

Physician Office Manager/ Office Staff Newsletter

Route to:

Volume 1, Number 1
July, 1992

Newsletter Launched

Here it is -- the inaugural issue of the physician office manager/office staff newsletter which has been designed to keep the office staffs of Lehigh Valley Hospital Medical Staff members better informed about hospital and healthcare industry issues that have some effect on them or their patients.

Medical Staff members have always been considered as key members of our hospital's "family" and their office staffs are a vital extension of that family. With this in mind, it is hoped that this office manager/office staff newsletter will help provide you with the necessary information to make you feel like you are, indeed, a part of the hospital's family.

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As you know, *Medical Staff Progress Notes* is published monthly for members of the Medical Staff. This newsletter contains articles and information relevant to the daily physician practice. It also contains a schedule of upcoming conferences and meetings, announcements, physician practice opportunities, as well as new appointments, address, and status changes. While *Medical Staff Progress Notes* has proven a valuable communications tool for physicians, the information does not always filter down to office staff personnel, nor does the newsletter contain as much office staff-specific information as it could.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions and look forward to hearing from you. If you have any ideas or would like to submit an article for the next issue of the newsletter, please contact Janet M. Laudenslager, Coordinator, Physician Office Practice Services, at 402-2780. Deadline for article submission is Friday, September 18, and may be sent to Ms. Laudenslager in the POPS Office, Lehigh Valley Hospital, 17th & Chew, P.O. Box 7017, Allentown, PA 18105-7017, or fax it to her at 402-2867.

"Name the Newsletter" Contest

In an effort to provide physicians' office staffs with pertinent information regarding the hospital and healthcare issues which affect them in the workplace, we are bringing to you the first issue of a newsletter for physicians' office managers and office staff. As this is **your** newsletter, we wanted you to have some input into naming the newsletter. The newsletter will be published quarterly and will include such sections as helpful hints/tips, upcoming events, conference/education opportunities, who's new/changes, congratulations, safety issues, and more. If you have any suggestions for a name, please send us your idea.

The winning entry, which will be chosen by the editorial board, will receive a gift certificate for a local restaurant. Any office manager or member of an office staff of a Lehigh Valley Hospital physician is eligible to enter. All entries must be submitted on or before Friday, August 28, to Janet M. Laudenslager, POPS Office, Lehigh Valley Hospital, 17th & Chew, P.O. Box 7017, Allentown, PA 18105-7017.

Medical Office Staff Handbook Available

"Medical Office Staff Handbook," developed by Conomikes Associates, Inc., is a 110-page comprehensive handbook which explains how to handle calls, develop telephone policies and procedures, and establish appointment priorities and guidelines. The manual includes sample forms and worksheets and is a helpful training tool for staff.

This new publication is available through the Pennsylvania Medical Society. The cost for Society members is \$69; and \$89 for non-members.

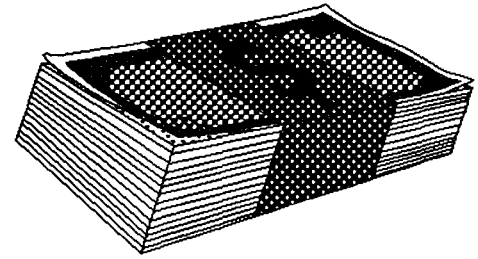
For more information, contact the Department of Physician Services at Pennsylvania Medical Society at 1-800-228-7823.

New Photo I.D.'s

If the physicians in your practice have not yet had their photos taken for new I.D. badges, please contact Maria L. Pillsbury, POPS Representative, at 402-2242 for further details.

Use of Electronic Ticket Capture Terminal Saves Time and Money for Pediatric Practice

by Ginny Phelan, PEDS, Ltd.



Many primary care offices aspire for a fee-for-service philosophy. In today's economic environment, the use of plastic is essential to achieve a collection rate nearing 100% at the door. With little encouragement, many patients enjoy paying the physician up front, and then dealing with their bank card statement later. We feel our collection rate at PEDS, Ltd. has improved by almost 5% by offering patients this option. It also saves us from sending bills and waiting weeks or even months for payment.

You may be thinking, "How can you achieve that high a collection rate while using plastic? Aren't the processing fees for bank cards near 5%, fraudulent card use rampant, and office paperwork time consuming?"

Enter the "white knight" -- Electronic Ticket Capture Terminal. Although this is not for everyone, it is worth looking into if you process at least \$1,500 a month in bank card payments.

The Electronic Ticket Capture Terminal allows you to electronically deposit MasterCard, Visa, Discover, and American Express payments directly into your account. If you close the terminal prior to 5 p.m., the money is available the next day. This is far superior to the almost seven-day

wait if manually deposited. The discount rate (processing fee) is based on the average sales slip. Our rate went from nearly 5% when manually deposited, to just over 2% electronically.

When electronically deposited, there is no paperwork to take to the bank. Everything is done through the machine. Cards and payments are verified automatically, reducing fraud and charge backs by the bank.

There are, however, a few fees charged. The bank charge for electronic claims is \$15 per month and \$0.20 per transaction. Even with these tacked on, however, we realize a substantial savings each month -- in both time and money!

Conversions are worked out on an individual basis. Ms. Livonia Echorn, Merchants Bank BankCard representative, quotes that a \$50 ticket using the paper (manual) deposit would carry a discount rate of 5.24%. By using the electronic claim method -- a cool 2.85%.

It's something to look into; we're sure glad we did! For more information about how this program has helped PEDS, Ltd., contact Ginny Phelan at 770-9111.

Single Hospital License and Provider Numbers Now in Effect

Effective July 1, 1992, Lehigh Valley Hospital was licensed as a single 833-bed hospital. The single license number is **0099-39**, which was previously used at Lehigh Valley Hospital, Cedar Crest & I-78.

In addition, the hospital will now utilize the following single provider numbers which became effective on July 1:

Medicare - 39-0133 (previously used for 17th & Chew only)

Burn Unit - 39T133

Psychiatry - 395133

Home Care - 390133

Renal - 390133R

Medical Assistance Inpatient - 0906934 (previously used for Cedar Crest & I-78 only)

Medical Assistance Outpatient and Ambulatory Services - 1069161 (previously used for Cedar Crest & I-78 only)

If you have any questions, please contact Tony Molchany at 402-9459 or Sandra Colon at 402-9461 in Patient Accounting.

Correct Addressing Helps!

Since the hospital's name change was made in April, a few minor address changes were made at both locations. Please make a note of the following addresses which will expedite mail to the hospital:

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

Lehigh Valley Hospital
17th & Chew
P.O. Box 7017
Allentown, PA 18105-7017

For those practices who use inter-office hospital mail, the following format will expedite delivery.

When sending mail to Cedar Crest & I-78, place the following information on the inter-office envelope:

Line 1: Name of Individual
Line 2: CC (code for Cedar Crest & I-78) plus the hospital department

When sending mail to 17th & Chew, the following format should be used:

Line 1: Name of Individual
Line 2: 17 (code for 17th & Chew) plus the hospital department

PAHCOM Holds Fourth Annual Meeting

The fourth annual meeting of the Professional Association of Health Care Office Managers (PAHCOM) was held recently in New Orleans, La. The conference began with a two-day certification process offering, for the first time ever, the opportunity for health care office managers to receive certification upon successful completion of the exam.

The examination covered a broad spectrum of topics including marketing, financing, human resources, insurances, risk management, and general medical practice management issues. Office managers from the Lehigh Valley who successfully completed the examination and received their certification as medical office managers include Colleen Burgess from Allen Neurosurgical Association, Inc., and Joan Rissmiller from Valley OB-GYN Associates.

Following the exam, conference goers were invited to attend a wide variety of informative workshops presented by an outstanding panel of nationally-recognized health care experts. Attendees also got a chance to network during a workshop designed to separate participants into specialty groups. Several exhibitors displayed their products and offered their services. The conference was concluded with an elaborate awards banquet including a New Orleans jazz band and a Mardi Gras style parade through the banquet hall.

Joan Rissmiller, local PAHCOM representative, was informed by PAHCOM that they will bring the certification exam to the ABE area when they receive a response from 30 or more genuinely interested managers. Don't miss this great opportunity. Call PAHCOM today at 1-800-451-9311 for more information. The exam is available to current members or to those of you who desire to join this very worthwhile organization. The deadline for registration is August 31, 1992.

Dependent Care Assistance Program

The Dependent Care Assistance Program Salary Reduction Arrangement may help to provide a tax break to your employees who have dependent care expenses. This is an IRS approved plan that will allow your employees to set aside pre-tax dollars in an account to be used for the care of a child under age 13 or an incapacitated dependent of any age. It is beneficial to the employee because

the employee does not pay taxes on the dollars placed in the account, and beneficial to the employer because the funds are not subject to payroll taxes.

The employer is required to write a formal plan which conforms to IRS regulations, make sure all employees are notified of the plans existence, and insure the plan is not discriminatory. Easy to follow guidelines are available.

For more information, call MASSPIRG Educational Fund at (617) 292-4800.

The John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center Project Update

The long and complex process necessary to plan, budget, design, and secure approvals for the Lehigh Valley Hospital's John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center is nearing completion. The final approval hurdle -- the Certificate of Need -- should be granted by the end of August, with the long-awaited ground breaking scheduled for September.

The John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center project, which was approved by the Trustees of the Hospital in February of this year, will bring together comprehensive, integrated cancer services in one location.

Currently, cancer patients and their families must make trips to several locations to receive clinical and support services. The Cancer Center will provide a single location where outpatient radiation therapy, chemotherapy, education, counseling and support services will be delivered. Additionally, several physicians involved in the care of cancer patients will locate/relocate their offices in this facility.

The construction project, which is expected to continue for 12 or 13 months, will necessitate inconveniences for both patient access to office buildings and parking for patients and staff. Meetings are being scheduled with employees and medical office building tenants to discuss these issues.

Upcoming Educational Opportunities

August

- 3 **Rx for Collections, Denver, Colo.**
- 4 **Rx for Collections, Cincinnati, Ohio**
- 6 **Code it Right! CPT Update, Portland, Ore.**
- 7 **Coping with Medicare, Portland, Ore.**
- 13 **Code it Right! CPT Update, Indianapolis, Ind.**
- 14 **Coping with Medicare, Indianapolis, Ind.**
- 17-19 **New on the Job -- Your Role as a Manager, Atlanta, Ga.**
- 24-26 **Strengthening Your Financial Management Skills, San Francisco, Calif.**

24-26 **Issues for Small Group Practices, Charlotte, NC**

September

17-18 **Collaboration Through Cooperation: Team Building in a Medical Group Setting, Boston, Mass.**

October

25-28 **Medical Group Management Association 66th Annual Conference, Orlando, Fla.**

For a current program update or for more information, call the Medical Group Management Association Education Department at (303) 397-7881.

You are cordially invited to attend the next

PHYSICIAN OFFICE PRACTICE FORUM

Wednesday, September 16, 1992

from Noon to 2 p.m.

Classroom 1

Lehigh Valley Hospital, Cedar Crest & I-78

(A luncheon buffet will be served)

This program will benefit members of the Medical Staff
and their office personnel

Topics will include:

- **Americans with Disabilities Act** - The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991 addresses how businesses and public facilities, such as hospitals, must deal with the needs of accommodations to their services. It also covers requirements of access and employment of individuals with physical and mental disabilities. **Maryanne Falcone**, Patient Representative, and **Dan Kane**, Employment Manager, will discuss how physicians' offices can assist disabled patients in their office practice and issues as they relate to office employees.
- **The John and Dorothy Morgan Cancer Center Project Update** - Currently, cancer patients and their families must travel to several locations for clinical and support services. In September, construction will begin for a multi-story cancer center which will provide a single location where outpatient radiation therapy, chemotherapy, education, counseling, and support services will be delivered. **Gary Marshall**, Administrator, Oncology Services, will provide an overview of how the new cancer center may benefit your patients.
- **Crime Prevention** - Crime is on the rise in our nation and in our neighborhoods. **Sgt. Barry George** of the Allentown Police Crime Prevention Unit will provide tips to safeguard you and your family at home, at work, and while traveling.
- **Hospital Identity** - On April 9, HealthEast/The Allentown Hospital--Lehigh Valley Hospital Center became Lehigh Valley Hospital in an effort to provide the hospital with a single identity. **Mike Kaufher**, Vice President, Public Relations, will be available to address questions and concerns related to the hospital's new identity.

To register for this Physician Office Practice Forum, please call Janet M. Laudenslager, Coordinator, Physician Office Practice Services (POPS), at 402-2780, by Friday, September 11.

*The Physician Office Practice Forum is sponsored by
Physician Office Practice Services (POPS) of Lehigh Valley Hospital*

LEHIGH VALLEY
HOSPITAL

17th & Chew
Post Office Box 7017
Allentown, PA 18105-7017

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Permit No. 1922

*Physician
Office Manager/
Office Staff Newsletter*

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This newsletter is published quarterly for the office staffs of physicians on the Medical Staff of Lehigh Valley Hospital. Articles should be submitted to Janet M. Laudenslager, Coordinator, Physician Office Practice Services, Lehigh Valley Hospital, 17th & Chew, P.O. Box 7017, Allentown, PA 18105-7017. For more information, please call Ms. Laudenslager at 402-2780.