Hospital CEO/Trustee Executive Forum June 13-15

Join your peers for the annual Hospital CEO/Trustee Executive Forum to be held June 13-15 at the Chateau on the Lake in Branson, Missouri. The summer conference offers a forum for hospital executives and trustees to come together to forge a better understanding of healthcare issues. Program highlights include:

- Casey Nolan of Navigant Consulting, Inc. will present an overview of current and anticipated trends in healthcare and will discuss their impact on and implications for healthcare providers. A key focus of the presentation will be identifying critical success factors for community hospitals seeking to stay independent and will include case studies of what successful community hospitals have done to address challenges presented by the rapidly changing healthcare environment.

- Dr. Bridget Duffy, chief experience officer of ExperiaHealth in San Francisco, will discuss making the patient experience at your hospital a top strategic priority. With the implementation of CMS-mandated patient satisfaction surveys, public reporting and pay for performance, patient experience has become a growing priority. She will address the importance of aligning healthcare organizations around patient experience from the board to the front line, and why physician engagement and leadership of this strategy is essential to success.

- Health and financial wellness programs are increasingly important for employers not only to save money, but to help employees be more productive. Ron Watt with Trustmark voluntary Benefit Solutions will discuss the barriers to success in these programs, why behavior change is difficult and how to effectively engage employees.

- Arkansas Hospital Association (AHA) vice president for government relations Jodiane Tritt will brief participants on a new healthcare personnel immunization project designed to educate, train and provide technical assistance to Arkansas hospitals to implement employee vaccination programs.

- Patient centered medical homes will be the focus of a panel discussion that offers 1.5 hours of Face-to-Face (formerly called Category I) ACHE education. Panelists include Ray Hanley, president/CEO of the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care; Dr. Mark Mengel, vice chancellor of Regional Programs, UAMS; and Dr. Mark Lee, Mercy Medical Center in Bella Vista. With increasing emphasis on improving outcomes and lowering costs, accountable care, bundled payments, physician integration and patient centered medical homes have been highlighted as value-based approaches to providing patient care.

Along with the planned educational sessions, Branson offers many opportunities for family entertainment – golfing, outlet malls, fishing, boating, swimming, tennis, a full range of musical entertainment for all ages and tastes, and much, much more – which make the trip to Branson memorable.

Registration information will be available this week, but you are encouraged to make hotel reservations now by calling (888) 333-5253. Mention the Arkansas Hospital Association for special room rates. Contact Beth Ingram at (501) 224-7878 for additional information.
Proposed All-Payor Portal Draws Few Comments

The April 5 public hearing held by the Arkansas Department of Human Services’ Division of Medical Services on an Official Notice regarding a Multi-Payor Web Based Provider Portal now under development drew a crowd, but yielded only two sets of formal comments. However, one of the presenters represented a broad spectrum of healthcare providers. The portal will be used in conjunction with Medicaid’s Payment Improvement Initiative as a way for Principal Accountable Providers (PAP) to report information needed to track and monitor the content and/or quality of care for patients under the proposed new episodic care model.

During the hearing, the Arkansas Health Care Providers Forum, a coalition of provider groups (including the Arkansas Hospital Association) which have common interests in Medicaid program policies, expressed the following concerns.

- The Official Notice incorrectly implies that the Payment Improvement Initiative has been fully approved by all parties. While individual provider groups have worked with Medicaid officials in shaping the initiative, they are not yet prepared to offer approval due to insufficient details related to the designation of principle PAPs, quality indicators, clinical metrics and target prices for the episodes of care.

- The Official Notice states that designated PAPs must use the portal to report certain required clinical metrics for their patients in order “to receive full payment” for designated episodes of care. Yet, previous information has indicated that the reporting of clinical metrics and achievement of certain quality thresholds are required only in order to share in any savings generated by the new payment model.

- The Official Notice states that the PAPs must obtain a username and password for the portal and enter data within two months of the date of service for each patient. However, it does not address consequences listed for the failure to comply with the provision. There also is no explanation about providers’ options if they choose not to participate as a PAP. Until more details about the initiative are available, providers won’t be in a position to make an informed whether or not to participate.

- The Official Notice states that the workgroups have given feedback on potential quality indicators to report on via the portal. Although workgroup participants have discussed the importance of a quality component, no specifics were offered. There also have been no assurances that the quality metrics to be used will be evidence-based or approved by independent national organizations such as the National Quality Forum.

Written comments about the Official Notice, which can be found on the Medicaid web page at [http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/director/Pages/APII.aspx](http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/director/Pages/APII.aspx), will be accepted through April 14.

ICD-10: Preparing for the Fallout

Even though the government is reviewing the implementation dates for ICD-10, there is still much work to be done to get ready. ICD-10 is a major undertaking and will compound the financial stress on healthcare providers. Often referred to as the “Y2K of healthcare,” the cost and impact of ICD-10 implementation is estimated to be between $2 and $6 billion for hospitals. Beyond implementation, financial challenges will increase as coding/billing productivity will be reduced.

To assist hospitals in their continued ICD-10 preparation, the Arkansas Hospital Association will host “ICD-10: Preparing for the Fallout,” May 31 at the AHA headquarters in Little Rock. The workshop is designed to evaluate the financial impact of implementing ICD-10 for your
organization, present action items necessary now for successful implementation, and provide tools to minimize and survive the economic challenges ICD-10 will create.

Faculty includes AHIMA-approved ICD-10-CM/PCS trainers Karen Scott of Memphis and Karen Garret Youmans of YES Consulting, who will discuss clinical documentation action items to minimize losses and what your staff needs to learn about training and education. In addition, Tracey Goessel, MD, of FairCode Associates and Bill Wagner of KIWI-TEK will talk about the revenue impact of implementing ICD-10 and enhanced compliance for operations and finances.

Program and registration information are available at http://www.arkhospitals.org/category/events2012-05, by clicking on May 31.

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New Governance Package Now Available

The Arkansas Hospital Association (AHA) is making available a new resource for member hospitals’ boards of trustees - the Governance Essentials Collection™. This package of materials, developed by The Walker Company Healthcare Consulting, a nationally recognized governance consulting firm, bundles together on one CD four important toolkits to help hospitals guide their governance practices toward greater accountability and performance.

The resource includes:

- A fully customizable 183-page model governance manual, with an additional 176-page section of information about topics in which governing boards need to have knowledge and expertise
- 26 sample governance policies, including 12 Form 990-related policies
- Tools for identifying and recruiting new board members
- Thirteen 20-minute “Trustee Foundations™” programs ideal for presentation and discussion at board meetings, or for individual viewing by trustees.

The AHA is making the Governance Essentials Collection™ available to hospitals for only $595, a $200 discount from the Walker Company’s normal selling price. If you are dissatisfied with the Collection for any reason, you may return it within 30 days for a full, no-questions-asked refund.

For more information about ordering the Governance Essentials Collection™, please contact Beth Ingram, (501) 224-7878 or bingram@arkhospitals.org.

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AHA Services Offers New 340B-Related Program

AHA Services, Inc., the Arkansas Hospital Association’s (AHA) for-profit subsidiary, is unveiling a new program that should prove beneficial to many AHA-member hospitals. This 340B Contract Pharmacy program, available through SUNRx, will allow eligible hospitals the opportunity not only to expand savings on drug costs, but also to increase resources. Hospitals eligible for the 340B drug discounts include, among others, critical access hospitals, sole community hospitals, and rural referral centers.

Under the 340B Program, eligible hospitals receive varying discounts for name brand prescription drugs and for generic and over-the-counter drugs prescribed for their outpatients. They are expressly prohibited from reselling or transferring the discounted outpatient drugs to anyone
except their own patients. The 340B prices are substantially lower than the average wholesale price (AWP) as well as prices available to group purchasing organizations. Nationwide, hospital participants have experienced an average of more than $2 million in savings annually.

Under this new program, an eligible participating hospital can realize more savings by expanding use of the 340B drugs to include prescriptions written for employee patients, a broader spectrum of outpatient services outpatient services, including ER, same day surgery, and other facilities, and prisons, jails, state and local government programs, hospices and other downstream entities. At the same time they have to chance to generate new operational resources related to the retail sale of pharmaceuticals for their patients.

The opportunity for new resources arises when patients fill prescriptions written by physicians in the hospital at community retail pharmacies that have a contract with the hospital through the SUNRx program. Once the transaction is completed, SUNRx captures the data and essentially serves as an intermediary, subdividing the total payment for the prescription into a pharmacy dispensing fee, a SUNRx administration fee and a payment to the wholesaler based on 340B pricing. The difference between the total payment at the retail pharmacy level and those fees, about 40% of the total, then accrues to the hospital. SUNRx has arrangements in place with large pharmacy chains for the program, but will also work with hospitals to identify local pharmacies and get them into the program, as well.

For more information about this program, check the brochure posted on the AHA website at http://www.arkhospitals.org/archive/MiscPDFFiles/SUNRx%20-%20MedImpact%20340B%20Contract%20Pharmacy%20Solution.pdf or contact Tina Creel at TCreel@arkhospitals.org or (501) 224-7878.

April Is National Organ Donation Month

It’s April, and that means it is National Organ Donation Month. The Arkansas Hospital Association (AHA) is partnering with the Arkansas Regional Organ Recovery Agency (ARORA) to try to sign up as many new registrants as possible during this month. The AHA asks every member hospital to consider an internal program encouraging hospital employees, patients and their families to consider becoming organ donors. Our joint goal is to sign up 60,000 new organ donors in the state of Arkansas by the end of 2012.

Materials, including posters, information sheets and other communication tools are available from Mike Hudson at ARORA, (501) 907-9128 or mhudson@arora.org. If you have questions about your hospital’s possible involvement in the program, you may also contact Nancy Robertson Cook at the AHA, (501) 224-7878 (NRCook@arkhospitals.org).

The AHA Calendar

April 2012
10 Arkansas Health Executives Forum (AHEF) Quarterly Luncheon, AHA Classroom, Little Rock
10 Value Based Purchasing: Clinical and Quality Integration – Webinar R1212
11-13 Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) Arkansas Chapter Spring Annual Meeting, The Austin Convention Hotel and Spa, Hot Springs

Information on all AHA educational programs and activities is available at www.arkhospitals.org/events.