News from Medical Records

Consent for Release of Information, Form #MRD-11, has been revised and is now available through Pic & Pac. This revised form includes separate patient authorization signature lines for release of sensitive information (drug and alcohol, mental health, HIV, etc.) which previously required the requestor to complete an additional authorization form. The result will be less duplication for the patient and the hospital. In addition, claims and requests for information can now be processed in a more timely manner.

If you have any questions regarding this form, please contact Sue Cassioun, Manager of Operations, Medical Record Department, at 402-4451.

News from Medical Staff Services

Welcome Aboard . . .

Welcome wishes are extended to Karen Fox who recently replaced Terry Mauser as Credentialing Technician. Karen comes to Medical Staff Services from Medical Records where she has held numerous positions since March, 1985. Most recently, Karen held the position of Team Leader/Analyst and was responsible for handling medical record suspensions.

Karen is located in Medical Staff Services along with Rita M. Mest, Director, Medical Staff Services, and Elizabeth (Bess) Ehnot, Receptionist. Mail for these individuals should be addressed to: Medical Staff Services, Cedar Crest & I-78, P.O. Box 689, Allentown, PA 18105-1556. The telephone number for this office is 402-8900. The Fax number is 402-8926.

Timely Reminder

It is of the utmost importance that Medical Staff Services have on file updated copies of Pa. license, DEA, and malpractice insurance cover sheets for members of the Medical Staff. Therefore, when you receive updates of these documents, please remember to send copies to Karen Fox, Medical Staff Services, Cedar Crest & I-78, P.O. Box 689, Allentown, PA 18105-1556, or fax them to 402-8926.
A Word About Using Electronic Federal Tax Payments
by Joan Rissmiller, Practice Administrator, General Surgical Associates, Ltd.

Although the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS) is not currently mandatory, when I received a PIN number, I was anxious to begin utilizing the telephone system.

On my first try, I was a little apprehensive. However, after two months of using the system, I am very comfortable with the user friendly paperless system. The coupons, preparation of checks, and delivery of checks to the bank have been eliminated. I am saving time and money, and encourage you to experience the same.

In order to give you an idea of what you can expect, I’d like to share my first time experience with you. Hopefully, you will avoid common mistakes that you might encounter as a first time user. The payment instruction booklet will provide you with a worksheet located on page 24. Make several copies of the two-sided worksheet to fill in the information prior to your actual telephone call. Keep this document as part of your permanent payroll record.

After dialing into the system, simply follow along on your completed worksheet. You are prompted to enter information. All entries are voiced back to you. If you entered incorrect numbers, you can edit by pressing the "*" key.

When entering the tax filing period in question 7, please keep in mind that the system is looking for quarterly filing periods. You need to enter 9703 for first quarter deposits, 9706 for second quarter deposits, etc.

Question 9, the digit verification code, can be figured out very easily. You simply add the number of your whole dollar amount -- Example $15,129.12 -- 1+5+1+2+9+1+2 = 21. To that calculation, you add the total number of digits in the dollar amount -- 7. Thus, 21+7 = 28. Therefore, 28 is the verification code.

Question 10 requires a further breakdown of the total deposit. Complete the appropriate section for Tax Form 941. You need to provide the Federal withholding amount, the Medicare amount, and the Social Security withholding amount. The sum of the three should equal the total deposit. If an entry error is made, you will be prompted and advised to start again.

After all the information has correctly been entered, the EFTPS responds with "You have entered." Pertinent information will be voiced back to you. You will then be given the option of accepting the information by pressing 1, or press 2 to start over. If you select 1, you will be informed that your payment has been accepted. An acknowledgement number will be given to you. Record that number for future reference. The number is repeated for you to review.

Remember, the system is user friendly. "Try it. You'll like it!" Good Luck.

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Recently enacted legislation gives you until July 1 to learn about the advantages of, enroll, and begin using the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System. Although you have until July 1, you are encouraged to begin taking advantage of the considerable conveniences offered by EFTPS as soon as you are able. However, to use EFTPS, you must first enroll. For more information, please call the EFTPS Customer Service number at 1-800-555-4477.
Inclement Weather Policy
by Colleen Burgess, Office Manager,
Allen Neurosurgical Association

It is important for the doctor/manager to communicate to the office staff the policy with regard to inclement weather which, in this area, is snow and/or sleet. Encourage your employees to use good judgment when deciding whether or not to travel. If your office will remain open, employees who anticipate difficulty in reporting to work should contact their manager or supervisor as early as possible. In the event of severe weather, the office may be closed. It is important to identify who will make the decision either to stay open or to close the entire office. Should the decision be made to close the office, a communications system must be established to contact employees and patients.

Your pay policy for a full day’s absence and for a few hours absence must be clearly defined. The policy must address both the hourly employee and the salaried employee. Some employers pay only for hours worked while other employers pay a full day’s wages to employees who only work part of the day because the employee made the effort the get to work. You may be able to request that employees use a vacation or personal day if they miss one full day.

Before creating your own policy, seek the advice of other office managers and be sure to have your policy reviewed by your attorney before implementation.

Upcoming Seminars and Educational Programs

A Physician Office Practice Forum will be held on Tuesday, February 11, from Noon to 2 p.m., in Classroom 1 at Lehigh Valley Hospital (Cedar Crest & I-78). Topics to be discussed include the PHAMIS 3.11 Upgrade and Pre-Admission Process Appointment Scheduling. For more information or to register for the forum, please contact Janet M. Seifert in Physician Relations at 402-8590.

How to Lead a Team (#39957) will be held on Friday, February 21, at the Clarion Hotel, 541-549 Hamilton Street, Allentown, Pa. No matter what kind of team you lead, plan now to attend this course to learn how to get the most out of your people and discover what they expect from you in return. You’ll gain the “how-tos” that are essential in today’s team-oriented workplace. For more information, please call CareerTrack Seminars at 1-800-334-6780.

Medicare Compliance (#M361H) will be held on Friday, February 28, at the Sheraton Inn Jetport, Allentown, Pa. Participate in this extensive one-day seminar and learn: what’s new in Medicare Part B, HCFA’s guidelines for evaluation and management documentation, complete 1500 Form instructions, including recent changes and requirements, and more! For more information, please call The Medical Management Institute 1-800-334-5724.

Fundamentals of Personnel Law for Managers and Supervisors (#39258) will be held on Wednesday, March 12, at the Allentown Hilton, 904 Hamilton Mall, Allentown, Pa. Find out how to avoid the most expensive legal mistakes managers and supervisors make when dealing with

(Continued on Page 4)
workers. The seminar will provide you with an understanding of exempt, non-exempt, overtime and other wage and hour issues, how to hire and supervise workers with disabilities, how to conduct legally sound performance appraisals, how to terminate without inviting a lawsuit, and more! For more information, contact SkillPath Seminars at 1-800-873-7545.

Managing Your Emotions in the Workplace (#41195) will be held on Tuesday, March 18, at the Clarion Hotel, 541-549 Hamilton Street, Allentown, Pa. What you learn at this program will help you: respond with a level head, even if you feel like blowing your fuse, confront people and issues you've been avoiding, so conflicts don't fester, project confidence and composure -- when you're short on both, say what's really on your mind -- so you don't bottle up your resentment, and more. For more information, contact CareerTrack Seminars at 1-800-334-6780.

Confidentiality of Medical Records will be held on Thursday, March 20, at the Allentown Hilton, 904 Hamilton Mall, Allentown, Pa. This half-day seminar is designed for hospital administrators, health care providers, medical records professionals, and business or office managers in the medical field as an explanation of the laws and their effect on the recordkeeping process. For more information, contact Lorman Business Center at (715) 833-3940.

Coaching and Teambuilding Skills for Managers and Supervisors (#37725) will be held on Thursday, March 20, at the Allentown Hilton, 904 Hamilton Mall, Allentown, Pa. This one-day workshop is guaranteed to sharpen your leadership skills and boost your team's productivity. Some of the things you'll learn include: how to inspire people to "go the extra mile," how to give feedback that helps your workers correct shortcomings and do their very best, how to create an environment of caring and cooperation, how to deal with difficult workers and turn problems into pluses, and more. For more information, contact SkillPath Seminars at 1-800-873-7545.

Peoples Skills Workshop will be held on Tuesday, April 22, at the Holiday Inn & Conference Center, Routes 512 & 22, Bethlehem, Pa. This program, which is especially designed for front desk, business, and clinical support staff, will include topics such as patient relations and communication skills, managing work and home stress, handling difficult patients, and working together -- teamwork. For more information, contact Hilda Maron at 402-1350.

The Professional Association of Health Care Office Managers (PAHCOM) 9th Annual Conference will be held May 7-10 in Buffalo, NY.

Each year, it becomes more apparent that today's office managers have to continue learning in order to keep up with the ever-changing demands of their profession. As new managed care concepts and formations continue to evolve, new requirements are being placed on office managers and administrators to learn about new coding and insurance requirements, new managed care contract standards, new Medicare provisions, HCFA, CLIA, OSHA, etc., -- the list goes on!

The speakers for this 1997 conference, including Joan Rissmiller, CMM, Practice Administrator for General Surgical Associates, offer a wide spectrum of knowledge and expertise condensed into three days of intensive education sessions. This is a wonderful opportunity
to improve personal knowledge and confidence, become more efficient, more profitable, and make your practice a more rewarding place to work.

The Lehigh Valley Chapter of PAHCOM, established in 1993, is 75 members strong and meets monthly to discuss current health care issues both on a national and local level.

For more information regarding the national conference or the Lehigh Valley Chapter of PAHCOM, please contact Colleen Burgess, CMM, Area Representative and Office Manager for Allen Neurosurgical Association, at 433-3143.

Who’s New . . .

Mary Colyer, Office Manager
Valley OB-GYN Associates Ltd.
322 S. 17th Street
Allentown, PA 18104-6734
(610) 434-4015
Fax: (610) 435-4821

Dawn Kaplan, Office Manager
Cardiology Care Specialists
3340 Hamilton Blvd.
Allentown, PA 18103-4596
(610) 433-6442
Fax: (610) 776-6645

Rosanne Kocher, Office Manager
Valley Oral Surgery, PC
1259 S. Cedar Crest Blvd.
Suite 302
Allentown, PA 18103-6267
(610) 437-1727
Fax: (610) 437-4715

Kim Wankel, Office Manager
Eastern PA Nephrology Associates
1230 S. Cedar Crest Blvd.
Suite 301
Allentown, PA 18103-6231
(610) 432-4529
Fax: (610) 432-2206

Best Wishes to Carolyn Lang who recently retired as Office Manager of Eastern PA Nephrology Associates!
From the Editor:

Please help us keep our records accurate. If your office manager has changed, please call Janet Seifert in Medical Staff Services at (610) 402-8590.

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 May 1, 1997, 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 (610) 402-8590.