June 2018 Infoline

HI Happy May.  It is spring and got to love the spring storms...which resulted in a 12 hr flight home yesterday from the east coast.  Crazy fun!

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**Medicare Advantage:**

I just attended the Better Medicare Alliance - Medicare Advantage Summit in DC. Wow!  Three days of intensive education on my part and thru it all, I felt like a sponge as I was  learning how it all works - structure of the plans, payment systems, 3000 plans in the US with many non-insurance companies forming MAs -including multiple health systems, and massive growth in MA plans.  As I listened and learned, I realized how little many providers know of how the MA plans 'work' and are paid.  Count me as one of them.  But the MA plans have the same very limited knowledge of how their plans are impacting hospitals and providers with getting paid for appropriate services, the cost of prior authorization, and other denial impacts.  UGLY!

We will be addressing many of these topics in this year's July Boot Camp:  Attacking Payer Denials - The New Battleground. Lessons learned and strategies for success.

I have asked all the speakers to add a couple educational points based on the Summit.  I am also very interested in reaching out to the Better Medicare Alliance group to begin a joint dialogue -as they need help with beneficary outreach/education and yes, impact to the providers.  \*I shared the massive increase in denials from MA plans in the past 4-5 years and their input was 'blank faces."  It is the disconnect we can try to provide leadership /education with.

But it was also amazing to hear of the hospital-sponsored MA plans.  Think ACOs but now move it to the MA world - better payments, at least now.  Risk is there but again, time to think about options.  We will definitely be bringing this type of education thru ARS and the Boot Camps.

We will also be addressing the NO CONTRACT issues for Medicare plans... Dr Baker has been hard at work to get us clarity from CMS.  Join us at the boot camp - live streaming or in person as we will be jumping all over these issues too.

Thanks to Dr Baker/RAC RELIEF:

Q:  UHC MA plan has been conducting pre-pay audits, then has hired Equiclaim to reveiw the same claim post-payment.  I emailed our UHC rep citing Medicare guidlelines and they responded saying those guidelines only apply to RAC and not MA plans.  HELP!

A:  Medicare Managed Care  Manual,  Chapter 4, Section 10;16, Medical Necessity

"If the plan approved the furnishing of a service thru an advance determination of coverage, it may not deny coverage later on the basis of a lack of medical necessity."

GET VERY GOOD AT CHALLENGING THEIR RULING. There is a Medicare Managed Care Manual.

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*SUPER EXCITING NEWS!   The 6th National Physician Advisor and Utilization Review Boot Camp Agenda is now posted and registration is under way.   EARLY BIRD DISCOUNTING EXPIRES ON MAY 25TH!   HURRY!**

**We are partnering with the RAC Summit team again this year to bring this 'get it done' focused boot camp. \*\*\*\*\***

**We are the only conference group that offers LIVE streaming directly to you as an option to the onsite.  Super cheap as we have not raised our rates in 6 years.**

**Check out this way cool agenda - and don't miss out on the Early Bird Discount.**

        Pre-Con:   **"What does disruption in healthcare look like?"** From patients, to physicians, to payers to new delivery system potential to national focus...  Including the Idaho Blue Cross Story. This agenda is getting updated almost daily... WOW!

        Main:       ' **Attacking Payer Denials - Chapter 2.  Lessons learned and strategies for su**cess."   Fabulous faculty will include operational focus by PAs and UR team leaders; payer input regarding new dialogue and hot at risk issues; Total Knees will take center stage with education and case study luncheon discussion; with regulatory updates, payer denial stories and how to be successful internally and with the payers.  Non-Contracted Rules with Medicare Advantage plans Plus National update on Part C plans - more hot topics.  WOW!  Did I mention tons of opportunities to network with the faculty?   Can't wait to see you all there-in person or on the web!

WHEN:        Weds-Fri, July 25-27th

WHERE:      Hyatt Regency Los Angeles International

PLUS:          Live streaming/like being with us; group pricing; early bird discounts, CME credits.

go to:  <https://racsummit.com>    or    our website.             **REMEMBER EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT ENDS MAY 25th.   LIVE WEBSTREAMING  OR  ONSITE..  GROUP DISCOUNTS.**

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**Updates:**

**Total Knee Ideas: as of Jan 1, 2018 - CPT 27447/APC grouper 5115- removed from the inpt only list.**

In previous Info Lines/posted on our webpage, we have been providing helpful hints from an operational aspect.  **Motto:  First point of contact - every patient, every time.**

The change to the work flow for the UM team and the surgery team should have been significant /already done?   Yep, took effect 4+ month's ago.

Last month's Info Line - we discussed some of the pitfalls while showing some 'real payment comparisons between inpt DRG and outpt APC.  Remember that historical Info Line are on th the webage.

This month - we have updated the Inpt vs obs class with slides specifically on Total Knees.   We have included information from multiple resources including the new work flow for the UM team.   Take a look for the free class material. It will also help with your internal audits.

There is no grace period to get compliant with documentation to support the 2 MN expectation for Total knees.

We will walk you thru some 'thought processes' plus great tips in multiple sources.  And don't forget to look at Dr Hirsch's website as he has great info too.   PLUS  RAC RELIEF has great dialogue from physician advisors and the support team in hospital.  \*\*Did I mention that Total Knees will take center stage at the Boot Camp?\*\*

It does take a village!

**UPDATES/HEALTH CARE BUZZ**

RAC links for updates. Thanks to Sharon Easterling for continuing to keep us updated on RAC happenings.

go to:  <https://www.cms.gov/research-statistics-data-and-systems/monitoring-programs/medicare-ffs-compliance-programs/recovery-audit-program/recent_updates.html>.

United Healthcare reports their valued based care program for knee, hip and spine procedures helped reduce hospital readmissions by 22 % and led to 17% fewer complications for joint replacement surgeries as compared to NON-CONTRACTING facilities.  For spine surgeries, hospital readmissions were reduced by 10% and there were 3.4% fewer complications, as compared to non-contracting. They share that since the program's introduction/2017- participating employers have realized an average savings of $18,000 per operation when compared with the median costs in the same metro area and eligible employees saved more than $3000 out of pocket.   (HealthExecMobile.com)

**Thought:  If I was a skeptic, I would wonder why the contract was the determining factor in the lack of readmission and better pt outcomes?? A contract really does that?  Don't be fooled - this is a very large marketing tool when approaching employers to purchase United...**

King and Spaulding Health Headlines:  May 21, 2018    Two-Midnight rule

Texas Health System /Memorial Hermann Health System pays nearly $2M to settle improper billing for inpt service for 3 of their hospitals.  Inpt surgeries from 20009-2014 - should have been done at a lower less expensive outpt service.  \*If not on the inpt only list, must use the 2 MN rule justification... now think total knee\*

Genesis Medicare Center/IA pays $1.88M to resolve inpt services.  Shoulld have been billed at a lower reimbursement rate for outpt or obs care.

AMA:  surveyed 1000 physicians.  "THEY HATE PRIOR AUTHORIZATION"   3-18

New survey found:

    86% reported that the burden has increased over the past 5 yrs.

    79% reported having to prior auth even if pts previously approved

    78% reported that it can lead to treatment abdonment.

    DEDICATED AN AVERAGE of 14.6 hrs per week for prescription and medical services per practice.  WOW!

NOTE:  At the MA Summit last week, one speaker (our speaker/John Gorman) spoke to the potential wasted manpower within the MA plans for the massive amt of prior auth.

Re-think the use of manpower and costs and benefit. Keeping the pt healthy and out of expensive hospitals is the goal of MA plans!!

**\*\*\*Hey do you need help with your coding backlog   or    just in time coding coverage?  Vacation coverage?   Turn over?**

**We would be thrilled to offer you any combination of coding support.  We don't have minimums as we have all worked in healthcare...**

**We have a per chart fee so coding coverage is budgetable.  24-48 hr guaranteed turn around for ALL patient types.  Let me know if we can help.  THANKS A TON!\*\*\***

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*Hey, I am going to be participating in the upcoming events and/or webinars\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*Come and say HI or join us\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***

**May 22nd          VHA                            Webinar series - Attacking Mgd Care Denials**

**May 24th          Western MI HFMA       What does disruption in healthcare look like?**

**June 6th           THA                             What does disruption....and yes, this class updates almost daily!**

**July 10th           GA HFMA**

**July 11th           Region 8 HFMA            Both webinars:  CREATING A Patient Financial Navigator Program at your hospital!   Doable!! Learn how it has been done ..**

                                                             For your community and employers...all done by the REVENUE CYCLE LEADERS!  Who better to teach...

July 25-27th        BOOT CAMP                6th National PA & UR Boot Camp in LA.   (Plus my granddaughter is getting married on July 21st.  Very blessed!)

**WOW~ we do have fun!**

**Have a great one!  Love sharing with you and learning from each of you.**

PS  Historical Info Line are always on our web page...plus powerpt classes.... plus articles..... plus Pearls.

All free... Enjoy!

**Last thought for the day:  Lean into the next grand adventure of your life...today!  YES!**