



HPCAIA Update

Bi-weekly News for Hospice Professionals in Iowa

July 2, 2010

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HPCAIA wishes you and your staff a wonderful 4th of July holiday weekend!

Plan Now to Attend HPCAIA Fall Conference

Mark your calendars now for November 1 – 3, 2010 and plan to attend the HPCAIA Fall Conference at the Scheman Building in Ames. The 2010 Fall Conference offers two general sessions, 32 breakout sessions and a pre-conference workshop, along with the trade show and many excellent networking opportunities.

Pre-Conference Workshop

This year we will welcome back Dr. Moses Altsech, a 2009 Fall Conference keynote speaker to lead the pre-conference workshop. He will be focusing on patient and employee satisfaction; why they are both critical, how they intertwine and how to measure each and respond to those measurements.

This full-day pre-conference workshop will be held on Monday, November 1 at the Gateway Hotel and Conference Center. More detailed information, along with registration information, will be included in the Fall Conference brochure which will be mailed later this summer.

Honored Volunteer Recognition

The Honored Volunteer Recognition Ceremony and luncheon will again be held at Hilton Coliseum, on Tuesday, November 2 from 12:15 – 1:15 pm. Honored volunteer nomination information and forms will be mailed soon.

Keynote Speakers and Education Sessions

The 2010 Fall Conference will feature two keynote speakers. Kicking things off on Tuesday will be Dr. David Casarett, NHPCO's consultant medical director and author of **Last Acts: Discovering Possibility and Opportunity at the End of Life**.

Education sessions on Tuesday will include offerings of particular interest to volunteers and volunteer coordinators. Wednesday education sessions will focus on topics of interest to clinical and administrative staff, including sessions by Don Schumacher and Judi Lund Person from NHPCO.

The closing keynote on Wednesday will be presented by Cy Wakeman. Cy is a dynamic speaker from Sioux City who will leave you with a tear and a smile.

This will definitely be a Fall Conference you don't want to miss! If you have any questions regarding the 2010 HPCAI Fall Conference, please contact [Stacey Nay](#) at 515-243-1046.

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CMS to Review PECOS Enrollment Process

Earlier this week, CMS announced it will not, for the time being, implement changes that would automatically reject claims based on orders, certifications, and referrals made by providers that have not yet attempted to enroll in the Provider Enrollment, Chain and Ownership System (PECOS) and have not had their applications approved by July 6. CMS further stated that claims will continue to be reviewed and paid as they have historically been reviewed and paid, and that providers should not see any change in the processing of submitted claims until further notice.

CMS issued this notice in response to hearing concerns from providers that had encountered problems enrolling and having their applications approved in the PECOS system. On May 5, CMS issued an [interim final rule \(IRF\)](#) with comment period, effective July 6, which implements several provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. The IRF generally requires physicians and other eligible health professionals enrolled in Medicare to be enrolled in PECOS in order to order or refer for certain services, including durable medical equipment, home health and Part B laboratory, imaging and specialist services. The IRF also requires Medicare contractors to reject claims, beginning July 6, from providers and suppliers for these services if the ordering or referring physician or eligible professional does not have an approved enrollment record in PECOS.

CMS is still accepting comments on the IRF, but must receive all comments by July 6. HPCAI will continue to monitor this issue and will provide additional information once available.

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Hospices and Medicaid Work on System Improvements

Last week, HPCAI and representatives from hospices across the state met with Iowa Medicaid to discuss plans to integrate the hospice program into the Medicaid ISIS case management system. The goal is to streamline hospice processes with Medicaid, reduce hospice paperwork and waiting times for DHS case worker approval by permitting hospices to enter information directly into ISIS. Ultimately, Iowa Medicaid hopes to integrate the new hospice ISIS system with the Medicaid billing system to essentially eliminate the need for the pass through billing for nursing home room and board.

Hospices advised Medicaid on the different workflows within the hospice program to guide the programming for the ISIS system. Participants promised to develop workflow examples for Medicaid by mid-July to help facilitate the work that still needs to be completed to implement the ISIS system.

Once Medicaid completes the programming work, hospices will receive an informational letter and opportunities for training. Iowa Medicaid hopes to have the first phase of the project implemented by Spring 2011. Overall, reactions from participant hospices were very positive as they recognized the potential that these changes will have for process improvement.

In addition, Medicaid is also working on draft rules to ensure that Medicaid is consistent with the Medicare conditions of participation. HPCAI previously provided Medicaid with suggested policy changes to update the rules including the recognition of inpatient hospice programs (hospice houses). HPCAI has advocated that Iowa Medicaid not only recognize these programs as hospice providers but also pay room and board for Medicaid patients similar to nursing facilities. HPCAI expects the draft rules to be released this fall.

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Conversations Continue Regarding Nursing Facility Quality Assessment

HPCAI met with representatives of the Iowa Medicaid program this week to discuss the unintended consequences of the nursing facility quality assurance fee, which does not provide an add-on payment for hospice patients in the nursing facility.

Iowa Medicaid enunciated again their position that hospices should not pay the \$10 per day add-on payment as it would exceed 100 percent of the nursing facility base rate in violation of law. Medicaid also clarified that they have been in communication with the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals who agree with this interpretation. The Associations representing nursing facilities continue to educate their members on this legal interpretation.

While appreciative of clarification on this important issue from Medicaid, HPCAI continued to raise strong concerns about the underlying problem where the nursing facility quality assurance fee has now created a disincentive for hospice referrals which will reduce access to hospice care, has strained relationships between hospices and nursing facilities, and has the potential to significantly disrupt hospice operations.

Medicaid has stated that they understand the severity of the issue and committed to researching other states' nursing facility assessment programs and their treatment of hospice patients in order to try and identify a potential solution.

HPCAI continues to encourage members to contact HPCAI with names of facilities who have stated that they will no longer refer to hospice or who will limit the number of hospice beds as a result of the quality assurance program. This and any other information or data related to a decline in nursing facility referrals to hospice will be very useful in HPCAI's continued advocacy efforts.

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Member News

Maggie Elliott, executive director, Iowa City Hospice is the new chair for District 6.

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HPCAI Calendar

- **September 2, 10 a.m.**
HPCAI Board Meeting
HPCAI Board Room, Des Moines
- **November 2 – 3**
HPCAI Fall Conference
Scherman Building, Iowa State Center, Ames

To add items to the HPCAI Calendar, send information to [Stacey Nay](#).

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