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2. Click on the Member Profile" button
3. Complete each profile section online

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PEPP Studies Re-admissions

by William French, RHIA

MetaStar's Payment Error Prevention Program (PEPP) has implemented a new project that addresses both quality and utilization issues. The intent of this project is to assist Medicare providers in establishing processes that prevent unnecessary re-admissions. Avoidable patient re-admissions are an inappropriate cost to Medicare and may place the patient at risk for increased safety and quality issues.

The project identifies patient re-admissions within 31 days, with a focus on re-admissions within 3 days post discharge to home. Unnecessary re-admissions are the result of multiple issues, including:

- ◆ Incomplete care or premature discharge during the first admission.
- ◆ Abnormal findings which were not addressed.
- ◆ Medically unnecessary inpatient hospital re-admissions for services that could have been provided in a less acute setting.
- ◆ Delayed initiation of and inadequate discharge planning.
- ◆ Separate billing of additional services that

"The project identifies patient re-admissions within 31 days, with a focus on re-admissions within 3 days post discharge to home"

should have been provided and billed as part of one continuous length of stay.

- ◆ Insufficient documentation to support necessity for re-admission.

Medicare providers can address these issues through the following activities:

- Concurrently identify short-term re-admissions through internal review programs designed to provide a rapid cycle correction of the root cause of the unnecessary re-admission.
- Continuous examination of short-term re-admissions to identify need for improvement of recurring issues.

Health Information Management (HIM) professionals have a central role in providing appropriate information to multiple care providers on a timely basis. All of these tasks are essential to prevention of unnecessary re-admissions. Of particular importance is HIM collaboration with medical staff, ancillary departments, quality, utilization, billing, information management and patient accounts.

The MetaStar PEPP staff can assist hospitals in reduction of unnecessary re-admissions by:

- Analysis and comparison of individual hospital data to that of Wisconsin.
- Sharing of lessons learned and best practices that have successfully reduced the incidence of unnecessary re-admissions. ◆

William French is Vice President, Payment Error Prevention Program, MetaStar, Madison, WI

About WHIMA

The Wisconsin Health Information Management Association [WHIMA] is a component state association of the American Health Information Management Association [AHIMA]. WHIMA is the leadership organization and premier resource for the management of health records in Wisconsin. WHIMA has 5 regional associations and more than 1200 members working in hospitals, physician practice groups, nursing homes, vendor organizations, consulting firms, and government agencies.

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From the Editor

As another WHIMA year begins, one can't help but wonder what this year will bring. The WHIMA Link recognizes this and strives to keep abreast of these changes to provide you with the most current information available. Within the last year we've provided access to the Link on our web site as well as a "paper" version.

This year the Link Team will investigate the option of providing a "paperless" Link. The publication will still be available on our web site. This change would be a major cost saving for WHIMA. Currently, the Ohio and Florida State associations provide their newsletter on the web only. As we look into this idea, I encourage you to provide us with your feedback. What are your thoughts on going to a "paperless" Link?



Bill French of PEPP (Payment Error Protection Program) has provided the feature article for this issue. Thank you Bill for writing an article for us. This issue also contains a new column titled "WHIMA at Work For You". Lisa Wobbema has written this column which will be a regular feature in the Link.

The Link Team welcomes new members and is always looking for new additions to our team. Are any of you interested in becoming a Link Team member? I am also looking for a potential Team Leader to mentor throughout this year. If you have any questions about our team as well as the duties we perform, feel free to contact me. I'll be happy to answer your questions. You can call me at 920-755-2716 or e-mail me at brenz4@juno.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

The next issue will arrive in your mailboxes in November of this year. The deadline for article submission is October 10, 2001. Don't forget to send in your coding questions. Lois Kelly and her staff at Dictaphone Healthcare Solutions answer one question per issue.

Have a great summer!

Brenda L. Koeppel, RHIT, CCS
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Visit our web site at www.whima.org

President's Message

By Chrisann Lemery, RHIA

It is the beginning of a new WHIMA year and your association has lots to accomplish!

As President, two of my responsibilities are informing the membership of activities and enlisting participation. I believe a good place to begin is to explain the 2001-2002 strategic plan and through that I hope to encourage your participation this year.

T The teamwork of those in attendance at our strategic planning session in February and the Board have identified five initiatives to promote quality health care information, which is WHIMA's mission. Those categories identified are Education and Professional Growth; Member Services, Building the Association and Profession; Legislative Policy, and Marketing the Association. We welcome the tenacity of the returning Board members Marilyn Toninato, Mike Kawczynski, Mary Obernberger, Cathy Hansen, and Nancy Davis and the talents of new members Lynn Olson, Bill French, and Nicki Geiser. The Board, team leaders, and team members create the teamwork necessary to accomplish our initiatives.

I Our success requires involvement on teams. The initiative and imagination of a team's involvement accomplishes our goals. The Policy and Legislative Action team, under the direction of Kathy Lindstrom, will influence legislation through contacting our representatives. WHIMA influences administrative codes by Cindy Chicker's representation on the OHI Board and Theresa Eckman's coordination of our involvement in HFS 124 rewrite. Under the guidance of Elaine Krause and Karen Holzwarth, another team influencing is the Payer's Guide Team, which will continue to accomplish changes with third party payers on coding issues. The ideas generated from the individuals involved on these teams are great examples of what we can influence, improve, and implement.

M You and I, as **Members**, make this association. **Members' minds** are the **means** to achieve WHIMA's goals. The mind is the world's most powerful tool and WHIMA benefits by all of us using our minds. Building the Association and Profession will continue to be accomplished by members using their knowledge to answer Professional Practice questions with Sheila Zweifel continuing as team leader. Sue Griswold's Spirit Team will use their creativity in their activities. The Nominating Committee, under Peg Schmidt's direction, will decide candidates to recruit for the Association's ballot. Lisa Wobbema will lead the WHIMA Promotion and Recruitment, which will be responsible for welcoming new members and keeping you informed through the "WHIMA at Work for You" column in *The Link*. Bill French will use his knowledge to lead the Board in determining how to market the association.

Services and resources are provided to you, the member. Sandy Bissen and Joan Campbell are the means of the web site and central office success. The successes of the publications of WHIMA rely on the sharing of members' knowledge. Brenda



Koeppel's team has already published this issue of *The Link* and will produce three more this association year. Linda Pristelski will direct the *HIM Practice Policy Manual* update. The Legal Resource Manual team with Julie Callies leading will use their wisdom to produce this year's update. Since we are Wisconsin's release of information experts we will include in the Legal Resource Manual a HIPAA crosswalk comparing the State regulations with the Federal Regulations. A HIPAA Task Force led by Sharon Gale will write this document with plans to have it available next spring. A resource for our student members is Scholarships, which will be headed by Mike Kawczynski. **Members** participating **motivate** each other and the **momentum** of the organization continues.

E You are the **experts**. Knowledge is power. Each of you possesses knowledge **essential** to being the leaders of health information. As members, the **expectation** of WHIMA providing **education** that enhances our skills and **excellence** in health information exists.

The **efforts** of the Annual Conference, led by Rachelle Buol and Heather Schardt, will assist us in enhancing our skills. The 2001 Fall Conference team, headed by Mary Bolle, has put together an **exciting** program. The 2002 Fall Conference team guided by Lori Cherrier and Gina Ransom will develop a program to **expand** our knowledge. Workshops this year will cover Release of Information, Transcription, and Coding. The **expertise** of Sally Luehring, Debra Ascher, and Ann Mach will be put to use to coordinate a workshop. It's your **enthusiasm** in attending the educational programs that is essential in accomplishing the Education and Professional Growth initiative.

When we share our **experiences** and **expertise**, we **empower** each other which produces the **energy** needed to **effectively** accomplish the strategic plan!

T-I-M-E ---Teamwork Involving Members' Expertise or WHIMA's valued resource that of TIME.

The year has just begun and there is much to be accomplished. I ask you to be participants **not spectators**. Participating is fun and rewarding both professionally and personally.

The success of WHIMA relies on TIME—teamwork involving members' expertise. Your TIME is the resource to move the association forward and promote quality health care information. Many team leaders are still building their teams. Contact a Team Leader, a Board Member, or myself with your interests.

As your President, I have made the commitment to give WHIMA my time. A "portion" of your time is needed now to accomplish the initiatives. In closing, as someone once said, "You must never *find* time for anything. If you *want* time, you must *make* it."

I'm looking forward to working with you during this year. ♦

Recharging and Restructuring WHIMA!

by Peg Schmidt, RHIA

Web Connection

To locate more information about WHIMA activities Go to www.whima.org

On May 4, 2001 the members present at the WHIMA Annual Business meeting voted to approve a bylaws change to restructure the elected positions on the Board of Directors. The change, which will go into effect with the 2002 elections, will eliminate the Vice President and Treasurer positions and replace them with two more Directors. The Board of Directors will then consist of a President, President Elect, Past President, and six Directors, each serving a two year term.



been diminishing. There was felt to be no need to make the budget duties the sole responsibility of a Treasurer position. By changing this position to a Director, we can add team liaison duties as well.

- Under the old structure, the Vice President and Treasurer were not considered delegates. By making these positions Directors, we will allow more Board members the opportunity to participate as delegates. This will enhance our recruitment efforts.

This change will not alter the total number of Board positions, nor will it change the number of delegates that attend the convention. AHIMA approved the change, describing it as a progressive and positive governance model. The rationale for proposing the redesign included these reasons:

- Increased continuity by having three Directors return each year to the Board. Previously, only two Directors returned each year.
- Under the old structure, there had been no clear role or duties for the Vice President position that were any different from the role and duties of a Director. The change makes the elected positions consistent with how the Board had been practicing.
- Under the old structure, the duties of the Treasurer had

Again, this change will be transitioned with the 2002 ballot. In order to accomplish the shift from two to three Directors, one elected Director in 2002 will need to commit to serving a three-year term instead of the usual two-year term. This is a one-time only situation. The incentive to the Director who commits to a three-year term is that he/she will be able to participate as a delegate twice during the three years.

The WHIMA Board of Directors is confident that this redesign will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of their work. ♦

In Memoriam: Karen Kohler



Karen Kohler, RHIT passed away on June 18, 2001. A past president of WHIMA, Kohler was an active volunteer in WHIMA serving as Vice President, Program Team Leader and a

Delegate to the AHIMA House of Delegates.

At the time of her death, she was employed by BayCare Health Systems in Green Bay. For several years, she worked at St. Marys Hospital in Green Bay.

In recognition of Kohler's service to WHIMA as President, the Board of Directors established a Past President's scholarship in her memory. The Board made an initial donation to the scholarship of \$500.

Applicants for the scholarship must be an active member of WHIMA, a student in an accredited graduate program in health care information, business administration, computer science and information systems, health care administration, or quality improvement.

Donations to the scholarship in Kohler's memory can be mailed to WHIMA, Past President's Scholarship.

Announcement of the scholarship award dollars and award winner will be made at the 2002 Annual Conference.

For a scholarship application or to make a donation, call the WHIMA office at 608-787-0168. ♦

Coding Corner

Q:

What changes have been made concerning reimbursement for preoperative exams?

A:

Effective June 30, 2001, the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) has directed Medicare carriers to remove processing edits that deny preoperative services claims (ICD-9-CM codes V72.81-V72.84). Non-global surgery preoperative evaluation and management (E/M) services and diagnostic test will become payable if they meet national or carrier medical necessity coverage

requirements. The Medicare Carrier Manual Transmittal 1701 reviews the importance of ICD-9-CM coding requirements for preoperative services. Assignment of a code from category V72.81 through V72.84 is to be sequenced first. ICD-9-CM codes describing the reason for surgery as well as other diagnoses and conditions affecting the patient is to be submitted on the claims as well. For more information on Preoperative Services Paid Under the Physician Fee Schedule

visit: http://www.hcfa.gov/pubforms/transmit/transmittals/comm_date_dsc.htm ♦

Editor's Note: If you have a coding question, E-mail your question to Sandy Bissen at sbissen@execpc.com or fax to (608) 787-0169. Lois Kelley and her staff at Dictaphone Healthcare Solutions will assist in answering one coding question in each Link.



2001 Fall Conference

"New Challenges--New Destinations"

September 13 and 14 2001

By Mary Bolle, RHIA

If you are headed for "New Challenges and New Destinations" the WHIMA Fall Conference will be your ticket. WHIMA will be hosting the Fall Conference at the Country Inn in Waukesha, WI on September 13 and 14, 2001.

Jean M. Jirovec, MS, MFT will kick off the conference with a keynote address on "Surviving the Twenty-first Century". Thursday's schedule will offer participants an opportunity to attend a daylong coding workshop presented by Dawn Seeley, RHIA, from MedLearn. The coding workshop will feature information and exercises related to evaluation and management and preventative medicine coding, provider education, and auditing. Other topics featured on Thursday include: APC's, Introduction to Creating Your Personal/Corporate Web Site, Creating

Awareness: Collaborative Efforts with Payers and Government Agencies, and HIM Hot Topics.

Friday's session offers two tracks of travel to reach your HIPAA destination. Track one will focus on privacy and security. J. Brian Patsy, President, CEO, and founder of LanVision will present the "EMR as a Web Service: Taking Small Steps to Achieve Maximum Impact on the Way to HIPAA Compliance". Jim Embke, Director of Special Services at Luther Midelfort will address issues relating to transaction and data security.

Track two will feature HIPAA Basics with Beth Malchetske, and a HIPAA: Cross-walk to Legal Resource Manual presented by Sharon Gale from St. Joseph's Hospital. Deborah Neville, RHIA, Mayo Clinic, will present information on HIPAA transac-

tion code sets.

John M. Zorbini, Vice-President from Community Health Care Services will complete your journey. Mr. Zorbini's message will provide humor and help you manage your stress by addressing "Everything Your Mother Told You and You Didn't Believe".

For more information, visit WHIMA on the Web at www.whima.org, click on the Conferences button and follow the simple instructions to view the program and obtain a registration form.

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Wanted! Volunteers!



If you would like to be on a WHIMA Team or want to volunteer to help WHIMA, just call Chrisann Lemery at 608-757-5172 or send an e-mail to chrisann@co.rock.wi.us

**Check out the
WHIMA web site
for information
on House of
Delegate issues!**

FOR YOUR BENEFIT

WHIMA at Work For You
By Lisa Wobbema, RHIT



DID YOU KNOW..... There are 26 volunteer team leaders to lead their individual teams for 2001-2002?

DID YOU KNOW..... That these new team leaders attended the WHIMA board meeting followed by orientation on June 22, 2001?

DID YOU KNOW..... That each team interacts with each other in many ways, therefore requiring much TLC (teamwork, leadership and cooperation)?

DID YOU KNOW..... That in upcoming issues of the *Health Information Link* you will get an update of one teams activities?

DID YOU KNOW..... That each of you has individual skills that would help WHIMA become a much more exciting and knowledgeable organization?

Please consider using your skills to bring additional TLC to WHIMA.

Professional Practice Policy Manual Team

WHIMA has a Professional Practice Manual that currently has five (5) different specific chapters outlining health record practices. This manual is a resource for developing standardized processes and procedures for key practice areas in the Health Information Management Department. Three additional policies will be developed over the next year and are:

- Electronic Signatures
- E-mail Use in Patient Care
- Medical Record Destruction

Please do not hesitate to contact any of the members on this team with ideas for future policies/procedures. This team will be working closely with the Professional Practice Team to determine areas for potential development of additional key practice areas needing standardized policies and procedures.

If you have a current policy that works for you on any of the outlined policies to be developed this year and are willing to share that information, please contact any of the team members.

Linda Pristelski, RHIT (Team Leader)
Nancy Davis, RHIA
Sheila Zweifel, RHIT

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Please send or fax resume to:
Lois Kelley, RHIA, Coding Manager
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Madison, WI 53719
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HIM Marketplace

To advertise your job opening in the next issue of the Health Information Link, call 608-787-0168.

Calendar of Events

September

September 13 & 14, 2001

Fall Conference

“New Challenges—New Destinations”

Country Inn Hotel

Waukesha, WI

For more information, call Joan Campbell at 608-787-0168

September 12, 2001

Board of Directors Meeting

Country Inn Hotel

Waukesha, WI

For more information, call Chrisann Lemery at 608-757-5172

October

October 13—18, 2001

AHIMA 73rd National Convention and Exhibit

“Return on Information”

Miami Beach Convention Center

Miami Beach, FL

For more information, contact AHIMA at 312/233-1100.



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