

Colorado Connection

The Official Newsletter of Colorado MGMA

President's Column By Jan Krause, FACMPE



CMGMA will have a strong voice in many arenas in the upcoming year! Our board looks forward to positive relationships and interactions with our members and strategic partners. I expect us to lead by example, and believe that with this team we will be enormously successful!

Our annual planning meeting will be on November 6, and we look forward to defining direction for CMGMA. As a CMGMA member your input and thoughts are always welcome and I encourage you to contact any board member with ideas.

It is my pleasure to introduce your new leadership team, all successful individuals. The executive (voting) members of the board generously embrace a four-year commitment to contribute their time to the association.

John Milewski, CMPE, from the Colorado Allergy and Asthma Centers and CMGMA President-Elect, has a strong voice of reason and ready humor. In addition to his secretarial role, John organized and led the very successful legislative receptions for the past two years. Lance Goudzwaard, MSHA, FACMPE, and CMGMA Secretary brings experience from serving on the CMGMA Salary Survey committee and Education committee. Lance is quick as lightning to define an issue and suggest creative solutions. The CMGMA Member at Large, Judi Spurgeon, from Southern Colorado Clinic, P.C., has exceptional experience in this position and will continue to bring sensitivity to people and issues, yet when necessary, is strong and persistent. Mary Jo Heins, FACMPE, has made generous contributions of her time and skills to the board in her three years of service. She will play a key advisory role this year as the CMGMA Immediate Past President.

The Chairs also provide a valuable service to the association. As CMGMA continues to grow in membership, public visibility, and quality educational/survey activities, the volunteer work time also grows. Our newest Chair is occupied by Mike Chisholm, FACMPE, College Forum Representative and Practice Administrator, Academy Women's Healthcare Associates. Mike is also a new Fellow, who completed his research paper on practices' integration with hospitals. Jeff Milburn, CMPE, was recently recruited as Third Party Payer Committee Chair. Jeff is the brains behind the Payer Survey. With 73 responses, members surpassed our expected target, and indicated that they expect this to be a valuable tool. Jeff is also famous for his dry humor and shrewd business savvy. Eric Chappell, Salary Survey Committee, is a reliable, heavy lifter for the board. Expect to see some positive direction from Eric with the physician and staff survey in the coming year. Hank Arellano, Membership Committee, will be serving his second year in that spot. Scott Raberge, Corporate Affiliate Representative, is serving his final year on the board, and will train his replacement. Scott has contributed so much to the board in the past few years and as we savor his remaining tenure, we will bid him a fond farewell. The CMGMA Legislative Liaison spot is filled by Janet McIntyre, FACMPE. Janet is responsible for increasing CMGMA's visibility and involvement in Colorado legislative activities. She has become personally acquainted with many of the legislators, and has advanced our knowledge about when and how to influence pending legislation. She has two excellent recruits to assist her efforts in Craig Bakken, CMPE and Debra Robinson. Sheri Page, a newcomer to the Education committee in the 2008/9 year, has done an awesome job for us. Sheri has taken on responsibilities outside of the education area in facilitating the recent CMGMA luncheon at Skyridge, and by being an all around dependable and valuable team member.

We love your feedback! We need your corrective comments, and we love your compliments when we get it right.

2010 Important Dates

Legislative Reception
January 21, 2010
5:00-7:00 p.m.
University Club
Denver, CO

4 Corners Conference
April 28-30, 2010
Sandia Resort
Albuquerque, NM

Fall Conference
September 15-16, 2010
Red Lion Hotel
Denver, CO

Visit www.cmgma.com
or call
303-756-8380
for more
information

The College Corner By Mike Chisholm, FACMPE

It is my privilege to take the reigns from Julie Kjack, FACMPE, in providing support to those of you who want to become members of the American College of Medical Practice Executives, or advance to Certification or Fellow status. This won't be easy because I don't know anyone with Julie's energy and enthusiasm for the College! But one can try.

By way of introduction I have been in health care management for over 35 years (I started at the age of 6). My career has included work in the hospital and payer sector, consulting, and medical groups. Four years ago I took my first medical practice administrator position. I don't think that I have ever worked harder or had more fun.

I joined ACMPE five years ago. I earned my CMPE three years ago and recently learned that I have earned the status of Fellow in the College. So I am psyched, and hope to be able to share some of my energy and enthusiasm for those who might benefit from it. It sounds like a cliché, but really, the process of learning and growth offered by ACMPE is very rewarding. For example, the paper that I wrote for my Fellowship was on the topic of Medical Group and Hospital integration. This topic is relevant to my group because integration strategies are likely to become strategically relevant within our market area. What I learned in researching the paper has been valuable to our practice. In all honesty, I learned things that I wouldn't have, if I hadn't written the paper.

I still have some learning to do in regard to my role as College Forum Rep and how I can best be of help to those interested in its opportunities. But for now, let me offer to listen to your questions and do my best to support your efforts. I would be happy to share my ACMPE experience with those who are interested. I also would appreciate any suggestion that you might have for me. Please feel free to contact me.

You can reach me at 719-622-3410 or by e-mail at mchisholm@awha.com

Payer Survey Thank You!

Questionnaires for the Payer Survey were arriving until nearly midnight on September 30, a day when billing folks have much to do. Members really rallied to get this information to CMGMA. Gina Johnson, Asst. Administrator, Western Skies Billing Service deserves special thanks, along with Sheryl Hieber, Surface Creek Family Practice, Cedaredge and Linda C. Epp, Director, HSC Management, LLC

Thanks to all who worked hard to make this report available to the membership!

CMGMA Board of Directors

Jan Krause, MA, FACMPE, President
Krause Kirkpatrick Bertrand, P.C.
950 S Cherry Street, Suite 200
Denver, CO 80246
303-815-1100 fax: 303-815-1101
jkrause@kkb-cpa.com

John Milewski, CMPE, President-Elect
Colorado Allergy and Asthma Centers
125 Rampart Way, Ste. 200
Denver, CO 80230
720-858-7431 fax: 720-858-7603
johnm@coloradoallergy.com

Lance Goudzwaard, MSHA, FACMPE, Secretary
Arapahoe Gastroenterology
1001 Southpark Dr.
Littleton, CO 80120
303-977-4242 fax: 303-952-2809
lcg@arapahoegi.com

Mary Jo Heins, FACMPE, Immediate Past President
Clear Creek Medical Group
4200 W Conejos PI #300
Denver, CO 80204
303-893-8300 fax: 303-825-7927
mjheins@clearcreekmed.com

Judith Spurgeon, Member-At-Large
Southern Colorado Clinic, P.C.
P.O. Box 9000
Pueblo, CO 81008
719-553-1808 fax: 719-553-2213
jspurgeon@scc.md

**Colorado MGMA Office
Summit Meetings, Inc.**
90 Madison Street, Suite 403
Denver, CO 80206-5414
303-756-8380 fax 303-759-8861
cmgma@conferenceoffice.com

Past President Report By Mary Jo Heins, FACMPE *We Understand One Another* – *Pass it Along!*

I was chatting on the phone with a colleague this week. She said, "You'll understand when I say doctors are the biggest _____."

Yes, I understand! And you understand! Others in our medical groups generally don't understand. They don't sit where we sit. And so, 2 thoughts regarding those statements:

- Your fellow CMGMA members do understand you. Call them, email them, do lunch! Get the support you need and the information you're craving in the midst of constant healthcare change. Come to the next CMGMA event on the docket – the Legislative Reception on January 20th.

- Spread the word! Forward this email to the practice next door or the manager of the small family practice doc you see personally. Pass along the information you receive via CMGMA newsletters, emails, and seminars to educate your elected officials, your neighbors, your friends on the providers' perspective of healthcare.

As always, we're better and stronger together!

Salary Survey Report By Eric Chappell

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of you for your participation in this year's CMGMA Staff and Physician Salary Surveys. Your continued participation and support provide each of us a valuable resource in our practices. Each of you should have received a CD in the mail that contains the completed survey data. If you participated in the Physician Salary Survey, and contributed physician compensation, you should have received a second disk in the mail.

This year the survey was emailed to 334 CMGMA members and additional practices with the support from the Colorado Medical Society. Although participation was down this year, 89 questionnaires were returned, representing 865 physicians and over 2,400 employees. Approximately 27% of the CMGMA membership returned the survey this year.

The CMGMA board has begun working on next year's Staff and Physician Survey. The 2010 Staff and Physician Salary Survey will be distributed in February or March 2010. So remember to keep copies of your physician's and staff's 2009 payroll information including retirement contributions.

If you are interested in participating in next year's survey committee, please contact me at echappell@coloradosurgicalsevice.com.

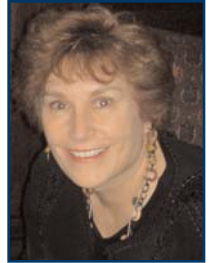
THANK YOU

Recently many of you completed a survey regarding the integration of Great-West Healthcare by CIGNA.

We want to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to provide us with what we feel is invaluable information. It will be used as we continue to improve our policies and procedures.

With appreciation for your time.

CIGNA Healthcare



Ready or Not, Medicare RAC Auditors Are Coming To Colorado

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services designed the Recovery Audit Contractors (RAC) program to detect and correct past improper payments made on claims provided to Medicare beneficiaries under part A or B. 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. Anyone who files claims with Medicare will be subject to review by the RACs. This includes **physicians, hospitals, home health agencies, and Durable Medical Equipment providers.**

In January 2009, CMS released an "Update to the Evaluation of the 3-Year Demonstration", which stated RACs succeeded in correcting more than \$1.03 billion of Medicare improper payments. Approximately 95 percent of these were overpayments collected from providers, while the remaining 4 percent were underpayments paid to providers.

Some of the reasons improper payments can occur on claims are:

- Payments are made for services that do not meet Medicare's medical necessity criteria.
- Payments are made for services that are incorrectly coded.
- Providers fail to submit documentation when requested, or fail to submit enough documentation to support a claim.
- Payments are made for duplicate services.

Are you prepared? The RACs are paid on a contingency based fee and have every incentive to find incorrectly paid claims. The program will look back up to three years but not before October 1, 2007. It also allows for review of claims in the current fiscal year. Any overpayments found by the RACs will need to be reimbursed to Medicare, which can collect their reimbursement from any future claims checks owed to the provider.

What can providers do to get ready?

Conduct an internal assessment to ensure that submitted claims meet the Medicare rules. Know where previous improper payments have been found. Look to see what improper payments were found by the RACs. (Permanent RAC findings will be listed on the RACs' website.) Consider hiring a third party who can walk you through the process and perform a RAC Base Line Audit. A Base Line Audit will identify non-compliance of documentation, coding and billing to give guidance on all corrective actions that need to be put in place to avoid and/or minimize potential fines and optimize the practice's revenue.

Given the significant overpayments uncovered during the demonstration period, health care providers should do all that they can to assess their risk, develop a plan, and take immediate action to get their "house in order" now.

For more information about the RAC audits, go to: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/RAC/>
www.connollyhealthcare.com/RAC

NETWORK INTEGRATION

As many of your know, Cigna recently conducted an online survey through the Colorado Medical Society to inquire our opinions of recent integration activity.

Below is an excerpt of their findings:

Colorado Physician and Office Managers Survey Results	% Rating item Excellent/Very Good/Good	
	Office Managers	Physicians
1. Ease of precertification with Great-West HealthCare	73%	36%
2. Effectiveness of case management and discharge planning offered by Great-West HealthCare	62%	38%
3. Ease of use of Great-West HealthCare call centers	74%	31%
4. Ease of use of Great-West HealthCare eServices (physician website for claims, eligibility, and benefits)	69%	21%
5. Timeliness of Great-West HealthCare claims payments	73%	38%
6. Resolution of Great-West HealthCare claims problems	58%	41%
7. Ability to communicate with CIGNA and Great-West HealthCare	37%	29%
8. Overall, how well CIGNA has managed the acquisition of Great-West HealthCare	44%	13%

Responses: 59 total (20 physicians) (39 office managers)

KEY POINTS:

Work to integrate the CIGNA and GWHC provider networks started soon after the transaction close date of April 1, 2008.

- Status by Contract Type:
 - 1.) Hospitals – 90+% of hospitals are integrated or scheduled to integrate.
 - 2.) Physicians – 251 medical groups/clinics/practices completed or on schedule.
 - 3.) Local Ancillary – A strategy will be defined and implemented in late 2009 and 2010.
- System Capabilities are one of the main drivers of integration timing resources need to load, audit and implement fee schedules on claims platforms.

CMGMA Representatives & Committee Chairs

**Mike Chisholm, FACMPE,
College Forum Representative**
Academy Women's Healthcare Associates
6071 E. Woodmen Road, Suite 405
Colorado Springs, CO 80923
719-622-3410 fax: 719-622-3456
mchisholm@awha.com

Scott Raberge, Corporate Affiliate Rep.
Professional Finance Co., Inc.
5754 W. 11th Street, Suite 100
Greeley, CO 80634
970-352-5000 x321 fax: 970-352-7972
scott@pfcollects.com

Hank Arellano, Membership Committee
Vascular Institute of the Rockies
1601 E. 19th Ave., Ste 3950
Denver, CO 80218
303-539-0736 x26 fax: 303-539-0737
hank@vascularinstitute.com

**Jeffrey B. Milburn, CMPE,
Third Party Payer Committee**
Milburn & Associates
1680 Old Stage Rd.
Colorado Springs, CO 80906
719-375-3158
jmilburn@jmilburn.com

Eric Chappell, Salary Survey Committee
Colorado Surgical Service, P.C.
3455 Lutheran Parkway, Ste. 290
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033
303-467-2450 fax: 303-672-8207
echappell@coloradosurgicalservice.com

**Sheri Page, MBA,
Education Committee Chair**
Integrated Ear, Nose, and Throat, P.C.
10099 RidgeGate Pkwy., Ste. 230
Lone Tree, CO 80124
303-607-5115 fax: 303-706-0177
spage@integratedent.com

**Janet McIntyre, MBA, FACMPE,
Legislative Liaison**
JEM Healthcare Consultants, LLC
824 S. Corona St.
Denver, CO 80209
720-301-7130
janetemc@msn.com

CMGMA 4th Annual Golf Tournament

On Monday August 10th we had 85 members, friends and family of the Colorado Medical Group Management Association join together for a fun filled day of networking and golf. The weather couldn't have been any better as it was another glorious sun filled afternoon in beautiful Colorado. Following play we enjoyed an incredible dinner and awards presentation on the outdoor deck of The Ranch Country Club.

Thank you again to our gracious sponsors who made the tournament a success:

Exclusive Tee Box Sponsor
NAVICURE

Beverage Cart Tickets
Krause Kirkpatrick Bertrand

Hole Sponsors
eTransMed, Medical Protective, Ironstone Bank, COPIC, TBG Fraud Solutions

- Tournament winners
- **Cliff Holmes, Pete Olander, Steve Isenmann and Kade Sessions**—1st place low gross
 - **Kade Sessions**—men's long drive
 - **Jill Sladek**—women's long drive
 - **Ray Hall**—most accurate drive
 - **John Chapman**—closest to the pin
 - **Lucas Hutchison**—longest putt

We look forward to you joining us for another fun filled exciting networking golf event again in 2010. Make sure you are a part of the excitement. Thanks, Scott Raberge.



Eric Worthan, Scott Raberge, Steve Nelson and Peter McNally



Nick Muzynsk, John Alfano and Greg Pfanstiel



Ranch Country Club

Lance Goudzwaard, Eric Chappell, Trey Smith and Jeremy Falasco

Where's the Ball?



John Chapman, Kari Osborne, Mary Jo Heins and Craig Fales



Enjoying a great CMGMA event!

