

Linked IPAs and PPC Voices

The Newsletter for IPAs and PPC Professionals

In the Know: Accountable Care Organization or "ACO"

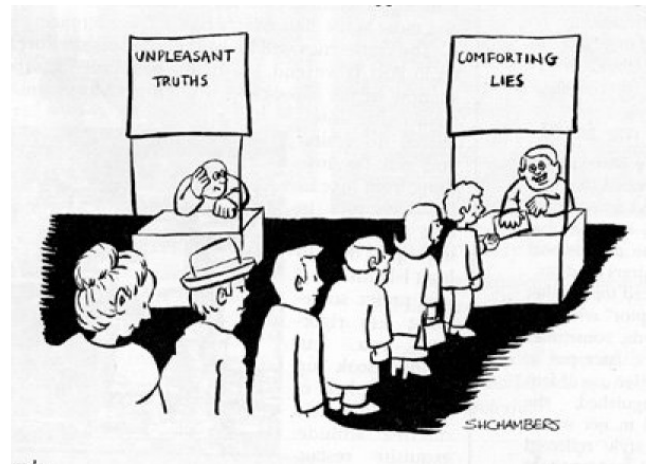
By: Jennifer McCormick, MPH

Recently, there has been a lot of talk in the national news about Accountable Care Organizations, or ACOs. This article will help explain what an ACO is, how it works and the requirements for ACOs in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

An Accountable Care Organization (ACO) is an organization of healthcare providers that agrees to be accountable for the quality, cost and overall care of the patients assigned to it. ACOs are based on a specific payment and delivery reform model. By tying provider reimbursements to quality metrics--such as improved health outcomes for individuals that are under the physician's care as well as reductions in the total cost of care for a population of patients--the goal of improved patient health can be met.

Why is this Model Being Implemented?

Patient health outcomes have become poorer and poorer in the United States. Unlike other developed countries, our healthcare system operates in the context of the economic free market system. Before the Affordable Care Act of 2009 was signed into law, health care practitioners and agencies were not required to show improvements in patient health outcomes to ensure



reimbursement for services. By encouraging groups like Independent Physician's Associations, hospitals and insurance companies to form ACOs, the government is attempting to improve coordination of patient care, to improve communication, and to identify best practices in the health systems that lead to better patient health outcomes.

The Formation of Physicians ACO in Houston

We are currently partnered with Integranet to make application as an ACO called "Physicians ACO". For information on joining the ACO and to take our ACO-readiness survey, please call Don McCormick at 281-733-3160 or email Eric Siao at esiao@healthbyinternet.com.

Upcoming Events

The ACO Election Form/ Survey is due by July 8, 2011. Please fill out the form completely and accurately as possible. We have extended the deadline and need your response immediately. You can find a copy of the form by visiting our website. Simply follow this link: <http://www.patientphysiciancoop.com/sites/default/files/aco-participation-survey.pdf> and print the form. We hope to hear from you very soon!

July

2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Health Management

Chinese Medicine vs. Western Medicine

By: Jennifer McCormick, MPH

Most Westerners--and western medical practitioners as well--may have strange notions about Chinese Medicine. If a patient is cured by herbs and acupuncture, they see it as a product of either the placebo effect or as a happy accident. They assume that Western Medicine has an exclusive handle on the Truth, and all else is hocus-pocus or superstition. In reality, Chinese Medicine is a coherent and independent system of thought and practice that has been developed over two millennia.

The main differences between the two approaches are:

- Chinese medicine considers certain aspects of the human body and personality important that are not considered significant to Western medicine.
- Chinese medicine uses terminology that is strange to the Western ear.
- The logical structure underlying the methodology, or, the habitual mental operations that guide the physician's clinical insight and critical judgment, differs radically in the two traditions.

The two different logical structures have pointed the traditions in different directions: the Western physician starts with a symptom and then searches for the underlying mechanism--a precise cause for a specific disease. The disease may effect different parts of the body, but it is a relatively well-contained phenomena. The Chinese Medicine physician, by contrast,



directs his or her attention to the complete physiological and psychological individual. In Chinese medicine, the question of cause and effect is always secondary to the overall pattern of disharmony of a person's body. For example, rather than ask, "what X is causing Y?" the question is, "what is the relationship between X and Y?". They are interested in discerning the relationships among symptoms occurring at that same time. When these relationships are determined, then a pattern of disharmony is discerned in the individual. The pattern of disharmony provides the framework for treatment, whose goal is to bring the individual back into balance.

These methods have significant implications for the therapeutic alliance between patients and physicians, which we will explore in a later issue.

Thanks to Ted Kaptchuk, OMD for his description of Chinese Medicine.

From The Desk Of

PPC New Benefit- Prescription Savings Card

By: Ella Chen

Patient/Physician Cooperatives (PPC) is glad to announce that PPC has partnered with PharmacyCard.org for PPC members to provide better and more prescription discount benefits. The new prescription savings benefit was effective on June, 2011. PPC has mailed a new prescription savings card to each active member household.

The prescription savings card delivers significant discounts which are about 10 – 75% off retail price on brand name and generic drugs at over 60,000 participating pharmacies nationwide, including Walgreens, Walmart, CVS, HEB, Costco, Target, Kroger, Randalls, etc.

In addition, PharmacyCard.org (<http://pharmacycard.org>) offers a “Drug Price & Pharmacy Finder” online service. The service can help you find cost of particular medication and participating pharmacy near you based on

your zip code.

PPC is improving its program and delivering more benefits to each member. If you are interested in the PPC program, please contact us 281-689-2605. We also provide our members with help in other languages such as Chinese and Spanish.

病人/醫生合作計畫新福利 (PPC) - 處方藥折扣卡

By: Ella Chen

PPC有了新的合作伙伴！PharmacyCard.org

PPC於2011年6月簽訂一項新的合作計畫，提供更好及更多的處方藥折扣給所有PPC的會員們。目前，PPC已陸續寄出新的處方藥折扣卡給每一個會員家庭。

使用新的處方藥折扣卡可享有比零售價便宜大約10 – 75%的價格去購買專利藥及非專利藥。全美有超過60,000間藥房接受此折扣卡，包括：Walgreens, Walmart,

From the desk of continued on page 4
詳文請見P.4



Linked IPAs
HMNet, SEMNet, UHPNet
7850 Parkwood Circle Dr.
Suite #A7
Houston, TX 77036



From the desk of continued:

CVS, HEB, Costco, Target, Kroger, Randall...等。

除此之外，PharmacyCard.org的官方網站 (<http://pharmacycard.org>)也提供平均藥價及參與此計畫的藥房之線上查詢功能。此功能可方便會員依郵遞區號來查詢藥品的相關資訊。

PPC不斷試著提升服務品質，且提供更多的福利給每一位PPC會員。若你對病人/合作計畫有興趣，請洽詢熱線281-689-2605，我們提供英文、西班牙文、中文及粵語的服務。

Laugh Out Loud!

The Waiting Room

In a psychiatrist's waiting room two patients are having a conversation. One says to the other, "Why are you here?"

The second answers, "I'm Napoleon, so the doctor told me to come here."

The first is curious and asks, "How do you know that you're Napoleon?"

The second responds, "God told me I was."

At this point, a patient on the other side of the room shouts, "NO I DIDN'T!"