

FOCUS

The Quarterly Newsletter for Physician Office Staff

Route to:

Volume 7, Number 3
August, 1998

In This Issue . . .

OR Central Scheduling to Relocate
Page 2

Summer Fun at MHC Festival
Page 2

Upcoming Educational Opportunities
Page 3

Medical Records - Retention Requirements*

According to the April 1998 edition of **Laws and Regulations Affecting Medical Practice**, a physician must retain a patient's medical records for at least seven years from the date of the last medical service for which a record entry is required. In the case of a minor, the regulations only require that the records must be retained until one year after the minor reaches age 18. However, because the statute of limitations for a negligence action extends until two years after a minor reaches the age of 18, it is prudent to retain the records one year longer than the regulations require. Thus, minors' records often may have to be retained beyond seven years. For example, if a physician treats an infant one week after birth and never treats that patient again, he is required to maintain that record for 19 years (age 18 plus one year), and it would be a good practice to maintain those records for 20 years.

A problem arises frequently when the successor to a physician's practice, whether another physician or a

surviving spouse, tries to conclude the physician's affairs. Three areas which pose frequent record retention problems are: 1) the sale of an ongoing practice, 2) winding down an active practice upon retirement, and 3) transferring or concluding a practice following a physician's death. In all three of these situations, a physician should make sure that his successor is aware of the guidelines set forth above.

In addition to the record retention issue, the sale, winding down, or transfer of a practice raises other concerns about patient notification. Pennsylvania does not regulate this aspect of record retention. However, the American Medical Association (AMA) has issued an opinion which suggests that upon retirement or death, the physician's patients should be notified and urged to find a new physician. In addition, the patients should be told that upon receipt of an appropriate authorization, their records will be forwarded to their new physician. The AMA has recommended the same sort of notification procedures when a practice is sold either by a physician or his estate.

*Information provided by Lehigh County Medical Society

Attention Office Managers

On September 1, annual dues letters will be distributed to members of the Medical Staffs of both Lehigh Valley Hospital and Muhlenberg Hospital Center.

Timely remittance of dues is both requested and appreciated.

OR Central Scheduling to Relocate

On August 18, OR Central Scheduling will relocate its office to a new location on the Third Floor of the 1770 Building on the Muhlenberg Hospital Center campus.

To ensure uninterrupted service and communication with your office, please update your rolodex and/or telephone directories to reflect the following new address and telephone numbers to be effective on August 18:

Address for U.S. Mail:

OR Central Scheduling
Third Floor
1770 Bathgate Drive
Bethlehem, PA 18017

Address for Inter-office Mail:

OR Central Scheduling
Third Floor
1770 Bathgate

Main OR Scheduling

Telephone Number: (610) 317-4430
Fax Number: (610) 317-4432
Sheryl Madrigale: (610) 317-4431

For a period of time, if you call the current main number, a recording will remind you of the new telephone number and automatically forward your call.

Office hours will remain the same:

Monday - Friday - 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Sundays and holidays - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Closed Saturdays

Services will remain the same and include daily Cedar Crest & I-78 and Ambulatory Care Unit OR scheduling, e-mail OR bulletin board schedule access, and department fax/telephone verification as currently practiced.

If you have any questions, please contact Sheryl Madrigale in OR Central Scheduling at 402-1842 (prior to August 18).

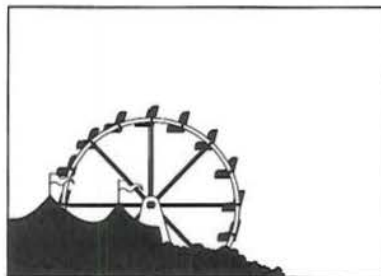
Congratulations to Colleen Burgess, Office Manager, Allen Neurosurgical Association, who was elected National President for PAHCOM at the annual meeting in May.

Summer Fun at Muhlenberg Hospital Center Festival

Muhlenberg Hospital Center will hold its 37th annual summer festival from August 19 to 22, featuring live music, arts and crafts, bingo, raffles, book sales, attic

treasures, a pediatric safety relay and all types of food.

Entertainment will be from 7 to 10 p.m. each night including:



August 19 - King Henry and the Showmen
August 20 - The Mudflaps
August 21 - The Cramer Brothers
August 22 - The Country Rhythm Band

For more information, call (610) 861-2229 or (610) 861-2200.

Health Spectrum Pharmacy Opens at Muhlenberg Hospital Center

Located on the lower level of the hospital next to the mailroom

**Hours: Monday through Friday
8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

- Prescription services
- Over-the-counter products and supplies (including vitamins, ostomy items, stethoscopes and much more)

**Phone: (610) 861-7004
Fax: (610) 882-2969**

Upcoming Educational Opportunities

Medical Terminology for Office Professionals

If you are new to the medical field or just need a refresher course in medical terminology, mark your calendar for September 15 and 17.

Medical Terminology for Office Professionals is a two-day class which will familiarize participants with the basics of medical terminology, spelling and pronunciation.

Program content will include:

- The philosophy of medical terminology
- Introduction to medical terminology
 - ⇒ Prefixes
 - ⇒ Suffixes
 - ⇒ Roots
- Pluralizing medical terms
- Basic spelling rules
- Common medical roots by body system
- Terminology of diseases and medical procedures
- Pronouncing medical terms

Sponsored by Physician Relations of Lehigh Valley Hospital in conjunction with Allentown Business School, the program will be held on Tuesday, September 15, and Thursday, September 17, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., in the First Floor Conference Room at 2166 S. 12th Street, Allentown.

The registration fee for the two-day class is \$35.00 per person and includes instructional materials. Space is limited.

Invitation flyers for the program will be distributed in August. For more information, please contact Janet M. Seifert in Physician Relations at 402-8590.

POPS Forum

Is your practice ready for the new millennium? If not, plan to attend the next POPS Forum for some tips in **"Preparing Your Practice for the Year 2000."**

The forum will be held on Tuesday, September 15, beginning at 12:15 p.m., in Classroom 1 at Lehigh Valley Hospital, Cedar Crest & I-78.

John J. Haney, Executive Director, MSO/Physician Business Services, will provide participants with the necessary information they need to plan an operational assessment of their practice, tactics for strategic planning, and the steps

needed to develop an action plan in preparation for the Year 2000.

Forum invitations will be distributed in mid-August. For more information, please contact Janet M. Seifert in Physician Relations at 402-8590.

Upcoming PAHCOM Meetings

- August 18 - 5:30 p.m. - Networking
- September 15 - 7:30 a.m.
Developing Leadership Skills - Vince Fazio
- October 20 - 5:30 p.m.
Importance of Higher Education
- Karen Walton, Allentown College
- November 17 - 7:30 a.m.
Physician Relations Reps from LVH, SHH and St. Luke's
- December 15 - 5:30 p.m. - Holiday Party

All meetings are held at the Ambassador Restaurant on Hamilton Boulevard, Allentown. For more information, please contact Maggie Theys at 776-8220.

Who's New

at LVH . . .

Jean Deady
Office Manager
Valley Gastroenterologists
Allentown Medical Center
401 N. 17th Street, Suite 207
Allentown, PA 18104-5058
(610) 434-5300 * Fax: (610) 434-9901

Christine Polomchak
Office Manager
Mark Noel Martz, MD
1255 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., Suite 1400
Allentown, PA 18103-6256
(610) 821-8790 * Fax: (610) 432-8640

at MHC . . .

Sharon Bills
Practice Administrator
Orthopedic Associates of the Greater
Lehigh Valley
Northwood Medical Arts Building
3735 Easton Nazareth Highway, Suite 101
Easton, PA 18045
(610) 252-1600 * Fax: (610) 250-9257

LEHIGH VALLEY
HOSPITAL

Cedar Crest & I-78
P.O. Box 689
Allentown, PA 18105-1556

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Allentown, PA
Permit No. 1922

FOCUS

Robert X. Murphy, Jr., M.D.
President, Medical Staff
John W. Hart
Vice President

Editorial Staff:
Janet M. Seifert
Managing Editor
Tony Langston
Pat Skrovanek
Diane Zapach

Editorial Board:
Colleen Burgess
Joan Rissmiller

FOCUS is published quarterly for the office staffs of physicians on the Medical Staff of Lehigh Valley Hospital. Articles for the next issue should be submitted by October 15, 1998, to Janet M. Seifert, Medical Staff Services, Lehigh Valley Hospital, Cedar Crest & I-78, P.O. Box 689, Allentown, PA 18105-1556.

For more information, please call Janet at 402-8590.