

Linked IPAs and PPC Voices

The Newsletter for IPAs and PPC Professionals

In the Know: ACO-part 2

By: Jennifer McCormick, MPH

Last month, we discussed what an Accountable Care Organization (ACO) is and why the government is encouraging IPAs, hospitals or insurance companies to apply for status as an ACO. This month, as part II of our introduction to ACOs, we thought it important to publish the requirements for ACOs from Section 3022 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. ACOs must meet the following requirements:

- The ACO shall be willing to become accountable for the quality, cost, and overall care of the Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries assigned to it.
- The ACO shall enter into an agreement with the Secretary to participate in the program for not less than a 3-year period.
- The ACO shall have a formal legal structure that would allow the organization to receive and distribute payments for shared savings to participating providers of services and suppliers.
- The ACO shall include primary care ACO professionals that are sufficient for the number of Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries assigned to the ACO under subsection.
- At a minimum, the ACO shall have at least 5,000 such beneficiaries assigned to it in order to be eligible to participate in the ACO program.
- The ACO shall provide the Secretary with such information regarding ACO professionals participating in the ACO as the Secretary determines necessary to support the assignment of Medicare fee-for-service beneficiaries to an ACO, the implementation of quality and other reporting requirements under paragraph (3), and the determination of payments for shared savings under subsection (d)(2).
- The ACO shall have in place a leadership and management structure that includes clinical and administrative systems.
- The ACO shall define processes to promote evidence-based medicine and patient engagement, report on quality and cost measures, and coordinate care, such as through the use of telehealth, remote patient monitoring, and other such enabling technologies.
- The ACO shall demonstrate to the Secretary that it meets patient-centeredness criteria specified by the Secretary, such as the use of patient and caregiver assessments or the use of individualized care plans.

Snapshots at jasonlove.com



"One minute she was eyeing her hospital bill, and the next minute..."

Beat The Heat: Non-Alcoholic Piña Colada

Did you know that coconut has many health benefits? It is rich in fiber, vitamins, and minerals! It is also great for:

- * Improving insulin secretion and utilization of blood glucose
- * Killing bacteria that cause ulcers, throat infections, urinary tract infections, gum disease and cavities
- * Supporting tissue healing and repair and reducing inflammation

Ingredients: 1 cup of fresh pineapple chunks ½ cup of coconut ½ cup of coconut milk
2 tsp of honey ¼ cup of ice cubes

Directions: In a blender, combine the pineapple chunks, coconut, coconut milk, ice, and honey. Puree or blend until smooth. Pour into 2 large glasses and serve.

Health Management

Thoughts on the Patient/Physician

Alliance in Chinese Medicine

By: Jennifer McCormick, MPH

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, any label, or diagnosis is understood to be a set of words that allows discourse between patient and physician, and between physicians and society in general. If, in Western Medicine, we more often saw the function of diagnosis as words that allow discourse between the patient and physician, I believe that the result would be a greater therapeutic alliance, and better health outcomes. What is typically lost in Western Medicine is the value and time given by the physician to the discourse between the patient and the physician. Instead, the focus is on the disease state, not on the role of patient and physician addressing an imbalance in health status together. The steps to a proper patient/physician relationship in Chinese Medicine are similar to western medicine, but the emphasis remains on keeping the patient at the center of care. Pay particular attention to step 1, which is oftentimes neglected, but may be the most important step in improving patient health outcomes. They are as follows:

1. Make the therapeutic alliance.
2. Organize the signs and symptoms into an emblematic image.
3. Use the labels and diagnosis to allow discourse between the patient and physician.



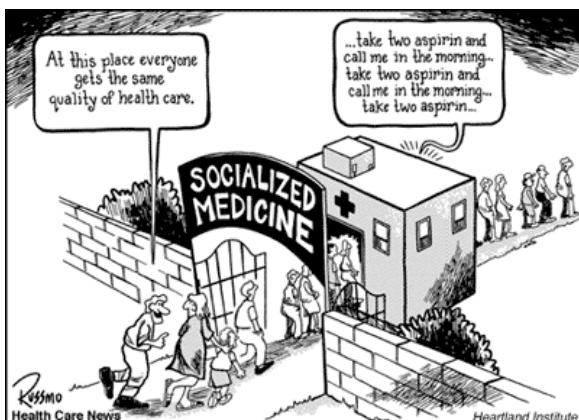
And you
thought
there was
stress
in your life

Reducing Stress While at Work

By: Crystal Chacon

Here are few helpful tips to ease and relieve stress in the workplace. It does not matter what line of work you are in it can all become stressful. It would be very beneficial to create a positive atmosphere that everyone can enjoy! Stress literally kills and it is easier to control than many think. There is no reason for stress to take control of your life, mood, or your well-being. Don't let stress be in the drivers seat. Take control and enjoy some relaxation and peace of mind . Please pass this article on to others as it may benefit them as well.

- **Just breathe.** Take a deep breath nice and slowly. In through your nose and out through your mouth. Do this as many times as necessary.
- **Lighten up.** There are some things that you don't have any control over. Don't over analyze or dwell on those things. It will only lead to more stress.



Reducing Stress continued on P. 4:

From The Desk Of

ACO Election Form

By: Eric Siaotong

At the end of May 2011, we sent our providers the ACO Participation Election form. The form gathers valuable information from our providers on their level of preparation to meet the criteria for ACOs outlined in the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Specifically, we use the form to determine what Electronic Medical Records system your practice is using, and if it meets the government's EHR Certification requirement.

Hospitals and physicians in the U.S. have until 2015 to deploy comprehensive electronic health records (EHR) and the accompanying technology to meet federal guidelines and qualify for thousands of dollars in reimbursements. Our survey results show that many practices are using

some kind of EMR, but they are not aware if their EMR is certified. Several other practices are in the process of acquiring an EMR system. For a comprehensive list of certified EMR products, refer to the CCHIT (Certification Commission for Health Information Technology) website:<http://www.cchit.org>.

Our survey data must be filed with our IPAs' Accountable Care Organization application at the end of July, 2011. Fortunately, our deadline for completed ACO Election Forms has been extended until July 8th. Please fill out the ACO Election Form which you received either by mail, email or fax. If you have not received the form, please email or call me to do so ASAP: esiao@healthbyinternet.com or (832) 525-5510.

Great Quotes by Great Ladies

Inside every older lady is a younger lady -- wondering what the hell happened.

-Cora Harvey Armstrong

I refuse to think of them as chin hairs. I think of them as stray eyebrows.

-Janette Barber

Old age ain't no place for sissies.

-Bette Davis

Every time I close the door on reality, it comes in through the windows.

-Jennifer Unlimited

I am a marvelous housekeeper. Every time I leave a man, I keep his house.

-Zsa Gabor

Nobody can make you feel inferior without your permission.

-Eleanor Roosevelt.

I try to take one day at a time -- but sometimes several days attack me at once.

-Jennifer Unlimited

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health management cont:

- **Smile.** Laughter lightens the heart and it is very contagious. It reduces stress and it can bring a smile to someone else heart.
- **Music to your ears.** Listen to some soothing music or soft sounds that calm you.
- **Take a small break.** Get up from you desk and take a short break from what you are doing. If you can go outside that is even better.
- **Pray or meditate.** If you pray you usually do the talking, but in meditation you have to clear your mind and focus. Try to find different techniques that work for you.
- **Repeat a positive phrase or quote.** Tell yourself that it will be alright and think of something positive.

Laugh Out Loud!

Getting Overpaid

An employee approached his boss regarding a dispute on his pay-check...

Employee – Sir, this is \$100 less than my salary.

Boss – I know. But last month, when you were overpaid \$100, by mistake, you didn't complain!

Employee – Well, I don't mind an occasional mistake, sir, but it seems to be becoming a habit, now!