



Executive Director Update

It's hard to believe the first part of the year has flown by, and it's summertime. I've continued to work closely with payers, preferred vendors, and explore other opportunities. One of our goals from our strategic plan is to provide a Learning Management System (LMS), e-learning 24/7 training, that is convenient and cost effective, and we are excited to offer an annual training bundle of 8 courses in mid-July that includes: Emergency Preparedness, Fire Safety, HIPAA, Infection Control & Blood Borne Pathogens, Fraud, Waste & Abuse, Sexual Harrassment, and Child Abuse Prevention.

Also, I would like to invite you to participate in a free MIPS/MACRA webinar for NLPHO members on Wednesday, July 10th at noon. We value your feedback and your continued support!

Monica Pittman



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Staying on Top of Quality Measures: MIPS, MACRA and the Like

As part of the **Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA)**, now known as the **Quality Payment Program (QPP)**, CMS is moving Medicare Part B payments away from fee-for-service (FFS) payments and into value-based payment calculated on provider **cost** and **quality**. The QPP penalties and rewards started out small; but for 2019, the penalty or reward is either a positive 7% or a negative -7%! There is a two-year lag between the data submitted (QPP program year) and the payment year – meaning your Medicare Part B reimbursement rate in 2021 is based on the data you submit in 2019.

Not many providers can afford a -7% decline in their Medicare reimbursement rate; therefore, the NLPHO encourages members to: 1) know the changes for 2019 QPP reporting, 2) review last year's performance, 3) determine if you are in the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) track or the Advanced Alternative Payment Models (APMs) track, 4) strategically select quality measures to report on for 2019, and 5) go for the exceptional performance bonus money of \$500 million which gets distributed to top performers. Details on each point will be covered in a **free webinar** for NLPHO members on **July 10th, 2019 at Noon**.

Key QPP changes for 2019:

- Performance category weights changed to: **Quality** 45%, **Cost** 15%, **Improvement Activities** (IA) 15%, and **Promoting Interoperability** (PI) 25%.
 - Security risk assessment required to earn points for promoting interoperability!
- Overall penalty and reward went from 5% to 7% (positive or negative) for 2019
- Performance thresholds changed: 30 points needed to avoid penalty and 75 points needed for and exceptional performance.
- Eligible clinicians (EC) was expanded to include: physical therapists, occupational therapists, clinical psychologist, and registered dietitians or nutrition professionals.
- Excluded eligible clinicians (ECs) include:
 - Providers in 1st year of billing Medicare
 - Qualifying APM participants
 - Clinicians who fall below the following criteria:
 - \$90,000 or less in Medicare covered professional services
 - 200 or fewer Medicare Patients or covered professional services

Webinar phone (888-601-0376) and link is:
<https://www.uberconference.com/christiej31awrence>

Security Risk Assessments: Use an Independent 3rd Party

According to John Mark Casey, CEO of Business Communications Inc. (BCI), one of the most trusted technology partners in the Southeast, practices need to utilize an independent, third party firm to conduct their required security risk assessment for MIPS. "A security risk assessment is not a pass / fail, but rather a review to establish a baseline of security and to identify gaps that need to be fixed to ensure data is secure from outside attack and internal breaches of protocol," said Mr. Casey. "You need an objective third party to tell you the truth. They also need to provide you with a detailed report of your security risks for your compliance documentation."

For more information on this topic please contact Monica at NLPHO (318) 387-7358.

The Future of Healthcare Payments



Technology is transforming healthcare; and while the current method of paying by check works, there is clearly a more efficient way of doing things.

Technology is transforming healthcare; and while the current method of paying by check works, there is clearly a more efficient way of doing things. The Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare (CAQH), an alliance of health plans and other interested parties, has long been advocating for greater use of electronic healthcare transactions to reduce administrative costs and improve accuracy.

As with any repetitive, administrative task, there is tremendous potential for efficiency gains and cost savings by using technology for instance:

- **The Association for Financial Professionals (AFP) survey estimates the all-in-cost for processing a check can be up to \$75 per check.**
- **The CAQH estimates use of an automated clearing house (ACH) saves an average of \$10.39 per the cost of a claim and saves 40 minutes of time by automating key claims management processes.**

Two primary electronic payment options exist:

- **Virtual cards** are a one-time use credit card number for a specific amount and claim. They are entered into a credit card or virtual terminal for payment to the

provider's bank account. The major advantage is the low effort to get started and a familiar process. Virtual cards can be downloaded from a portal, faxed or mailed. Costs range from 3-6% of a payment, plus the staff cost of keying a card. While faster than a check, it is still not the fastest or lowest cost option available.

- **Automated Clearing House (ACH)**, a.k.a., direct deposit, funds are transferred to the provider's bank through the Federal Reserve. Set up can take a little more time up front because a provider must share their bank deposit information, but the savings speed and efficiency of future payments are worth it. Pricing for ACH is less than 2% and becomes even more efficient with larger volumes of payments. It is fast, efficient and flexible, with payments available individually by claim, by payer or all payers combined.

Zelis has a central portal where providers, hospitals and health systems gain access to a central portal where they can manage payments to and from multiple payers and payer groups from a single account. For more information contact Theresa Bergeron, Zelis Provider Contracting Representative at 504-680-4494.

United Healthcare Update

Information gathered at a provider information expo on May 8th in Shreveport includes:

UHC On Air offers you access to live and on-demand education and training videos you can watch anywhere, anytime, from any device. The program includes these topics and many more:

- Ask an Advocate Sessions
- Claims Processing and Payment
- Provider Training and Orientations
- Behavioral Health Issues
- Reform and Regulations
- Accountable Care Tools and Programs

UHC Quick Reference Guides:

- Coding for Adult Health Quality Measures
- Coding Procedures for Welcome to Medicare Visit, Annual Wellness Visit and other Preventive Screenings
- ICD-10 Codes to Identify Social Determinants of Health

Payment Integrity Overview and ACE, Smart Edits

UHC DSNP Plan Benefit Overview

For more information on these topics please contact Monica at NLPHO (318) 387-7358.



ACCESS CREDIT MANAGEMENT, INC.

Accounts Receivable & Collection Service

NLPHO has established several preferred partners it recommends to NLPHO members. NLPHO has vetted each partner on your behalf. This quarter, we want to introduce you to Access Credit Management.

The NLPHO has negotiated a great rate (15 – 20% lower than the national average) from **Access Credit Management, Inc. (ACMI)** for its members needing an experienced and reputable accounts receivable and collection service. In addition to a great rate, ACMI offers a **37.5% higher than average collection rate** (24% vs national average of 15-16%), **FREE access to ACMI's 24/7 online performance monitoring portal** where clients can see their accounts and collection reports – normally a \$250 per year client cost.

“We’re committed to helping healthcare professionals manage cash flow while providing compassionate dedicated recoveries from their patients,” said Ed Vance, CEO.

“We treat your patients like “customers”, with cooperation and respect as we work together to get a bill paid.

Founded in 1989, ACMI has more than 2,500 physician and healthcare providers as clients in seven (7) states in the mid-south, and they are already working with five (5) to six (6) NLPHO members including Franklin Medical Center.

Call or email Ed personally to discuss your accounts receivable situation at:
C: 501-351-6040 or ejvance@arcollectors.com, and **don't forget to mention you are a NLPHO member in order to get the discount!**

What makes ACMI different or stand out from its competition?

“My people,” said Ed. “My staff has been with me for an average of 15 years, and some are now part owners of the company which makes them very motivated since they have a stake in the company’s future.”

Other Preferred Patners include:

- Behavioral Health Screening – Vault
- Document Shredding & Storage – The File Depot
- Health Information Technology Support & Security Risk Assessments – Business Communications (BCI)
- Online Workforce Training – Opango / Surge Advisors
- Practice Management – Practice Management Institute

LAMMICO Practice Solutions

LAMMICO’s Risk Management and Patient Safety Department recently augmented its risk reduction services to include services that address key operational and financial processes in a physician’s practice. These services, collectively referred to as Practice Solutions, were developed to help physicians, administrators and staff manage the risks associated with the business side of medicine. The cornerstone of Practice Solutions is their consultation their consultation service. It is practice specific and issue specific. For questions about Practice Solutions or to request a consultation, contact 800-452-2120 or riskmanagement@lammico.com

PMI Live Webinars

Medical Practice Training: Practice Management Institute (PMI) is offering the following live webinars in June:

- **June 12th:** Outsourcing Your Billing
- **June 19th:** ICD-10-CM Coding Refresher
- **June 25th:** 5 HIPAA Issues You Must Address With Your Team

Visit pmimd.com/insidepmi or call 800-259-5562 for more information. **20% discount code NELAPHO10**

What do you offer as the CEO of ACMI?



A: “I’m the founder, CEO, and acting president of ACMI, and I am committed to growing and serving my client base. I’m also a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) that is passionate about helping organizations manage their cash flow, and I bring national / regional thought leadership to each client since I serve or have served in various capacities in trade organizations such as:

- Director, Arkansas State Board of Collection Agencies. Appointed by two different governors of Arkansas
- Immediate Past President, American Collectors Association International, Arkansas Chapter
- Committee Chair, Arkansas Healthcare Financial Management Association
- Member, Medical Group Management Association
- Member, North American Collection Agency Regulatory Association



Welcome New Members

Please join us in welcoming the following new members:

Practice Name	Specialties	Provider Names
Arthritis & Diabetes Clinic	Rheumatology	Musty Praneetha, MD
Citizens Rural Clinic	Family Practice, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, and General Practice	Randy Head, MD; Kamal Masri, MD; Gerald Ross, MD; Frederick Yates, MD; Linda Allen, NP; Robin Floyes, NP; Whitney Keahey, NP; and Lea May-Lillo, NP
Ear Nose & Throat Specialists	Otolaryngology	Aimee Oldham, NP & Audrey Walton, NP
Glenwood Pulmonary Specialist	Pulmonology	Sherri Drake, NP
Hardtner Family Clinic	Anesthesiology, Cardiology, Chiropractor, Family Practice, General Practice, Gastroenterology, General Surgery, Mental Health, Nephrology, Neurology, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Orthopaedic Surgery, Otolaryngology, Pediatrics, Podiatry, Urology, Mental Health, and Social Work	Williams Ellis, DO; Vikram Nijjar, MD; Anthony Fenoli, MD; Laura Griffin, DNP; Wayne Barksdale, MD; Mary Benjamin, NP; Jennifer Byrd, NP; Chari Ceronio, MD; Kenneth Mauterer, MD; Crystal Meredith, PA; Amanda Novak, NP; Jorie Sanford, NP; Brian Smith, MD; Clifford Tillman, MD; Greene Butler, MD; Jennifer Jones, NP; Ricky Hendrix, MD; Ariel Antezana, MD; Gonzalo Hidalgo, MD; Joel Hall, MD; William Crenshaw, MD; Charles Texada, MD; Christian Wold, MD; Tariq Ahmed, MD; Maria Saucier, DPM; Robert Fontane, MD and Ellen Floyd, LCSW
Melanie Massey PT	Speech Language Pathology	Kate Paquette, SLP
Union General Rural Health Clinic	Family Practice	Vanessa Brass, NP

Upcoming NLPHO Event

MIPS Webinar, July 10th
from Noon – 1 p.m. given
by Christie Lawrence,
NLPHO Consultant. Call
the NLPHO office for
details or join the demo
using the following link:

<https://global.gotomeeti.com/join/951831477>

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1900 North 18th Street
Suite 304
Monroe, LA 71201
318.387.7358 ph
318.387.7452 fax
www.nelapho.com