

What You Missed – Your Plan for Future Success

by Richard Blanchette

I hope all of you had a Joyous Holiday Season and are now ready to dig in and get your practices ready for the challenges of 2012. As some of us discovered at the 2011 National PAHCOM Conference in October, there will be many changes. Paramount among them is the future of Obamacare as it heads to the U. S. Supreme Court. Sarah Fontenot, BSN, JD told the membership not to expect any sweeping changes to Obamacare because President Obama took each segment of the new law from prior attempts by Republican or Democrat administrations to attain their favored segment. Sarah cited efforts by the Truman, Eisenhower, Nixon, Reagan, and Clinton administrations to enact four different segments of what we now call Obamacare. Sarah's perspective made perfect common sense. If you were there you heard it firsthand. If not, talk to your PAHCOM Chapter members who did attend, and plan on being there yourself in 2012. You missed an important understanding on how to evaluate the rhetoric that dominates our news.

Another PAHCOM Conference speaker that will greatly impact 2012 is Dr. Jin Zhou. He provided insight as to how the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) now interacts with Obamacare. The overall concept is that any patient that has a work-place insurance plan or pays for their own individual health insurance now falls under ERISA rules. Part of ERISA prohibits health insurance payers from denying or reducing payment for medical care. According to Dr. Zhou any decrement of the invoiced amount is grounds for appeal. Upon appeal, the regulations require that the insurance company provide you (representing the patient) with the criteria, process, names of the individuals, and the rationale for the reduction or denial



Sarah Fontenot, BSN, JD speaking at the PAHCOM 23rd Annual Conference.

of payment. More than likely there is a huge reimbursement benefit to your practice waiting to be claimed. One thing for sure, the insurance companies will not tell you about it. Network with your fellow PAHCOM members. It pays big dividends.

Those were just two of the phenomenal fourteen speakers. Each brought information, ideas, and attitudes that benefit small group and solo physician office practices. The cost, time, and trouble of traveling is far outweighed by the dollars, efficiency, and confidence reaped from the education attained at each and every PAHCOM Annual Conference.

The National Office is tasked with providing opportunities for the general membership to excel in their professional responsibilities. The Annual Conference is one of those opportunities. We also have the obligation to alert the membership to the tools the National Office has set up to help you keep up to date on the many changes occurring throughout the health care industry. Paramount among the PAHCOM tools is the Networking, both among

individual members and your local PAHCOM Chapter. You should also use the PAHCOM ListServ Forum for resolving individual challenges. Do not forget the Member Library. We can go on and on, but you get the idea: involvement leads to education, which leads to profitability.

Start the New Year with a resolve to get involved and Share Knowledge. We hope to see you at the 2012 Annual Conference, October 16, 17, & 18 Clearwater Beach, Florida where you can ensure that you are contributing the most you can to your practice and your own professional development.

Happy New Year!

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