



HPCAIA Update

Bi-weekly News for Hospice Professionals in Iowa

July 31, 2009

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Please note: There will be no *HPCAIA Update* on August 14. The next issue will be August 28. The deadline for articles for that issue will be Noon on Thursday, August 27. Thank you!

Cuts in FY2010 Hospice Wage Index Undergo Change – Hospice Wins One Battle

The Final FY2010 Wage Index Rule, posted July 30, diminish the impact of the cuts associated with the elimination of the budget neutrality adjustment factor (BNAF). Now the elimination of the BNAF will be stretched over seven years rather than two.

The hospice community has been fighting a regulation originally proposed in the FY2009 Wage Index issued by the previous Administration that would reduce hospice reimbursement by eliminating the BNAF. The seven-year phase out of the BNAF allows the hospice community more time to assimilate the rate reductions. No more important than now as hospices are already dealing with financial challenges brought on by the economic crisis.

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) reports it will continue to work with Congress in an attempt to eliminate the cuts completely and look for further relief on the proposed "productivity factor" cuts to help finance health care reform.

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CMS Region VII offers RAC Info Via Conference Call

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' Region VII invites all providers to participate in their upcoming *Provider and Partner Call* on August 6, 2009 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm Central Time. The

topic will be the Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) Program.

Section 302 of the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006 makes the RAC Program permanent and requires the Secretary to expand the program to all 50 states by no later than 2010. The national RAC program is the outgrowth of a successful demonstration program that used RACs to identify Medicare overpayments and underpayments to health care providers and suppliers in a number of pilot states. The demonstration resulted in more than \$900 million in overpayments being returned to the Medicare Trust Fund between 2005 and 2008, and nearly \$38 million in underpayments returned to health care providers. Expansion of the RAC program to Region D, that includes Iowa, is scheduled for August 1, 2009.

During the call a CMS subject matter expert will provide an in-depth presentation on the subject and will be available to answer questions. Space for this call is limited. If you would like to participate on this call, please register by sending an email to Kansas_City_CMS@cms.hhs.gov containing the following information: name, organization, state, contact information, and the estimated number of people who will be on your line.

The toll-free call-in number and presentation materials will be sent shortly before the call. In the meantime, if you have questions or need additional information, please contact Jacqui Stanard, at 816-426-6405.

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CMS and HDI Representatives Will Present Program on Preparing for Audits

Representatives of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and HealthDataInsights, Inc. will conduct a RAC briefing for Iowa hospice, hospital and health system representatives on August 25. This briefing is intended to provide information on the organization and implementation of the RAC effort. In addition to the CMS's introduction, there will be a time dedicated for questions and answers.

The briefing will be offered in two repeat sessions. Please note, the morning session is filled, but approximately 50 seats remain for the afternoon session from 1:30 to 4:30 pm. Both sessions will be held at the Thompson Auditorium at Iowa Methodist Medical Center in Des Moines.

A detailed brochure is attached. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

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HPCAI Nominating Committee Seeking Recommendations

The HPCAI Nominating Committee is seeking potential candidates to serve on the HPCAI Board. There will be two board vacancies to fill.

The Nominating Committee is chaired by immediate past Board President Joel Fry. Also serving on the committee are current Board President Chris Oleson as well as Marvin Fagerlind, Executive Director of Cedar Valley Hospice in Waterloo; Leanne Burrack, Director, Hospice of Mercy - Cedar Rapids and Linda Todd, Director, Hospice of Siouxland in Sioux City.

HPCAI members are encouraged to suggest individuals for consideration by the Nominating Committee. Anyone wishing to make a recommendation is encouraged to forward the suggestion to any of the Nominating Committee members. While the Nominating Committee will consider all suggestions, the Committee must give consideration for representation from districts, representation of hospices by size and by ownership, as well as skill sets and experience.

Prior to nominating a candidate, please be sure the nominee is willing to serve and can fulfill the expected commitment if elected. Please share with them the documents attached to this week's *HPCAI Update* including the *Board Member Role and Responsibilities* and a *2010 Board Nomination* form. Candidates are required to complete a *Nomination Form* and return it by the deadline.

- Sept. 1 Nomination Forms due to HPCAI office
- Oct. 1 Slate of candidates and officers mailed to HPCAI Member Hospices
- Oct. 28 Election at HPCAI Annual Business Meeting

The newly elected Board members will begin their term January 1, 2010. If you have questions, please contact any of the Nominating Committee members.

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DIA Begins Posting Statements of Deficiencies

As of July 1, 2009, the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) has begun posting to its [Report Card web site](#) all statements of deficiencies from inspections or investigations conducted at hospitals, home health agencies, hospice programs, and end-stage renal disease units, among others* (Medicare-certified non-long-term care facilities). The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) stipulates that these statements of deficiencies may be made available to the public 90 days following the last day of the survey or investigation. As a standard practice, the Department will post to its web site all statements of deficiencies from certified health care providers and suppliers after the 90-day period has expired. Statements of deficiencies also may be released to the public once an acceptable plan of correction has been received from the affected health care provider.

With the addition of the statements of deficiencies from these entities, the Department's Report Card web site is now more complete than ever before, DIA Director Dean Lerner explained. "Iowans now have a much better research tool for making informed decisions regarding health care providers in our State," he added. Reports from certified providers and suppliers will be added to the web site as they become available beginning July 1st, the start of the Iowa's new fiscal year.

The Department's Nursing Home Report Card web site is available via the Internet at the following URL: https://dia-hfd.iowa.gov/DIA_HFD/Home.do. The reports from inspections and investigations conducted at long-term care facilities have been online since 1999. Reports from visits to assisted living facilities, elder group homes, and adult day services were added to the Report Card web site in January 2008. DIA's Health Facilities Division is responsible for inspecting and licensing or certifying more than 1,600 health care providers in the State of Iowa.

*Included among Medicare-certified health care providers and suppliers are rehabilitation agencies, hospitals, critical access hospitals, psychiatric units in hospitals, rehabilitation units in hospitals, rural health clinics, home health agencies, hospices, ambulatory surgical centers, organ procurement organization, comprehensive out-patient rehabilitation facilities, end-stage renal disease units, portable x-ray services, long-term acute care hospitals, transplant centers, and hospitals with swing beds.

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Visiting Nurse Associations of America Offer Discount on Procedure Manual

The 2008-2009 Visiting Nurse Associations of America Nursing Procedure Manual (NPM) is still available (although quantities are limited) and VNAA is offering a 25% discount to all HPCAI members who place their order by Friday, September 4. Just mention referral code STMBR09 to receive the discount. With over 900 pages dedicated to nursing and personal care procedures, the VNAA Nursing Procedure Manual was developed to provide clinicians with guidelines to properly and safely implement nursing procedures in the home setting and includes screening tools, charts and tables for use in daily clinical practice. For more information about the NPM or to place an order, visit their [Web site](#).

In addition, the VNAA has announced the open Call for Abstracts for the 28th VNAA Annual Meeting to be held April 21 – 23, 2010, at the Hilton Hotel in Orlando, Florida. All hospice leaders are invited to submit an abstract for breakout or poster presentation to share the successes, challenges

and lessons learned over the last year as a hospice provider while earning recognition among peers for the accomplishments and contributions made to advancing the hospice and palliative care field.

For more information regarding the Call for Abstracts process visit the [VNAA Annual Meeting Web site](#) and download the Call for Abstracts Brochure and Proposal Package. The deadline for submission of abstracts is 5:00 p.m. EDT, Monday, September 14, 2009.

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Cahaba News

Upcoming educational events for hospice providers. For more information and to register to participate, please visit the [Web site](#).

8/11/2009, Noon – 2:00 p.m. – “Home Health Billing - Part 1”

Webinar for new home health providers or home health agencies with staff who are new to home health billing, and small home health agencies who have 25 or fewer full-time employees.

This Webinar will provide basic education regarding home health billing, including the requirements to be eligible for Medicare coverage of home health services, and the necessary information needed to bill a typical home health Request for Anticipated Payment (RAP) and final claim.

The registration deadline for this event is Thursday, August 6, 2009. For more details and to register, [click here](#).

8/12/2009, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. – “Clinician's ABCs of the Home Health Benefit”

Webinar for home health clinicians, administrators, and QI coordinators.

This Webinar will provide basics of the Medicare Home Health benefit, including the qualifying criteria, what is a "skilled service" and what makes it medically necessary. Also will cover the basics of Cahaba's role with medical review, and local coverage determinations.

The registration deadline for this event is Friday, August 7, 2009. For more details and to register, [click here](#).

8/13/2009, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. – “Clinician's Intro to the Medicare Hospice Benefit”

Webinar for hospice clinicians, administrators, and QI coordinators.

This Webinar will provide the basics of the Medicare Hospice benefit, including the qualifying criteria of election, certification, and terminal prognosis. Will also cover the use of the Hospice Local Coverage Determination (LCD) to assist in identifying patients with a six month prognosis, and the different levels of the hospice benefit.

The registration deadline for this event is Monday, August 10, 2009. For more details and to register, [click here](#).

8/18/2009, Noon – 2:00 p.m. – “Hospice Billing - Part 2”

Webinar for new hospice providers or hospices with staff who are new to hospice billing, and small hospice agencies who have 25 or fewer full-time employees.

This Webinar will include how and when to submit a cancel NOE, how to cancel a benefit period, appropriate billing of discharge/revocation claims, including the posting of revocations when omitted, and billing in transfer situations and much more.

The registration deadline for this event is Thursday, August 13, 2009. For more details and to register, [click here](#).

8/25/2009, Noon – 2:00 p.m. – “Home Health Billing - Part 2”

Webinar for new home health providers or home health agencies with staff who are new to home health billing, and small home health agencies who have 25 or fewer full-time employees.

This Webinar will include topics on avoiding billing errors for overlapping episodes and dates of service; appropriately submitting claims for special home health billing situations, including beneficiary transfers between home health agencies, and discharge/readmission during the same episode of care; correcting home health episode information posted to the Common Working File (CWF) and much more.

The registration deadline for this event is Thursday, August 20, 2009. For more details and to register, [click here](#).

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Hospice News Network

End-of-Life Provisions Are Focus of Forbes Article on Health Care Reform

A recent *Forbes* article examines the House health care reform legislation focusing on the language related to end-of-life issues. The bill calls for Medicare to pay for a consultation between patients and their doctor or nurse, once every five years, to discuss what kind of care a patient would want if unable to decide for themselves. It also states that patients should be instructed on how to write an advanced health care directive. It defines standard categories of care that can be included in such a document as nutrition, hydration, antibiotics and resuscitation in the event of a lack of pulse. It also would create a tracking system to see if doctors are promoting advanced care directives and following them.

Hospices support the reform efforts to promote their organizations. The article quotes Jon Keyserling, general counsel for NHPCO, "It's a good provision. I've seen an inference that government doctors will be steering patients to choose less care, and that's not the intent."

One opponent, a Republican strategist, claims the bill requires every senior to have a mandatory counseling session with a government bureaucrat every five years on ways to 'die with dignity;' starvation and dehydration. Others, as reported in the article, made a connection between the bill and Terry Schiavo. Yet, the article refutes it stating; "In fact, the bill says nothing about death with dignity or any other code words for euthanasia. It also does not make these counseling sessions in any way mandatory—it just says that Medicare will start reimbursing for them."

Some opposition to the end-of-life portions of the bill come from some who are not necessarily opposed to health care reform. Marilyn Golden of Berkeley's Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund maintains in the article that many doctors, when counseling patients, push for do-not-resuscitate orders or have them sign boilerplate documents that can lead to the premature denial of lifesaving medical care. She says, "I don't want to say we're opposed to the language in the bill. But there are legitimate concerns about how advanced directives are administered."

Diane Coleman, of Not Dead Yet, adds, "The disability community often experiences pressure to sign treatment-withholding orders. ... Society does devalue older and disabled people. And the medical profession is not always very accountable."

[Click here to view the article online.](#) (*Forbes*, 7/24)

HNN is sponsored by Glatfelter Insurance Group that provides property and liability insurance for hospices and home healthcare agencies through their Hospice and Community Care Insurance Services division. Ask your insurance agent to visit their website at www.hccis.com.

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Member News

Congratulations to Norene Mostkoff, president and chief executive officer, Hospice of Central Iowa,

who was featured in the “Get To Know You” section of the Des Moines Register on Monday, July 27. [Click here](#) to see the piece.

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Job Openings

Care Initiatives new hospice division has several opportunities:

- *Hospice RN*

We are now accepting applications for full-time, part-time, and on-call / weekend positions in all of our Hospice locations. Care Initiatives has Hospice sites in: Albia, Cedar Rapids, Creston, Des Moines, Sioux City, & Waterloo. You can [apply on-line](#) or email resume to kbanning@careinitiatives.org with your location preference. If you are a caring, compassionate nurse with dedication to providing quality services, we'd like to hear from you! Competitive pay and full-time health benefits. Drug Screen Required; EOE

- *Reimbursement & Data Director – West Des Moines*

Care Initiatives Hospice has a new full-time opportunity for an individual with hospice and billing experience. The Reimbursement & Data Director will report to the VP of Hospice and will be responsible for coordinating all hospice-related billing activities, assuring appropriate recording of transactions, routine monitoring of accounts receivable, and database management & reporting. Associates Degree required; Bachelor's Degree preferred. Candidates must have healthcare billing experience. You can learn more and [apply on-line](#) or email resume to kbanning@careinitiatives.org. Drug Screen Required; EOE

- *Spiritual Care / Bereavement Counselor – Cedar Rapids & Creston Offices*

Care Initiatives new Hospice Division now has a full-time opportunity in Creston for a Spiritual Care / Bereavement Counselor. This position will provide services in Creston and surrounding areas. The Spiritual Care and Bereavement Counselor arranges for counseling or provides counseling to meet the spiritual needs of patients/families/caregivers in a manner consistent with their beliefs and desires; and provides for the bereavement needs of the families/caregivers by providing counseling and bereavement services to those survivors. Services are provided in accordance with the patient's acceptance of these services and the patient's care plan. [Apply on-line](#) or email resume to dburton@careinitiatives.org (Creston inquiries) or gjensen@careinitiatives.org (Cedar Rapids inquiries). Drug Screen Required; EOE

- *Community Representative / Volunteer Coordinator – Albia, Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, Sioux City, & Waterloo*

Care Initiatives new Hospice Division is seeking a Community Representative / Volunteer Coordinator for the Albia and surrounding areas. Full-time position offers competitive salary and benefits.

Authority is delegated to the individual in this position to:

- Establish and maintain positive relationship with community referral source and public target audiences.
- Recruit volunteers.
- Assist in volunteer training.
- Maintain coordination of volunteer services within the community.

[Apply on-line](#) or email resume to kbanning@careinitiatives.org with your location preference. Drug Screen Required; EOE

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HPCAI Calendar

September 23

Parkin Memorial Lecture on Aging, Dr. Diane E. Meier, *University of Iowa, Iowa City*

October 27

HPCAI Fall Pre-Conference, *Gateway Hotel and Conference Center, Ames*

October 28 – 29

HPCAI Fall Conference, *Scheman Building, Ames*

To add items to the HPCAI Calendar, send information to [Stacey Nay](#).

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