July 2014

Local Notes

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President’s Letter

Dear Fellow Members:

This has been a busy couple of months for the local chapter. We had representatives attend the annual Leadership Training Conference (LTC) held in Washington, DC in April, followed by a regional Leadership Training Conference that we call the "Mini-LTC" held in Watkins Glen in June. Then the big conference came at the end of June in Las Vegas, the Annual National Institute. If you have never been to an ANI, I strongly encourage you to attend. Next year, it will be in Orlando, FL from June 21 – June 24th and it is a very impressive conference.

This year’s ANI was when we officially said goodbye to our former President, Karen Carter. She performed her last duties as President by accepting the multiple awards that the Central New York Chapter received. I have been working with Karen for so long, I don’t even remember when we started. She asked me to join the membership committee and I was hooked. I can’t thank her enough for her support and friendship over these past years. I hope to do her proud as your incoming President.

ANI was also full of numerous educational sessions, but for HFMA National, there was a strong focus on the tools and resources available to you through the HFMA website. They are still continuing their initiatives of the Patient Friendly Billing and the MAP program, but they rolled out a new project which is Pricing Transparency. You can view the whole report at HFMA.Org under Industry Initiatives. Within that area, there is also a link to best practices on how to communicate with patients as well as when it is appropriate to do so. This can be a difficult decision to make, particularly in an Emergency Room setting.

With all of the major national conferences out of the way, we are in high gear for our upcoming Chapter year. We will be having our first social event on August 12th as we all cheer on the Chiefs. For those of you thinking about becoming Certified, our next Certification Study Group kicks off in September. The weekly webinars will help you prepare for the exam. We will also be starting our educational sessions in the fall. Be on the lookout for the Region II brochure which will be released shortly for the conference that will be held from October 22nd-24th.

I am very excited for this upcoming year and I welcome your comments. Please feel free to contact me with your ideas or concerns. This is your chapter and I hope that my team and I can help you get the most out of your membership!

Michele Mecomano, CPA, FHFMA
HFMA CNY Chapter President
Among two popular theories on what drives hospital lengths of stays, new evidence suggests practice variation is most influential.

A study, which was funded by the National Institutes of Health and published online June 25 in JAMA Surgery, examined the degree to which extended length of stay (LOS) represents complications, patient illness, or inefficient practice style. The retrospective cohort study of 22,664 adult patients undergoing colorectal resections in the 199 hospitals examined those facilities’ risk-adjusted extended LOS rates, defined as the proportion of patients with a hospital stay greater than the 75th percentile for the entire cohort.

Among the patients, 2,177, or 42.8 percent, with extended LOSs did not have a documented inpatient complication. There was wide variation in risk-adjusted extended LOS (14.5 percent-35.3 percent) and risk-adjusted inpatient complication (12.1 percent-28.5 percent) rates, and only a weak correlation between the two. Only 52 percent of the variation in hospitals’ extended LOS rates was attributed to inpatient complication rates.

The findings led the authors, at the University of Michigan Health System to conclude that since much of the variation in hospitals’ risk-adjusted extended LOS rates is not attributable to patient illness or complications it most likely represents differences in practice style.

“Efforts to reduce excess resource use should focus on efficiency of care, such as increased adoption of enhanced recovery pathways,” they wrote.

LOS Drivers Significant

The study came amid continuing uncertainty about the best strategy to reduce extended LOS, which is commonly used as a proxy for resource use. Hospitals are increasingly focusing on improving resource use in response to value based payment initiatives from an increasing number of payers.

Understanding of the extent to which extended LOS is attributable to patient illness, complications, or practice style differences is essential to targeting efforts for improvements, the authors noted.

The authors noted that emerging evidence suggest that process interventions for surgical patients, such as enhanced recovery pathways, are effective at reducing LOS without increasing overall complication rates, but the efficacy of such interventions on a large scale remains unclear.

“With different uptake and implementation of enhanced recovery for patients with colectomies, it would be reasonable to assume that practice style differences underlie at least a portion of the unexplained variation in hospitals’ extended LOS rates,” the authors wrote.
To manage change, healthcare organizations should re-wire the thinking framework, or structure, of their employees, according to two healthcare management experts. Penny Crow, CEO of Operational Strategies, a healthcare consultancy, and Paul Selivanoff, a vice president of finance for Adventist Health System, Saint Helena Region, urged attendees at ANI: The HFMA National Institute to instill a “thinking framework” in their organizations’ workers. Such a system, they said in a June 25 innovation lab session, would spur faster decisions, increased productivity, and permanent behavior change.

Employees generally respond to change through a series of steps:

Denial
Resistance
Exploration
Commitment

Leaders need to create an environment that will move people through these stages to the commitment stage, Crow and Selivanoff said.

Strategies usually fail because culture trumps strategy. In turn, structure trumps culture. If the structure is not in place to support a strategy, execution and implementation of the strategy will fail, Crow and Selivanoff said.

To stop the chaos of change management, healthcare leaders need to think about the thought structure used to drive solutions in their organizations.

For instance, measurement shapes the path of change. Organizations usually get the results that they reward; they reward based on what they measure, and they measure based on what they want to achieve.

Motivating Employees to Invest in the Organization

Crow and Selivanoff said that for healthcare organizations to change their employees’ thinking, leaders need to make the change personal. They offered the example of riding a horse that is motivated by a carrot on a stick held in front of its face. The horse is only motivated to obtain the carrot. He’s not invested.

In contrast, Crow and Selivanoff said employees need to have an interest in getting the organization to its destination.

They discouraged financial incentives because it has only a 90-day window of memory in individuals’ psyche. After that point, the reward “wears off,” and it no longer motivates us. After that point, people only want more money and are not emotionally invested in desiring the change and the result of the change.
Chapter Goals

Did you know your local chapter governance has goals that they need to meet each year? Chapter Balanced Scorecard (CBSC) goals are set annually by HFMA National and passed down to us, your Central New York Chapter board. We use these to guide us through the year along with the comments and results of the annual Member Satisfaction Survey. This helps us make the Chapter the best resource it can be for you, the member. The chapter year runs from June 1 – May 31st, with some goal deadlines being April 30th. Each goal has a weight assigned to it based on importance and the Chapter has to achieve 60 out of 100 points. Each year, chapter Presidents and President Elects gather together as a Region at the Fall President’s Meeting and we review each Board’s plan to achieve the goals and how we can help one another. Some examples of what have come out of these meetings are the Region II Webinar Series that was started a few years ago and the Certification Study Group that is in its inaugural run. Here is a quick description of some of the goals, their weights, and why we feel it is important to you.

**Membership**
This year’s membership goal looks maintaining the same number of members as the prior year. Membership is important because we rely on you to help us shape the direction of the Chapter. Members are also why we do what we do! Weight: 20 points

**Education**
The education goal looks at the number of hours of education we provided in the prior year and requires us to increase that. This can either be achieved by meeting a total number of hours goal or an education per member goal. HFMA’s Vision Statement is to be the indispensable resource for healthcare finance. Our educational content locally and on the National level helps us to strive towards that Vision. We hope that you look forward to our educational sessions and know that when you attend one, it is going to be worth the time out of the office. Weight: 30 points

**Board Composition**
The newest goal added to the CBSC, this goal looks to make sure that providers are adequately represented on the Chapter board. Provider input on the direction of the board is critical, as they can guide us towards Educational content that is relevant as well as keeping the board comprised of the local issues facing Healthcare Finance. Weight: 5 points

This is just a few of the goals that we as your Central New York Board need to meet each year. We are always open to suggestions for Educational topics or events that you would like to see to help your Membership be more valuable to you. Please feel free to contact us through www.cnyhfma.org if you have ideas or suggestions. We would love to hear from you!
On June 1, 2014, I officially started my role as Regional Executive 2014-2015 for HFMA Region 2, following Mr. Bruce K. Liebel, FHFMA, Regional Executive 2013-2014. I must tell that he is an outstanding leader, a mentor, and an extraordinary human being, professional and friend. It will be though to follow his steps, as for me the standard is set at a very high level. Though, I am lucky enough to have Bruce as one of my backstage counselors, so I am fully confident on my role. Thank you Bruce for all your contributions to our outstanding Region 2, and for your continued help!

My term as RE preliminarily started in January, with the beginning of the coordination for our main educational event at a regional level: The Region 2 Institute. The 2014 event will take place on October 22-24 at the Turning Stone Resort & Casino in Verona, NY. One member of each one of the seven chapters comprising Region 2, generally a past chapter president, belong to the group of coordinators, together with the outgoing RE, the incoming RE-Elect, and our regional Treasurer. We are planning an extraordinary educational event that you may not miss. Mark your calendars at this time for October 22-24, 2014! I am already thankful of all our current year coordinators: Karen Carter from Central NY Chapter, Matthew Knaus from Hudson Valley Chapter, Cindy Strain from Metro NY Chapter, Rabin Kayastha from Northeastern NY Chapter, Rafael Rodriguez from the Puerto Rico Chapter, Alicia Dockrell from Rochester Regional Chapter, Christine Blidy from Western NY Chapter, Mollie Kennedy, Regional Executive-Elect, John Cousins, Regional Treasurer, and Bruce Liebel of course.

My first official presentation as RE happened at our regional Mini LTC 2014, which took place on June 1-2 at the Harbor Hotel in Watkins Glen, New York. With the attendance of over 55 people, this was an outstanding regional event organized by the 2014 host chapters: Northeastern NY Chapter and Rochester Regional Chapter. Our sincere appreciation to Tige Monacelli and Paula Tinch, Presidents of both chapters, for their outstanding job organizing this great event. We are also very thankful of Jinna Davis, from HFMA National, and Nancy Reiss, CAT Member, for their contribution as speakers. We enjoyed the wonderful and beautiful hotel by the Seneca Lake, and had a great time networking and socializing, enjoying also the great presentation of the event’s guest speaker, Mr. Jay Rifenbary.
What is coming next? Our most immediate event will be the Fall Presidents Meeting, which will take place in Chicago, from September 21 to 23, 2014. That will be our most important meeting at the regional level, which I will have the honor to conduct. I must tell that I, being from the Puerto Rico Chapter, feel very proud of leading Region 2, one of the most outstanding Regions within HFMA. As stated on his series “Roots and History of Our Chapter” by Mr. Enrique Baquero, Past President and Founder of the PR Chapter, “the moving of the Puerto Rico Chapter from Region 5 to Region 2, effective in 1994-95 was a natural thing to do because we always had a cultural and historic tie with New York due to the migration of Puerto Ricans and the constant travel between San Juan and New York. Another factor was politics, since we always aligned our petitions to Congress with the politicians from New York, as our representative in Congress doesn’t have a vote. And in healthcare we were part of Region II in New York; we had a close working relationship with HCFA, especially during the implementation of the Medicare Prospective Payment System”. I know that the bonding between all of us will strengthen during this 2014-2015 year. I am already enjoying this “voyage” that requires a lot of time commitment but is also greatly rewarding.

To all of you, 2014-2015 Region 2 Chapter Presidents: Michele Mecomonaco (Central), Joanna Schaffer (Hudson Valley), Wendy Leo (Metro), Tige Monacelli (Northeastern), Aristides Castro (PR), Paula Tinch (Rochester) and Bob Lavesque (Western), thank you for your commitment and dedication; I am sure we will all keep our Region in the successful and outstanding path it has reached. Together we will be “LEADING THE CHANGE”.

Teresa R. Figueroa, CPA
Regional Executive 2014-2015
HFMA Region 2
Local Notes

The HFMA Virtual Conference includes live sessions on February 5, April 24, September 18, and December 16, 2014. It is back by popular demand with all new content. The conference is FREE to HFMA members! Non-member registration is $155, which also includes membership for those new to HFMA. Learn more about this FREE virtual educational opportunity. ([http://www.hfma.org/virtualconference](http://www.hfma.org/virtualconference))

Upcoming Events

**August 12th:** **Syracuse Chiefs Baseball Night**

Gate opens at 6:00 pm; Game starts at 7:00pm

Members and their immediate family can join the fun free of charge. (Being a member does have its benefits)

Non-members can attend for $15 / child and $20 / adult

Price includes ticket, meal and parking pass

Refreshments will be available early. Dinner will be served at 7:00

If you would like to attend please contact James Godleski at James_Godleski@uhs.org or (607) 762-3319

**August 15th:** **Deadline to Sign Up for Certification Study Group**

If you have been thinking about becoming certified as a CHFP, your local chapter has joined forces with other chapters across the region to bring you a Certification Study Group.

The group will run from the week of September 8th to November 10th from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm with a kickoff meeting on August 25th. The group will decide which night of the week to hold the sessions and if you miss one, a recording will be made so you can catch up.

There will be no cost to you! These sessions are free, but we do need your active participation to make them be successful. We also need a commitment from you.

If you are willing to commit to the program, we can offer you the study materials at a 20% discount. That means you pay $200 instead of the $249 that other members would pay!

Still not sure if Certification is for you? Visit hfma.org for more information or contact your local certification contact, Michele Mecomonoaco, at mmecomonoaco@fcc-cpa.com

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Annual HFMA Region 2 Fall Institute

**October 22-24, 2014 at Turning Stone Casino**
HFMA’s ANI: The 2014 National Institute

PHOTO 1: 
Our Chapter Awards for 2013-2014

PHOTO 2: 
Region 2 Chapter Presidents Accepting the Yerger Award

PHOTO 3: 
CNY Chapter members mingle with WNY Chapter members at ANI
Local Notes

HFMA’s ANI: The 2014 National Institute

PHOTO 1:
Left to Right:
Steve Rose, National Chair (2013-14);
Karen Carter; Kari Cornicelli, National Chair (2014-15)

PHOTO 2:
Region 2 Chapter Presidents
PHOTO 1:
New Regional Executive Teresa Figueroa at the Mini-LTC

PHOTO 2:
Left to Right:
Amy Jackson - CNY Education Committee

Member Ed Polly - CNY Board Member

Jay Rifenbary - Keynote speaker

Michele Mecomonaco - CNY President

Do you have an idea for a social networking event?

Please contact Michele Mecomonaco or James Godleski.
Local Notes

Member Spotlight – Lori Dorsey

Lori Dorsey is the Controller at Oneida Healthcare in Oneida, New York. A graduate from Liverpool High School, Lori grew up in Liverpool, New York and went on to attend Lemoyne College in Syracuse from which she graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelors of Science degree in Accounting. Lori is also a Certified Public Accountant.

Lori began her career in 2001 as an auditor for Fust Charles Chambers LLP. By the time Lori left Fust Charles Chambers LLP ten years later, she was a Senior Manager with the firm. During eight of those years, Lori was an auditor for Oneida Healthcare. Throughout most of her career in public accounting, Lori mainly specialized in the healthcare industry where she audited various healthcare entities. In January of 2012, Lori began her current position as Controller at Oneida Healthcare. The most rewarding aspect of her job is that it allows her to devote all of her professional time and energy to the organization, especially with all of the hardships that hospitals have currently been facing.

Lori has been a member of HFMA for nearly 10 years and began her involvement near the beginning of her career at Fust Charles Chambers LLP. She is a member of the Education Committee and just recently began her term as a Board member in June of this year.

When she is not busy at work, Lori enjoys spending time with her six month old son. Her most favorite activities include watching him learn new things and grow. Lori is also an avid sports fan with the Buffalo Sabres and the Buffalo Bills being two of her favorite teams. She also just recently completed a four year tenure as the Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee of the Ecumenical Camp Association (Vanderkamp).

“I have benefited not only from the informative and relevant education sessions and regional institutes but also from the numerous professional connections that I have developed over the years.”

“It is rewarding to be able to provide care to the city of Oneida and the residents of Madison and Oneida counties through a small community hospital in a time filled with mergers and acquisitions. Every day seems to bring new challenges with changes in reimbursement and governmental regulations and rising costs to do business.”
Welcome New Members

Karen Reece – Accounts Receivable Manager
Sheryl Seigfreid – Audit Assistant, The Bonadio Group
Sandy Nettles - Director of Patient Financial Services, Oswego Health
Misty Postol - Director, Customer Care Provider Market, Excellus BCBS
Renee Olmsted - Director, Corporate Compliance, Risk Mgt, Privacy, Oneida Healthcare
Ellen O’Connor - Chief Finance Officer, Loretto Rest Nursing Home
David Capria - Sales and Marketing Director, Simon’s Agency Incorporated
Barbara Hunt - Accountant, Auburn Community Hospital
Scott Brennan - VP of Business Development, Bankers Healthcare Group, Inc.

Recruit new HFMA members and you could win:
• HFMA apparel item, duffel bag, or smartphone accessory
• $25, $100 or $150 Visa Prepaid Cards
• Cash prizes of $1,000 or $2,500
• Apple iPad Mini
• Grand Prize of $5,000

Go to www.hfma.org for more information.

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