



Education is value-packed

If you think education is expensive, try ignorance. (Benjamin Franklin).

Healthcare managers and supervisors should always update skills and knowledge. Our August conference will offer many opportunities to do this. Our Lean Six Sigma workshop presented by Owen Dahl, offers information on this program designed to improve profitability by improving processes.

At a recent leadership conference in Denver, our board members participated in sessions and panel discussions, and networked with peers which is often the most valuable learning. Shown in the photo at left, are (l-r) Stefanie Ardoin, Tim Barrett, Greg Ivey and Crystal Williams.

News You Can Use

Hospitals impact state economy: **As you might suspect, our state's** economy is heavily impacted by our hospitals. According to the report from Louisiana Hospital Association, hospitals generate about \$30 billion in economic activity with over 98,000 employees. Hospitals represent 35% of total healthcare employment and nearly half of the annual payroll. See the 2014 [report](#).

More physicians seeking impairment help: This recent article by Debra Beaulieu-Volk writing online for "[fiercemanagement.com](#)" says, "Physician health programs across the country have been busier in recent years treating doctors for problems such as substance abuse, impairment, physical illness and burnout." [Learn more here](#).

Network confusion results not pleasant: Finding out whether a physician is in a patient's insurance network is more complicated than meets the eye, leaving practices to sort out the confusion following an unexpected bill for high out-of-network rates, this article points out. [Read more](#).

Road to 10:
The small physician **practice's route** to ICD-10

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Photos of newborns come down
because of HIPAA concerns

(This article courtesy of LHA Trust Funds, [Sept. 2014 eNSIGHTS newsletter](#))

Posting photos of newborns has long been a tradition among obstetricians and midwives but those photos are coming down because of concern over HIPAA regulations. The New York Times notes “under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, baby photos are a type of protected health information, no less than a medical chart, birth date, or Social Security number, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. Even if a parent sends in the photo, it is considered private unless the parent also sends written authorization for its posting, which almost no one does.”

It’s a shame, says Dr. Pasquale Patrizio, director of the Yale Fertility Center in New Haven. “For me, the face of a baby, that is really an anonymous face. It was representative of so much happiness, so much comfort, so much reassurance. It is purely a clinical office now,” he commented to the newspaper.

Although HIPAA was enacted in 1996, privacy concerns have become paramount since 2009 with the push towards electronic health records. A spokeswoman for the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Health and Human Services, confirmed to the Times displays of baby photos are illegal. “A patient’s photograph that identifies him/her cannot be posted in public areas” unless there is “specific authorization from the patient or personal representative,” she wrote in an email.

“By specific authorization, Ms. Seeger said, she meant an official HIPAA-compliant form, including elements like an expiration date. She was not aware, however, of any medical office that had been fined over the issue,” the Times reported.

But, as the newspaper noted, there is a point to the law. At fertility centers, for instance, photos often show the mother holding the baby. Posting these photos in a public area would be a violation of their privacy and, if word got out, could be embarrassing for the women because most women do not disclose they used an egg donor.

“At the University of Southern California’s fertility program, the lab area has photos of embryos next to the babies they produced. But in the public area, art has replaced baby pictures,” the newspaper reports. However, the Times adds not everyone is following the law closely. Some doctors and midwifery centers still post the photos because parents keep sending them, and healthcare providers assume the parents have given their consent.

No matter: the law still does not allow it. “Unfortunately, there’s no concept of implied authorization for this type of use,” Clinton Mikel, chairman of the American Bar Association’s eHealth, Privacy & Security Interest Group, told the newspaper.

Additional news for members can be found online in a variety of categories including ICD-10, Bayou Health and Human Resources. See recent posts such as: Interviewing potential employees and Faking a vacation.

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