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The OHARA Times



OHARA's goal is to provide case management with spectacular outcomes for all parties involved. We recognize that time is valuable and appreciate the opportunity you give us to earn your business with every referral. Thank you for your continued support.

Nebraska Update

For those of you who adjust claims and approve payment for hospital bills in Nebraska, we wanted to make you aware of some possible upcoming changes in the Nebraska State Law (in case you haven't already heard). Bill LB 588 has been passed.

As of January 1, 2008, the Nebraska Workers Compensation Court will drastically change the way hospital bills are paid, and ultimately, reduce the amount of payment hospitals receive for their services.

As of right now, all hospital bills in Nebraska are paid on a percentage discount of billed charges according to the area they are located and within the number of days the bill is paid. For example, a large hospital in a metropolitan area is subject to a 20% discount off of billed charges, if paid within the recommended 60 day time period. However, if the payment delays past 60 days, the discount off billed charges is reduced to 15%. The overall percentage discount decreases according to hospital size and location.

LB 588 will abolish the current system explained above, and adopt a Medicare based payment system.

The most frequently encountered workers' compensation DRG's (Diagnosis Related Groups) will be affected by this bill. They represent a group of revenue codes commonly associated with a typical diagnosis. Rather than paying the bill with a certain percentage discount, the bills would be paid at a set amount intended for

What are YOU saying?

OHARA recently conducted a customer service survey.

We would like to thank all of you who took time out of your busy schedules to complete and return the survey. The results are posted below.

94% of all adjusters surveyed say that:

- * OHARA Case Managers handle files proactively, professionally and efficiently
- * Communication from the OHARA case manager was precise and timely.
- * Reports were concise with attention to action plans, updates, and follow up.
- * Consideration was given to containing costs associated with the file.
- * They are satisfied with the service and experience they have with OHARA Managed Care.

that DRG, which they estimate to be 140% of the Medicare approved payment amount. For those of you unfamiliar with the Medicare payment amount, it is drastically lower than the current Nebraska Fee Schedule. Even paying at 140%, it will reduce the amount of payment hospitals receive from workers compensation cases by a large amount. Under the new law, the bill would revert back to 'billed charges' if payment is not received within 30 days.

There is no way to tell exactly how hospitals will react to this change or how it will affect the way they bill or collect on monies owed to them.

It is certain, however, that it will affect everyone involved in the workers compensation arena: providers, hospitals, adjusters and case managers alike.

For more information about the Nebraska Workers Compensation Court, you can visit their website at www.wcc.ne.gov.

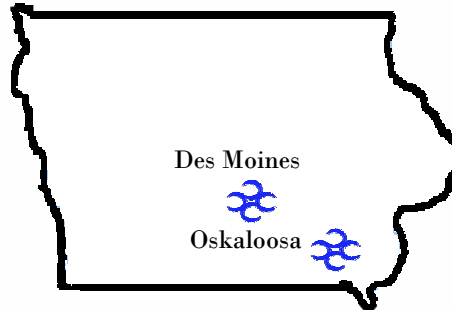
INTRODUCING OUR IOWA STAFF..

CHRISTY MCDONALD, RN, BA, CCM

Christy has been providing case management services to clients since 1993 and more specifically, field based workers compensation case management since 2000.

Christy's experience includes complex catastrophic case management, occupational health and special training in ergonomics. She enjoys working with employers to facilitate return to work and has a special interest in orthopedic injuries.

Residing in Oskaloosa, Iowa, Christy will be providing on-site case management services to customers in Iowa.



Referrals can be made by contacting (800) 363-4272, ext. 1825 or e-mail JoanH@oharallc.com.

LYNETTE STOWE, RN

Lynette has been performing case management services since 1997.

Her professional experiences include occupational medicine, home health, open heart care, transplants, anesthesia technician and surgical nursing.

Her special interests include management of difficult or complex injuries and working with multiple injuries.

Residing near Des Moines, Iowa, Lynette will be providing on-site case management services to customers in Iowa.

For complete staff listing, biographies and pictures, please visit our website at www.oharallc.com



Last edition, we briefly discussed the stress of being an adjuster. We shared one way to eliminate and cope with that stress: *exercise*.

So, lets talk about something that requires less physical, and more mental action. What is the one thing that can better your ability to cope with stress? Something that is actually contagious? **A Positive Attitude!**

I say a positive attitude and not positive thinking for a reason. Many positive thinking experts dwell on continued happiness and optimism. But lets face it, bad things happen every day in this world and probably, in our jobs at times. We all know, it's hard to maintain a positive attitude toward angry clients or co-workers; and furthermore, it requires a lot of effort.

A recent article from the Mayo Clinic suggests that having a positive outlook on life can have a drastic affect on your health. Many people with negative mindsets are already feeling so bad about themselves and circumstances, that they find it hard to cope with every day stress. Their studies found that a positive attitude enables a person to better handle stress, and in turn, triggers a healthier and happier life.

So, if you find yourself in the trap of negative thinking, how do you get out of the rut and arm yourself with a positive attitude? Some experts suggest looking at problems or circumstances as opportunities to grow, rather than hindrances. Or, paying attention to the thoughts you have in certain stressful situations and consciously steering them in a more positive direction. However, it could be as simple as getting around someone who is having a less stressful day. Their positive outlook on life might just cheer you up and turn your negative thinking around.

We all have the ability to choose a positive attitude. And, choosing it more often will afford us the opportunity to better cope and even reduce the level of stress in our lives.

Trivia!

What type of injury occurs with repetitive motion of overhead lifting?

Please visit our website and click on the trivia link for the answer and more information on this topic.

FRESH CALIFORNIA SALSA!

Growing tomatoes this summer? Don't know what to do with them all?

Make some salsa! This recipe yields 2-3 cups.

Perfect for a family meal or get together!

- 4 large tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 large onion, minced
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced
- Salt to taste

In a small mixing bowl, combine tomatoes, onion, garlic, cilantro and lime juice. Add jalapenos 2 teaspoons at a time, tasting after each addition to see how hot the salsa has become. Jalapeno peppers vary in heat, so it is important to taste the salsa to ensure you do not make it too hot to handle. Salt to taste. Enjoy!