, and have a broader perspective of their overall role in the big picture of the revenue cycle. Our cash collection has continued to improve, and twice we achieved new all-time record months. Likewise, other goals based on industry AR metrics are regularly exceeded. In an uncertain and changing world, people are reassured that their jobs are more secure and they have a skill set which is marketable anywhere in the healthcare business.



SPECIAL BULLETIN

Improvements Made to Provider Directory Capabilities

Searching for a provider in the TRICARE West Region just got easier for beneficiaries and providers alike. TriWest Healthcare Alliance Corp. has added the following new functionalities to the Provider Directory on www.triwest.com:

- Search by Specialty is now a main search function.
- There is a link to the “Find an MTF” search on the www.triwest.com main page.
- A Search by Island for Hawaii has been added.
- An optional search has been added to each main search section to search by “Practice Capabilities.”
- The Urgent Care Extended Hours Directory is now available on www.triwest.com.

“These changes were based on suggestions and recommendations from providers, beneficiaries, network subcontractors, military treatment facility staff and TriWest employees to improve the provider directory application,” said Carri Kelly, Director of Provider Data Management. “They also are intended to help users search more quickly through an extensive database of over 120,000 healthcare providers.”

This is the first major change to the provider directory since it was overhauled in February 2006. The changes became effective on July 2.

It is essential for providers to keep demographic information up-to-date so TriWest can provide accurate information to TRICARE beneficiaries and ensure that claims payments are sent to the correct address.

Please note that not all network providers are listed in the directory. Emergency room physicians, urgent care physicians and some other hospital-based providers may not be listed.

Network providers are urged to visit the online provider directory at www.triwest.com to examine their individual listing and determine if their information is accurate. If information is not current, please contact your local network representative or complete the online suggested changes form, which is located on the individual provider information page in the provider directory.

Non-network providers are only listed in the TRICARE Standard Directory. Non-network providers with changes should contact WPS directly by e-mail to westreg@wpsic.com or call 1-608-301-3248.

The new Provider Directory home page allows users easy access to information.



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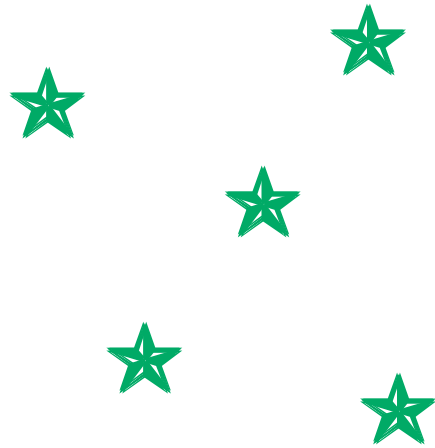


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President's Message

by Gary Smith, CPAM

As I write this column, the summer of 2007 is just about complete. Although busy, it has been a great season in Pacific Northwest. This year our family embarked on a couple local adventures, rather than flying back to the East Coast, to visit family. Our first trip was to Victoria, BC. Then we spent a week in Seaside, OR. Seaside seemed to be preferred by both of my kids. Although, they had fun playing on the beach, flying kites, and swimming in the pool, the packaging line at the Tillamook Cheese Factory kept them fascinated. The only way to get them off the viewing platform was to let them know, we were about to order ice cream.




The elections for the 2008-2009 board are complete and the results were announced at the September Quarterly Conference. I hope you took the time complete and return your ballot. The Evergreen Chapter will have another great board. The incoming and outgoing boards will meet at a strategic planning session in October.

The purpose of the meeting is two fold;

1. For the current board members to share their knowledge of each role, with the position-elect and provide the training, hints and expectations, which


will make them successful during the 2008-2009 term.

2. Plan the activities, functions and goals for 2008.

There is a lot of planning and work which goes into continuing to keep the Evergreen Chapter as successful as it has been. I have been blessed to have a great team, in which all contribute to the mission of our chapter. As I prepare the agenda for the strategic planning retreat, I would like to incorporate your ideas, into the discussions. Please feel free to contact me with your suggestions for functions, topics, activities, etc that you would like the AAHAM Evergreen Chapter to tackle in 2008.
gary.smith@providence.org 

Inside this Issue:

- President's Message from Gary Smith
- CPAT/CPAM Certification Awarded
- Corporate Sponsors Make a Difference
- Meet Your Board Members: Interview with Steve Kasal
- Thank you to our Corporate Sponsors



Congratulations to all the following who were awarded their Certification from National for the May exam:

All CPAT's passing the May exam were recognized during the July 12th Joint Quarterly meeting at Evergreen Hospital and Regional Medical Center in Kirkland, Wa.

CPATs



Central Peninsula Hospital in Soldotna Alaska

Connie Nelson

Harrison Medical Center in Bremerton, Wa.

Pamela Higgenbottom

Marilou Tucker

HealthServices Northwest

Claudia Sherman

John McAlonan

Traci Johnson

Cathleen Smith

Debbie Young

Victoria Croghan

Mary Hayes

Suzanne Livingstone

Highline Medical Center

Allison Folkerts

Oregon Health Sciences University

Alicia Ogden

Shelly Vroman

John Payne

Rene Villaraldo

The next CPAT/CCAT/CCT exam will be given September 29, 2007



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We thank the following companies and organizations for their continued support of the Evergreen Chapter.

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MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

by Darlene Wood, CPAM

Steve Kasal, Education Committee Member

Following is my interview with Steve:

Darlene: *What was your first job in Healthcare? What Healthcare jobs did you hold after that and up until your current position?*

Steve: I started out as a Medicare auditor. After I realized that auditors always end up in the hospital boiler room I decided that the business office is always in the basement and that is step up from the boiler room, but not much. So I became a director at a large county facility in California and then when my wife said I want to live somewhere green I said how about Seattle.

Darlene: *What is your current title, where do you work and what are your areas of responsibility? How long have you been in this position and who do you report to?*

Steve: I have been Director of the Central Business office for Franciscan Health Systems for 10 years and I report to our CFO

Darlene: *When did you first join AAHAM?*

Steve: I joined AAHAM many years ago in California but only recently became involved in Washington. I have been on the education committee for 4 years.

Darlene: *What is your biggest challenge in your current position?*

Steve: Keeping technology solutions on the cutting edge.

Darlene: *What are your hobbies outside of work?*

Steve: I love to golf, ski and love to fish. I have a lovely wife Mary who is in the healthcare IT area. And 3 great children.

Please email your responses back to dwood@pacificmedicaid.com. If you have any questions, please call me at 206-992-2973.

Thanks,

Darlene Wood, CPAM



Thanks to our Corporate Sponsors

Corporate Sponsorships help us provide high quality, low cost educational programs and networking opportunities for AAHAM members. We thank the following companies and organizations for their continued support of the Evergreen Chapter.

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Oct. 26, 2007

Valley Medical Center
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newsletter for the

WASHINGTON HEALTHCARE ACCESS MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION



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UPCOMING

Evergreen AAHAM Meetings & Events

September 26-28, 2007 National AAHAM ANI, Ft Lauderdale, FL

September 29, 2007 CPAM / CCAM Certification Exams



October 15 – 19 National Patient Account Management Week

October 26, 2007 Fall Target Workshop, Valley Medical Center, Renton, WA

 *Winner of the 2006 AAHAM National Journal Award*

The Evergreen Connection & WHAMA Newsletter

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Time / Dated Material