

CT SCANNER

Connecticut Chapter — Healthcare Financial Management Association
October 2007



National Survey

By Steve Vargo

Every year HFMA National conducts its Chapter Performance Survey. If you have not yet received your 2007-2008 survey, keep an eye out for it.

The survey is intended to give National a barometer of how chapter members think their leaders are meeting their needs. It is also a vehicle that National uses to determine if a chapter should receive any awards for its achievements in a given year.

Many people ignore this survey and do not realize the important role it plays in helping the leadership of the chapter provide more and better services to the members. Don't ignore the survey when you receive it – Complete It! If you have already received it, dig it out from that pile you put it in and respond!

A few clarifications to help you complete the survey:

- We as the Leadership strive for all Extremely Satisfied Ratings — so don't feel too many Extremely Satisfied's are a bad thing.
- Are you confused over how to answer the questions about the Chapter meeting your needs? If you have asked the Officers or Directors to do something special or different and
 - They did it – it's Extremely Satisfied
 - If they responded they could not do it and explained why – it's Very Satisfied
 - If they ignored you – it's Not Satisfied (hopefully there are none of these)
- Did you have an idea and never bothered to tell Leadership? You would still need to rate Extremely Satisfied because we can't fix what we don't know is a problem. But make sure you contact one of us ASAP about that issue!

Keep in mind our main purpose is to provide you with the tools and assistance you need to perform your job more effectively. As you complete the survey, remember the enhancements we have made:

- Provided new and different educational sessions

Continued on page 2

President's Corner

By Lou D'Auria

I hope this message finds you well rested from your summer vacations, cookouts, outdoor activities and all the other fun filled adventures of summer.

As for your CT HFMA Chapter leadership, we too have had a great summer and, in addition to fun, we have been busy insuring that our CT Chapter is positioned to continue to serve our members by continuing to bring them outstanding, pertinent and timely educational programs as well as fun filled, meaningful networking experiences.

To that end, much has happened in the past few months. I accompanied our Chapter leadership team to both the Leadership Training (LTC) and the American National Institute (ANI) Conferences held in San Diego, California. At these conferences we were able to network with other Chapter leaders throughout the nation as well as acquire timely and excellent educational training. In addition, outstanding national speakers, one of whom was retired General Colin Powell, graced us with insightful messages.

The high point of my HFMA experience this summer happened in June at the ANI conference when, while attending the Chapter President's dinner, I was summoned to the stage by the President of HFMA National, Richard Clark, to accept The Hottum Award which is given to a Chapter for "educational performance improvement." Needless to say, I was honored by this achievement and I accepted this award on behalf of our excellent and highly dedicated Education Committee, led by Gary Bergenty and Barbara Durdy as well as on behalf of our Board and our membership. In addition, our Region was given a Yerger Award for "outstanding performance and improvement" related

Continued on page 5



Web Site Information

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The Hottum Award

By Gary Bergenty

It's important to note that this award does not represent pictures of Mike Rosadini and Lou D'Auria on the beach at Misquamicut when they both turned 21.

The C. Henry Hottum Award is one of the major national awards that individual chapters can earn. It is presented by National HFMA to a local Chapter for "Educational Performance Improvement". It recognizes the Chapter for achieving a significant increase in educational performance from one year to the next. The award is based on exceptional growth in registrant hours over the last year. It also requires a lot of hard work by a lot of dedicated members of the Program Committee and Board of Directors as well as volunteers who help plan and coordinate our educational programs. Your individual participation is equally important.

This year in June at the 2007 Chapter Presidents Dinner and Meeting at HFMA's National Institute in San Diego, CA, our President Lou D'Auria was totally caught by surprise when he was called to the stage in front of the entire national assembly. Unbeknownst to him, our CT Chapter was presented with the



Lou D'Auria accepting the 2007 Hottum Award at ANI along with Joe Pifer and Mary Beth Brisco.

C. Henry Hottum Award. Lou proudly accepted the award on behalf of each and every member of the CT Chapter. We all share in this important accomplishment.

Needless to say, it will be a challenge for the CT Chapter to duplicate last year's effort. However, we are off to a strong start with our Annual Program this past June 8 with Michael Hoffman as our guest presenter and the September 19 Revenue Cycle Program with Steven Berger, FHFMA, CPA who is endorsed by National HFMA. Please also mark your calendars for December 4 which is the Annual Medicare Update to be presented at CHA by National Government Services.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the super group of people who served on the Program Committee this past year. They were Barbara Durdy from St. Raphael's who is our Co-Chair, Melinda Agsten, Partner at Wiggin & Dana, Eric Wetherell, Manager from PricewaterhouseCoopers, Bruce Messenger, VP for Mellon Financial Services and Chuck Rondidone, VP, Imagesoft, Inc. The great news is that they are all back with us this year. Each one brings their own special talents to providing our Chapter and its members with quality educational programs. Please shake their hands and give them a pat on the back when you see them.

National Survey

Continued from page 1

- Enhanced the newsletter to provide more technical and social news
- Made available additional networking opportunities
- Participated with the other Region 1 Chapters to create a more encompassing regional education session with nationally recognized speakers

If you have any ideas, our names are in each issue of the Newsletter. Our contact info is on the Chapter Web site at <http://www.cthfma.org> under Chapter Information. We would love to hear from you.

Remember, our goal is that all of you are Extremely Satisfied—and only through your efforts and recognition can we achieve it.



Connecticut Chapter — Healthcare Financial Management Association

CT HFMA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Lou D'Auria, *President*
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Kathy Pajor is also the 2007-2008 Regional Executive

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Review of the One Day Seminar: Superior Hospital Revenue Cycle Management

By Janet F. Roemer FHFMA

The Connecticut Chapter of HFMA, in collaboration with the Connecticut Hospital Association, presented a conference on the Revenue Cycle, September 19, 2007. The seminar was titled "Superior Hospital Revenue Cycle Management: Hot Issues and Cold Calculations." The meeting was held at CHA headquarters in Wallingford, Connecticut. Thirty three hospital professionals attended, representing 17 different Connecticut hospitals. There was a very diverse group in attendance, which enhanced the interaction with the speaker.

Steve Berger FHFMA, presented the seminar. Steve has over 30 years of healthcare experience. He began his healthcare career in Brooklyn, New York, but now resides outside Chicago. He is President of Healthcare Insights, LLC, a firm specializing in training healthcare professionals. He has presented for HFMA at their national conference, the ANI. Steve has written healthcare management books and numerous articles.

Steve presented the Revenue Cycle in three parts. He spent most of the morning presenting a comprehensive Overview of the Revenue Cycle. He next addressed Revenue Cycle Metrics. In the final part of his presentation, Steve presented tools and techniques to improve the Revenue Cycle.

Steve used a very interesting approach. His entire seminar actually revolved around a chart on the workflow of the revenue cycle. His workflow model began well before the patient arrived for services at the facility. He told us how important "pre-patient" contact is to establish a relationship before coming to the facility. Each facility should have an action plan with clearly defined objectives. Policy and procedures should be understood by staff so that the process will be smooth and meaningful for both the patient and the facility performing the service. Steve went on to tell us how important the Patient Registration department is to a healthcare facility. The registration process is the



Steve Berger along with Gary Bergenty and Susan Distasio

beginning of the patient contact phase of the revenue cycle. He told us that the registration clerk is one of the lowest paid positions in the hospital, but has a very important role in the Revenue Cycle. In fact, Steve believes registration clerks should be paid at the same level as billing personnel. All the information the billing department needs is gathered through registration. His view was quite controversial with some of the billing people in the audience. A very lively debate ensued with some audience members.

Next, the patient receives their services. The clinical areas are responsible for capturing the charges for the services and supplies used. After the patient is discharged several departments are responsible for accurate bills. Hopefully every facility has a great Charge Master and Coding department so that every charge is captured and the correct diagnosis is placed on the bill. Once all information is captured, (hopefully complete and correct) the bill goes through the billing cycle. If the bill is "clean," there is no problem but if the bill does not make it through the "scrubber," the billing personnel must follow-up and make corrections. As you can see through this model, many departments have already been intricately involved in the Revenue Cycle.

Steve emphasized that there is really only one result that Management wants



from the Revenue Cycle: CASH, CASH, and CASH! A healthcare facility can't run without it.

Throughout this entire process, Steve stressed that there must be Excellent Customer Service.

In the next part of the presentation Steve taught us the importance of Performance Metrics. How do we know we are doing a great job? Each organization should develop performance metrics to measure the results of organizational policies, practices and procedures. Steve emphasized that metrics represent key drivers and critical success factors to each organization. Each organization needs to monitor the results of performance metrics to determine the quality of its operation. Steve gave us examples of metrics that can be used for several departments. Measurements are different depending upon the task. Each facility can set goals that they aspire to achieve. They can compare their facility results against benchmarks of their peers.

In bringing the Revenue Cycle to its conclusion, we learned the importance of Denials Management to the organization. Steve defines a denial as a communica-

Continued on page 4

Save The Date

"Medicare Update"

Date: Tuesday
December 4, 2007

Time: 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Location: CHA

Join with your colleagues and listen to what CMS has planned for the coming year. Representatives from National Government Services (formerly Empire Medicare Services) will discuss items such as Cost Report Changes, Medicare PPS updates, NPI's and Provider Enrollment issues.

Please join us!

Mark Your Calendars!

HFMA Region 1
Seventh Annual
Healthcare Conference

Thursday, April 24 - Friday, April 25, 2008

Mohegan Sun Casino
Uncasville, Connecticut

The Connecticut Chapter Golf Tournament
will precede the conference on
Wednesday April 23, 2008.

Stay Tuned for More Details



Review of the One Day Seminar: Superior Hospital Revenue Cycle Management

Continued from page 3

tion. The denial "tells" us something about the claim. In order to get resolution, the denials management personnel must understand what the denial is REALLY saying. We were given examples of possible different denials from various payors. Denials can be a result of any of the departments in the revenue cycle that we have addressed up to the denials management department. We learned that a denial might also be the result of a poor revenue cycle process.

One of the most important tools we have available to reduce denials is the use of Internal Audits. Steve stressed the importance of continuously and completely auditing claims. There should be a sampling made of both inpatient and outpatient claims, a review of the percentage of clean claims and review of the reasons for denials. One of several departments could conduct these audits. Through Steve's years of experience, he has found that there are 15 common denials for all facilities.

We concluded this excellent program with a review of Revenue Cycle Improvement Opportunities. In Steve's opinion, the most important tool that no facility should be without is a great Contract Management System. He also told us that staff needs to be current with technology solutions. Steve taught us that to be successful each facility should use electronic insurance verification software, denial management databases, and performance monitoring tools.

You know a presenter has done a great job when a long day seems short. Another indicator of a successful seminar is leaving with real ideas and tools that you can use in your own job. We were also given Steve's e-mail address so that we could contact him if we had any additional questions. This was a great seminar that many healthcare professionals could have benefited from. I know I did.

CT HFMA

New and Transferred Members

We extend a sincere welcome to the following individuals who have chosen to join the Connecticut Chapter of HFMA.

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Founders Points

By Steve Vargo

All of the Founders Points earned through the end of the last chapter year have been posted to each member's account. They reflect your volunteerism to HFMA at the Chapter, Regional and National level. The accuracy of these points will determine when you will be eligible for the various achievement awards HFMA confers upon its members. It is your responsibility to review the points recorded and, if there is any issue, contact the Founders Points representative for the Chapter.

In order to assure that you have been credited with all of the Founders Points you earned you must sign in to the HFMA Web site and go to Your Account Home page. Chapter members can view their Founders Points and activity on the HFMA National Web site under activities in their personal profiles in the membership directory area at: http://www.hfma.org/access_eseries.cfm.

Any discrepancy between the information on the Web site and your records should be reported immediately. It is ultimately the responsibility of the individual member to report points earned to the Chapter's Founders Award Chairperson, who serves as a liaison to HFMA National.

I am the Founders Points contact for CT HFMA. I can be reached at (203) 679-5359 or by email at svargo@masonicare.org.

President's Corner

Continued from page 1

to our highly successful Region One conference held in May at The Mohegan Sun Resort. Congratulations to all involved in this highly successful venture.

As you know, our chapter is dedicated to the education of our members as well as affording them the opportunity to network. I am proud and confident that we have been, and will continue to be, successful in achieving these goals in the future. Be assured that the education, networking and fun filled experiences we are preparing for our members will satisfy their needs and bring benefit to their membership in HFMA. Please keep a watchful eye opened for the announcement of these future endeavors.

The Connecticut Healthcare Financial Management Association proudly thanks the sponsors below for their contributions to our Chapter

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