

FOCUS

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The Quarterly Newsletter for Physician Office Staff

Volume 8, Number 2
May, 1999

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Allowable Charges for Medical Records

Under Act 26 of 1998, which is presently in effect, the following fee schedule related to the charges for copying medical records has been established.

Physicians are entitled to charge the following fees for copying medical records: (These fees may be collected prior to producing the charts and/or records.)

Copying Fee Schedule

Searching and retrieval fee	\$15.00
Pages 1-20	\$ 1.00 per page
Pages 21-60	\$.75 per page
Pages 61 and up	\$.25 per page
Microfilm copies	\$ 1.50 per page
Postage, shipping & delivery	Actual charges

NOTE: Additional charges can be made provided prior approval has been obtained from the requesting party.

Beginning on January 1, 2000, the fees will be adjusted annually by the Secretary of Health based on the most recent changes in the consumer price index.

Other Charge Limitations

- A health care provider or facility shall not charge more than a flat fee of \$19.00 for the expense of reproducing medical charts or records, plus the actual cost of postage, shipping or delivery, when the records are requested for the purpose of supporting a claim or appeal under the Social Security Act.
- A health care provider or facility shall not charge an independent or executive agency of the Commonwealth for the copying cost related to medical records or charts unless otherwise required by law.

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- **A health care provider or facility shall not charge more than a flat fee of \$15.00 for the expense of reproducing medical charts or records, plus the actual cost of postage, shipping or delivery, when the records are requested by a District Attorney.**

With respect to the above charge limitations, documentation shall be required by the requesting party with clear and convincing documentation that the purpose of the request is to obtain information to support a claim or appeal under the Social Security Act or any other Federal or State financial needs-based benefit program.

(Information obtained from Pennsylvania Medical Society at <http://www.pamedsoc.org/members/gov/copying.htm>)

Newly formed Penn/Jersey Line Chapter of the American Academy of Professional Coders will be holding monthly meetings the third Monday of every month from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m., in the First Floor Conference Room at Muhlenberg Hospital Center.

Guest speakers will present information on correct coding issues.

These meetings are open to medical coders, physicians, and practice managers.

For more information regarding these meetings, please contact Linda Kresley at (610) 432-4873.

Compliance for Physician Practices

Over the last four months, Lehigh Valley Physicians' Business Services (LVPBS) has provided a variety of classes dealing with compliance programs specific to Medicare billing. These courses were designed specifically for private practitioners and their administrative staff. Judging from the overwhelming response and attendance at these classes, it is evident that there is a definite need for programs such as these.

To accommodate those individuals who were unable to attend previously, a number of the programs will be offered again over the next few months. A schedule announcing the classes will be distributed shortly.

During the first round of classes, which were held from January through April, a myriad of different interpretations by physicians and administrators regarding compliance, fraud and abuse, and coding and auditing was discovered. The following information should help to clear up some of these misconceptions:

- Myth:** Compliance policies and programs are mandatory
- Fact:** At this time, compliance policies and programs are not mandatory. However, there are several reasons why a practice should institute a voluntary compliance program: 1) it can help avoid prosecution; 2) it may help in arguing for a smaller fine; 3) it discourages all employees from wrongdoing; and 4) it detects problems (especially in billing) before they become bigger.

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- Myth:** If compliance programs are voluntary, then we should wait until the government makes them mandatory before we develop one.
- Fact:** This is "head in the sand" logic. With regards to billing, a voluntary approach to compliance is much better than doing nothing. If you are audited, the first thing the government inspector will make you do is develop a compliance program.
- Myth:** The Lehigh Valley is too small an area for the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to visit for fraud and abuse issues.
- Fact 1:** Allentown is the fourth largest city in Pennsylvania. The OIG has already spent a great deal of time in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia doing audits of hospitals and physician practices.
- Fact 2:** There are over 2,000 physicians in the Lehigh Valley. This is "virgin" territory for the OIG.
- Fact 3:** Congress has approved an additional \$500 million for the OIG to establish a national network of field offices specific to compliance and fraud abuse reviews.
- Fact 4:** Medicare collects \$14 for every \$1 spent in fraud and abuse review.
- Fact 5:** LVPBS is aware of two practices in the Lehigh Valley currently negotiating with OIG on fraud and abuse issues. One practice could face fines reaching six figures. The unfortunate issue in this case is that there was an honest

mistake in coding that went undetected for several months.

- Myth:** Audits or OIG reviews are done by random selection only.
- Fact:** Almost all audits are initiated by the following:
- aberrant coding/billing patterns
 - dissatisfied patients - complaining to OIG
 - disgruntled employees
 - former spouses/lovers

If you have any questions or concerns regarding compliance policies, please call Patricia Spacek, Director of Operations, Lehigh Valley Physicians' Business Services, at (610) 317-4440. LVPBS can assist in the development of your compliance policy and can also perform audits on your billing activity.

The Lehigh Valley Chapter of
Professional Association of Health Care
Office Managers
proudly presents
The Third Annual Vendor Fair
and Conference

June 2, 1999 - 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Holiday Inn & Conference Center
Routes 22 & 512, Bethlehem, PA

- Handling Emotions and Stress in the Workplace - Carol Clendinen, RN, MS
- Fashion Show by Wardrobe Consultant - Cindy Schneider
- Sexual Harassment, At Will Employment, Leaves of Absence - Donna M. Miller, Esquire

Computer Access Requests for Private Practice Offices

Is your practice connected to the LVH computer network? Do you have employees that need access to PHAMIS or E-Mail? Have employees that had access to the hospital's computer network left your employ? If so, did you remember to send notification to the hospital that they are no longer authorized to access YOUR patients' information via the computer system?

Good news! A phone call or memo to Physician Relations is no longer necessary to submit your computer access requests. The process has been made easier. Your requests can now be sent directly to Information Services, with a copy to Physician Relations, using E-mail.

Private practice physician offices are now requested to submit requests for employee computer access via the hospital's E-mail system. Each Practice Manager should have access to E-mail. Information Services Access Request Forms (I/S Access Request) are located on the E-mail bulletin board "FORMS_/LVH." The steps to submit requests are found on pages 7-9 of this newsletter. For new users in your practice, please don't forget to complete an Acknowledgement of Confidentiality Form and forward the yellow copy to Lehigh Valley Hospital, Physician Relations, 2166 S 12th Street, Allentown, PA 18103-4799, as is currently the practice. Your employee's system user ID number (SUI#) will be forwarded to you via E-mail by Information Services when assigned.

If you are a Practice Manager and need access to E-mail or wish to assign the authority to request computer access to another member of your management team, please contact Pat Skrovanek, Physician Relations, at (610) 402-9190. Acknowledgement of Confidentiality

forms can be obtained through Consolidated Graphics, Forms and Stationary Requisition process by checking ADM-26.

The above change effects private physician practices only; LVPG practices should continue to follow established procedures.

Please Note: Computer access or changes for Allied Health Staff is arranged by the Medical Staff Services Department upon appointment or upon notification of change of status.

News from Lehigh Magnetic Imaging Center

New Open MRI System

Lehigh Magnetic Imaging Center (LMIC), located at 1220 S. Cedar Crest Blvd., Allentown, recently replaced its open MRI scanner with a new state-of-the-art open MRI scanning system. Now available to scan patients, the new open system produces the highest quality images at reduced scanning times.

The unique design of LMIC's open MRI unit provides the most accessibility of all open MRI systems in the Lehigh Valley by utilizing a c-arm design which is totally open on three sides of the patient. The patient enters the scanning area by a side entry approach, which alleviates the anxiety often associated with head-first entry of claustrophobic patients into the scanning area. The design of the open MRI suite offers a spacious room, large windows overlooking a landscaped view, and ceiling skylights to allow natural light into the suite. Additional seating is available for family members or friends who wish to accompany the patient during the scan.

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Daytime and evening appointments are available Monday through Friday, with daytime hours on Saturday. To schedule an appointment, please call (610) 740-9500.

Clinical History Critical When Ordering an MRI

Xact Medicare recently published specific diagnosis codes that the payer will accept for each type of MRI study. Beginning in February, Xact Medicare began denying payment for MRI procedures that are not billed with a diagnosis code included in the payer's list of appropriate codes.

Many diagnosis codes previously submitted to Medicare, such as codes for "pain" or "dizziness," will no longer be accepted as the sole reasons for a MRI study. Therefore, it is very important to provide as much clinical information as possible when scheduling the MRI study so the most appropriate code(s) can be selected. LMIC scheduling secretaries will work closely with the referring offices to help collect diagnosis information.

In addition, LMIC radiologists review a patient's clinical history, symptoms and diagnosis to determine the most effective imaging protocols for each individual patient. Therefore, the more information provided at the time of scheduling, the better the radiologist can ensure the most appropriate imaging sequences are performed.

MRI Report Availability

Lehigh Magnetic Imaging Center is committed to providing timely reports. Most reports are available within 24 hours. Available options include the following:

- most reports are autofaxed to offices signed up for this service within 24 hours
- dictated reports that have not been transcribed are available via the Lanier dictation system
- transcribed reports can be accessed through the hospital's Phamis system.

For information regarding any of these options, please contact Kim Seidel at (610) 740-9500.

Upcoming Educational Opportunities

To help your practice stay in touch with new and upcoming changes in healthcare, Lehigh Valley Physicians' Business Services, in conjunction with the Physician Relations Department of Lehigh Valley Hospital, is offering a collection of programs for physicians and office staff.

Coding/Audit Practice Classes will be held during the month of June as follows:

- June 8 - OB/GYN
- June 10 - Family Practice/Pediatrics
- June 15 - Internal Medicine
- June 17 - Cardiology
- June 24 - All Surgical Specialties/Pain Management

Topics to be discussed include:

- Coding/audit practice
- Focus on E & M codes

This class is appropriate for administrators, office managers, coders, and physicians.

The cost is \$50 for first participant from practice, and \$40 for each additional participant from practice. Refreshments will be served.

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All classes will be held from 1 to 4 p.m., on the campus of Lehigh Valley Hospital, Cedar Crest & I-78.

Documentation and Coding for Physicians/The Components of a Chart Audit will be presented on June 15 and September 14 from 7 to 9 p.m., in Classroom 1 at Lehigh Valley Hospital, Cedar Crest & I-78, and on June 22 and September 28 from 7 to 9 p.m., in the First Floor Conference Room at Muhlenberg Hospital Center.

Topics to be discussed include:

- Documentation rules
- Coding rules
- Chart audit samples

This course is designed specifically for physicians. The cost is \$100 per physician. Refreshments will be served.

A Comprehensive Compliance Policy Course will be held on June 28 and November 5 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the campus of Lehigh Valley Hospital, Cedar Crest & I-78.

Topics to be discussed include:

- What started the compliance uproar?
- Will Medicare audit private practices?
- Does employee training need to be formal?
- How detailed does a compliance policy have to be?
- How to maximize revenue while decreasing liability.
- How to communicate rule changes to your staff.
- Update job descriptions to include compliance requirements.
- Procedure for code changes.
- Goals of an audit.
- Cost of an audit.
- Procedure to correct coding errors.

- Customize your compliance policy, and take it with you in Microsoft Word on disk.

The cost of this program is \$200 per participant, and \$150 for each additional person from your practice. Lunch will be served.

For more information regarding any of these courses, please contact Lehigh Valley Physicians' Business Services at (610) 317-4440.



May Daze '99

This year's May Daze festival will be held on the campus of Lehigh Valley Hospital, Cedar Crest & I-78 on:

Friday, May 14 - 6 to 10 p.m.

Saturday, May 15 - 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Sunday, May 16 - Noon to 5:30 p.m.

There will be plenty of food, crafts, games, and fun for the entire family. Entertainment is scheduled throughout the weekend.

=====
===== TAO Mail Menu

- ==== Q Quickmail
- ==== I Inbasket
- ==== O Outbasket
- ==== B Bulletin Boards
- ==== C Conferences
- ==== D Directory of TAO Mail IDs
- ==== E Draft Letters
- ==== F File Folders
- ==== K Calendar and Schedule
- ==== J Private Mailing Lists
- ==== L Public Mailing Lists
- ==== P Personal Configuration
- ==== T Timely Reminders
- ==== Y Clipboards
- ==== Z Summary Overview Menu

Step 1

Type option letter --> B

PF 1=Help 2=Exit 3=Return

EMCC0001

TAO Bulletin Boards

Q-Query L-Letters M-Track N-News S-Subsrch Srch/Ord: FORMS

Step 2

====	----- Bboard -----	Department -----	Title -----	====
====	//LVHHN	System-Wide	Important Announcements	====
====	/Department_Info	System-Wide	Locations and Telephones	====
====	/Dept_Head_Minutes	System-Wide	Dept. Head Meeting Minutes	====
====	/EMAIL_Printers	System-Wide	EMAIL Network Printers	====
====	/EMail_Tips	System-Wide	E-Mail Tips; Q&A from User	====
====	/GUI_Usage_Tips	System-Wide	Tips and Hints for GUI Mai	====
====	/I/S_SECURITY	System-Wide	Policy Notices and Info	====
====	/LVH_Cafeteria_Menus	System-Wide	All Cafeteria Menus	====
====	/LVH_Cost_Centers	System-Wide	LVH Responsibility Centers	====
====	/LVH_Emergency_Info	System-Wide	Emergency Response Info.	====
====	/LVH_Employee_Health	System-Wide	Employee Health Schedule	====
====	/LVH_Expense_Codes	System-Wide	LVH Expense Codes	====
====	/LVH_InterpreterList	System-Wide	Interpreter List	====
====	/LVH_Job_Postings	System-Wide	LVH Job Postings	====
====	/LVH_LIST	System-Wide	Memos/News	====
====	/LVH_Mail_Codes	System-Wide	Inter-Office Mailing Codes	====

PF 1=Help 2=Exit 3=Return 7=Back 8=Forward

EMCC0003

TAO Bulletin Boards

Q-Query L-Letters M-Track N-News S-Subsrch Srch/Ord: Step 3

====	----	Bboard	-----	Department	-----	Title	-----	====
====	L	Forms_/LVH		System-Wide		Standard Forms		====
====		Forms_/MHC		System-Wide		Standard Forms		====
====		Forms_Anesthesia		Anesthesiology		Standard Forms		====
====		Forms_BioMed_Engr		Biomedical Eng.*		Standard Forms		====
====		Forms_Cancer_Program		Cancer Program		Standard Forms		====
====		Forms_CardiaccathLab		Invasive Cardiology		Standard Forms		====
====		Forms_Central_Sched		Admitting		Standard Forms		====
====		Forms_Child_Care		Child Care Center		Forms and Information		====
====		Forms_Conslt/Liaison		Consultation/Liaison		Standard Forms		====
====		Forms_CRM		Clinical Res. Mgnt.		Department Forms		====
====		Forms_Education		System-Wide		Forms for Education		====
====		Forms_Emerg_Dept		Emergency Service		Various Forms		====
====		Forms_EMI		Emrg.Medicine Admin.		Registration Forms		====
====		Forms_Engineering		Engineering		Various Forms		====
====		Forms_Hemodialysis		Hemodialysis Treat		Standard Forms		====
====		Forms_HIM		Medical Rec*		Various Forms		====

PF 1=Help 2=Exit 3=Return 7=Back 8=Forward

EMCC0003

Step 4
Press F8 to page forward

Letters on file for Forms_/LVH

R-Read Q-Query D-Delete F-File A-Answer Srch/Ord:
E-Edit K-Forward G-Clip L-List P-Print O-Output/Prompt U-Useform

====	Date	---	From	-----	Subject	-----	====
====	03/22/99		Barrie.Borger		Monthly Calendar Form		====
====	03/22/99		Barrie.Borger		Telephone Modification Request		====
====	03/22/99		Barrie.Borger		Computer class registration form		====
====	03/22/99		Barrie.Borger		ORDER ENTRY-TP STATUS CHANGE		====
====	03/22/99		Barrie.Borger		Hospice/HomeCare Order Form		====
====	03/22/99		Barrie.Borger		Pediatric Bereavement Follow-up		====
====	03/22/99		Barrie.Borger		Library Req.-Book Pockets, Label		====
====	02/09/99		Barrie.Borger		Key Request Form		====
====	01/25/99		Barrie.Borger		Remote Access Request		====
====	12/29/98		Barrie.Borger		Lost Item Form		====
====	12/17/98		Barrie.Borger		Library Request-Loans/Photocopy		====
====	12/17/98		Barrie.Borger		Food Service Catering Request		====
====	12/10/98		Barrie.Borger		Web Browser Access Request		====
====	12/10/98		Barrie.Borger		Volunteer Mailing Request		====
====	U		12/10/98		I/S Access Request		====
====			10/13/98		17 Engineering Work Request		====

PF 1=Help 2=Exit 3=Return 7=Back 8=Forward

EMCC0003

TO: Barbara.Stangl
FROM: Patricia.Skrovanek@LVHTAO
SUBJECT: I/S Access Request
CC: Patricia.Skrovanek
CC: Req.Track

Step 5

Date: May 06 99 Thu

Time: 3:22pm ET

Lehigh Valley Hospital
Information Systems Access Request

Dept:(Practice Name) Cost Ctr() Tele(123 - 4567)

Add:(x) Change:(x) Delete:(x) LVHHN Employee: Yes() No(x)

Table with columns: SUI, Name: (LN, FN, MI), SS#, Application: PHAMIS Info (Phamis, EMAIL, etc), User Class. Includes entries for Jane A Doe, Mary C Smith, and John G Green.

REQUIREMENTS: Confirm spelling. Include Middle Initial. NO Nicknames. This form MUST be submitted by the department head.

NOTE: If any of the above are new users, please type employee's birthdate under name. If you are requesting more than one application, please use as many lines as you need in this column for each user.

* * * * *
I/S USE ONLY: Date Completed: Completed by: *
* * * * *

Please complete as shown in examples above.
Press F4 to mail.

LEHIGH VALLEY

HOSPITAL AND
HEALTH NETWORK

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

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FOCUS

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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 July 15, 1999, 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.