## HAWKEYE HIGHLIGHTS



**SPRING 2007** 

## President's Message

#### Dear AAHAM Member:

I hope everyone is as excited about spring being here as I am. I am also very excited about everything that is going on with AAHAM both nationally and here in Iowa. National has been busy working on the online test for certification and on the local level the board has been working on some great educational programs for this year.

Our spring meeting is set for May 23-25 and we have some great educational sessions set up for the members. The board has reviewed the member survey from last year and we have been talking about make some changes for next years meetings, more to come later about this.

On January 8-9 I attended the National Presidents meeting in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. It was hard to make myself go but I did. We discussed the funding of the online certification test and some new scholarships that will be offered to members and their families.

I attended the National Legislative Day in Washington DC March 14-15 along with Diana Hiatt from Iowa Health System, the winner of our drawing for the free registration and hotel. We met with representatives from Senator Grassley and Harkin's offices. We discussed the need for a 12-month contingency plan for the NPI implementation date. We also discussed the

need for uniform standardization in the acceptance or rejection notices received from the payers. We felt the meeting went very well and that the meeting was well worth the time and expense. Because of the weather we got to see more of Washington then we expected to see.

In closing I want to encourage every member to become involved to the extent that you can. You will find you will get back much more then you give. This is a great Association made up of people that are willing to share with others. I look forward to seeing all of you at this years meetings.



Respectfully, Luke Gruber, President

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 The statements and opinions expressed represent the attitudes of each author.
 Readers are encouraged to express their opinions of the written articles.
 Articles and letters to the editor are subject to editing and condensing.

#### 2007 HAWKEYE CHAPTER ADMINISTRATION OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

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# Guidance on Compliance with the HIPAA National Provider Identifier (NPI) Rule

AFTER THE MAY 23, 2007, IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE

#### BACKGROUND

To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the health care system, Congress enacted the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996, which included a series of "administrative simplification" provisions that required the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to adopt national standards for electronic health care transactions and code sets and identifiers to be used in those transactions. The final rule adopting the NPI as the standard unique health identifier for health care providers was published on January 23, 2004, and became effective on May 23, 2005. All covered entities must be in compliance with the NPI provisions by May 23, 2007, except for small plans, which must be in compliance by May 23, 2008.

Compliance means in part that the NPI must be used by covered entities to identify providers on all HIPAA covered transactions that call for health care provider identifiers. Covered transactions that require a health care provider's identifier that are transmitted containing only legacy identifiers (identifiers in use today) or containing both legacy identifiers and NPIs would be noncompliant.

The NPI final rule is clear: May 23, 2007 is the final deadline for covered entities, other than small plans, to comply with HIPAA's NPI provisions. After that date, covered entities, including health plans (other than small health plans), may not conduct noncompliant transactions. With the May 2007 deadline just ahead, HHS has received a number of inquiries expressing concern over the health care industry's state of readiness. In response, the Department believes it is particularly important to outline its approach to enforcement of HIPAA's NPI provisions. The Department will

continue to provide technical assistance to the industry and issue guidance on the NPI provisions and compliance requirements.

#### **ENFORCEMENT APPROACH**

The Secretary has delegated to the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) authority to enforce the electronic transactions, code set, security, and identifier provisions (i.e., non-privacy administrative simplification provisions) of HIPAA. CMS will focus on obtaining voluntary compliance and use a complaint-driven approach for enforcement. When CMS receives a complaint about a covered entity that appears to allege a failure to comply with a non-privacy administrative simplification provision of HIPAA, it will notify the entity in writing that a complaint has been filed. Following notification from CMS, the entity will have the opportunity to 1) demonstrate compliance, 2) document its good faith efforts to comply with the standards, and/or 3) submit a corrective action plan.

#### **GOOD FAITH POLICY**

CMS's approach will utilize the flexibility granted in section 1176(b) of the Social Security Act to consider good faith efforts to comply when assessing individual complaints. Under section 1176(b), HHS may not impose a civil money penalty where the failure to comply is based on reasonable cause and is not due to willful neglect, and the failure to comply is cured within a 30-day period. HHS has the authority under the statute to extend the period within which a covered entity may cure the noncompliance "based on the nature and extent of the failure to comply."

CMS recognizes that transactions often require the participation of two covered entities, each of whom is required to comply with HIPAA, and that noncompliance by one covered entity may put the second covered entity in a difficult position. CMS also understands that if one of the covered entities is a small health plan, which has a May 23, 2008 compliance date, compliance by (Continued on Page 4) (Continued from Page 3)

the covered trading partner may be especially challenging. Therefore, during the 12 month period immediately following the May 23, 2007 compliance date for all covered entities other than small health plans, CMS intends to look at both covered (non-small health plans) entities' good faith efforts to come into compliance with the NPI standards in determining, on a case-by-case basis, whether reasonable cause for the noncompliance exists and, if so, the extent to which the time for curing the noncompliance should be extended.

For a 12-month period after the compliance date (i.e., through May 23, 2008), CMS will not impose penalties on covered entities that deploy contingency plans (in order to ensure the smooth flow of payments) if they have made reasonable and diligent efforts to become compliant and, in the case of health plans (that are not small health plans), to facilitate the compliance of their trading partners. Specifically, as long as a health plan (that is not a small health plan) can demonstrate to CMS its active outreach/testing efforts, it can continue processing payments to providers. In determining whether a good faith effort has been made, CMS will place a strong emphasis on sustained actions and demonstrable progress. We limit the period during which covered entities may deploy contingency plans to allow additional time to carry out needed testing and other activities without payment disruption, while providing a clear ending date for those activities. A covered entity may end its contingency plan at any time prior to May 23, 2008, but cannot continue it after that date.

Indications of good faith might include, for example, such factors as:

- Increased external testing with trading partners.
- Lack of availability of, or refusal by, the trading partner(s) prior to May 23, 2007 for health plans (other than small health plans) to test the transaction(s) with the covered entity whose compliance is at issue.
- In the case of such a health plan, concerted efforts in advance of the May 23, 2007 and

continued efforts afterwards to conduct outreach and make testing opportunities available to its provider community.

• For a health care provider, having obtained an NPI and having the ability to use it on HIPAA transactions.

While there are many examples of complaints that CMS may receive, the following is one example that illustrates how CMS expects the process to work.

> Example: A complaint is filed against a health plan (that is not a small health plan) solely because it accepts and processes transactions containing both legacy identifiers and NPIs while working to help its provider trading partners achieve compliance.

In this situation, CMS would 1) notify such a plan of the complaint, 2) based on the plan's response to the notification, evaluate the plan's efforts to help its noncompliant providers come into compliance, and 3) if it is determined that the plan had demonstrated good faith and reasonable cause for its non-compliance, not impose a penalty for the period of time CMS determines is appropriate, based on the nature and extent of the failure to comply.

(Continued on Page 5)



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For example, CMS would examine whether the health plan (that is not a small health plan) undertook a course of outreach actions to its trading partners on awareness and testing, with particular focus on the actions that occurred prior to the May 23, 2007 NPI compliance date. Similarly, health care providers should be able to demonstrate that they took actions to become compliant prior to the May 23, 2007 NPI compliance date, including obtaining an NPI. If CMS determines that reasonable and diligent efforts have been made, the cure period for noncompliance would be extended at the discretion of CMS. Furthermore, CMS will continue to monitor the covered entity to ensure that their sustained efforts bring progress towards compliance. If continued progress is not made, CMS will step up their enforcement efforts towards that covered entity.

Organizations that have exercised good faith efforts to correct problems and implement the changes required to comply with HIPAA should document such efforts in the event of a complaint being filed. This flexibility will permit health plans to mitigate unintended adverse effects on covered entities' cash flow and business operations during the 12-month transition to the NPI standards, as well as on the availability and quality of patient care.



#### WORKING TOWARD COMPLIANCE

In the few remaining months before the May 23, 2007deadline for all covered entities other than small health plans, HHS encourages those covered entities to intensify their efforts toward achieving compliance with the NPI requirements. In addition, HHS encourages health plans that are not small health plans to assess the readiness of their provider communities to determine the need to implement contingency plans to maintain the flow of payments while continuing to work toward compliance. Although compliance with the NPI is a huge undertaking, the result will be greatly enhanced electronic communication throughout the health care community. Successful implementation will require the attention and cooperation of all health plans and clearinghouses, and of all providers that conduct electronic transactions. HHS plans to reassess industry readiness on the May 23, 2007 compliance date, and throughout the 12-month contingency plan period.

#### Welcome New Members!

#### **Russel Merchen**

VP of Operations for HPS, Inc.

#### **Matt Russell**

National Director Account Management for Chamberlin Edmonds

#### **William Maly**

Regional Director for AIM Healthcare

#### Julie Henke

Admitting Manager for Madison County Health Center

#### **Todd McQueston**

Director of Revenue Cycles for HBCS

#### **Karen Gagnon**

Owner of Gagnon and Assoc., LLC

#### **Gerri Lyons**

Manger for St. Lukes Regional Medical Center

#### **Toni Sitzmann**

Business Operations Manager for Mercy Medical Services

## **AAHAM Board Meeting Planning Session Minutes**

January 16, 2007

Present: Pam Brindley, Connie Dudding, Steve

Stewart, Luke Gruber, Laurie Gaffney, Val Gifford, Lisa Quillen, Stephanie

Hultman, Jolene Hansen,

<u>Present Via Phone</u>: Tara Spidle, Liz Baptist, and Craig Lee

Luke has indicated the Chapter Operations report is due in February. He will speak with Heather Hulscher to ensure this is completed.

#### **National Board Meeting Events / Luke Gruber:**

- Chapter Mentoring: Currently chapters are ranked by color depending on their vitality. National may change the ranking methodology. National is asking that troubled chapters be mentored by those in a position to assist. Missouri has been identified as a troubled chapter, and the Hawkeye Chapter has been asked to help. Luke has asked Pam to contact the MO chapter to give them information, such as speaker ideas. Others are allowing chapters in need for their board members to attend a meeting of a chapter who is doing well to gain ideas on how to improve. This may be extended to the MO chapter as well from the Hawkeye Chapter.
- Legislative Day. Is coming up, and will be held in conjunction with the President's meeting. Luke has to attend as a Chapter President. Due to increased Hawkeye Chapter costs to send another member, discussion was held if the board wanted to grant the opportunity to another individual. Mike Dobbs in unable to attend as our Legislative Chair. Luke indicated this is a worthy meeting, and what to expect from the meeting. Liz also indicated National has asked healthy chapters to send additional members. Luke indicated some

chapters are paying the registration costs. The costs for registration is \$199, plus hotel and travel expense. Liz motioned for the Hawkeye Chapter to subsidize the cost of registration and 2 hotel nights for one additional member of the Hawkeye Chapter to attend. Steve seconded. The motion carried. Kristina will send an email to the membership informing them we will hold a drawing for interested members to help cover their costs of attending.

- National has committed \$20,000 to brining the professional exams online.
- National is changing the scholarship programs to allow 2 \$2500 scholarships to national members, and 4 \$1000 scholarships to members and their dependants. More information is to come as they are first putting guidelines into place.
- National is reviewing the technical certification to give people the option to retest every three years, or earn CEU's if the technically certified individual is a national AAHAM member. CEU's have not been identified yet, and the beginning date of this has not been defined.

#### **National News / Liz Baptist:**

 The Compliance exam is now available. National is working on more information regarding this.

#### **Treasurer's Report / Connie Dudding:**

- The chapter lost money on the 2006 fall meeting, approximately \$1100. This is due in part to the banquet held and the portfolio's given.
- Cash in the bank is \$1500, \$7500 in CD's.
- To date, the Hawkeye Chapter has made a profit of \$2,650.16.
- Discussion was held of a common bank to move to. Connie has agreed to review banks.
- Allied Insurance needs new names of authorized signers. They have to be bonded as well.

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#### **Certification / Liz Baptist**

- 21 people are scheduled to take the technical exam in February.
- Pam is planning on localized sporadic training.
- Melynda/Pam have developed an overhead. Pam asked if others would be willing to assist with training. Pam will email the presentation to Liz.
- Laurie has asked for dates training may occur in the event others would like to attend.
   These will be placed on the website
- National is looking at hosting webinars for exam preparation. No time frame. They are also looking at redoing practice tests.
- Liz will contact interested parties in the professional exam.
- Liz will also draft something for the website for parties interested in certification.

#### Membership / Kristina Gursky:

- Currently have 99 national members and 1 state member.
- Share processes for welcoming and recruiting members with NE and MO chapters
- Retired Membership-one member currently qualifies for this and is also a lifetime member. Lee made a motion to spend \$50 to pay for Duane Voshell's fees. Steve seconded. The motion carried.
- Discussion was held to work on a bylaw revision to pay for retired members fees. Liz will research if they can maintain certification. Luke will work on the bylaw revision.
- IA has maintained membership numbers. National holds steady.

#### **Hawkeye Highlights / Jolene Hansen:**

 Highlights will be published in May, September, and December. Articles are due 30 days prior.

- Luke will provide updated officer listings to the board. Jolene will ensure these are updated for Highlights.
- Need more submission materials such as national meeting updates, articles from speakers, etc.
- Luke has indicated he does not need to proofread prior to distribution.

#### **Corporate Sponsorship / Craig Lee:**

- Letters were sent last week.
- Names of potential sponsors should be submitted.
- The HFMA sponsor list will be reviewed for more potential sponsors. Steve will provide this to Craig.

#### **Website / Laurie Gaffney:**

- Decision was made not to include the membership listing
- Laurie will follow up with Heather to see if a link can be made to the IHA list serve
- Pictures from the fall meeting will be added
- Past President's letters will be added
- Legislative Day Brochure will be added
- Pictures by names on the website of Board Members will be added

#### **Upcoming Meetings were discussed:**

- The Spring 2007 meeting is planned for May 23-25 at the Hilton Garden Inn.
- Pam presented a form available to potential speakers to learn their topics and fees.
- Board meeting will be held at 10:00 on the 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Agenda tentatively set:

- Wednesday: Bob Masters

- Thursday AM: Linda Shaeffer

- Thursday PM: Roundtables

- Friday AM: Payers

 Pam will confirm with speakers and update if changes are needed

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- Fall 2007 Meeting tentatively set
  - Wednesday: Dennis Grindle
  - Thursday AM: Work Comp
  - Thursday PM: Roundtables
  - Friday AM: Payers
- Pam has asked for work comp ideas, and other general speaker ideas
- Pam and Luke will work on food for meetings
- In 2008 shorter meeting periods will be reviewed rather than 3-day meetings. Not possible in 2007 as contracts set with hotels.

## The minutes from the last board meeting were amended:

- Pam and Melynda audited the treasury books
- The \$2500 CD has been changed to 14 month per board meeting
- The \$5000 CD has been changed to 10 month per email approval by the board
- Laurie motioned to approve the minutes
- Connie seconded
- The motion carried

#### **New Business:**

- Steve presented the concept of a joint venture with HFMA IA Chapter. One-day sessions possible for topics interesting to both associations. Ideas such as Bobette Gustafson discussed. Steve will come back to both respective boards after concepts better in place.
- Jackets were presented to incoming and outgoing board members.
- Records maintained by the treasury 7 years or older will be shredded.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted, Kristina Gursky

## **New Member Spotlight**



Please welcome
John Shannon to
the Hawkeye
Chapter of AAHAM!

My name is John Shannon and I joined the management team at Automated Accounts Management Services in January of this year, as Manager of Business Development. I'm excited about the future of this company, and enjoy working with and learning from terrific individuals, who are extremely experienced in my industry. Growth plans and continued success are on the horizon and I'm thankful for the opportunity to contribute.

My career background, spanning 13 years, includes marketing financial products and performing collection services. I have experience in financial planning, student loan marketing and collections, accounts receivable management, and have worked in both first and third party collection environments.

My wife Carrie and I have two small children (Taylor and Andrew) and we live in Altoona. I enjoy spending time with my family and also playing softball, basketball, golf, fishing, hunting, and practically any other sport that doesn't involve ice skates.



**Networking Opportunities**. Melynda Crawford, Madison County Hospital; Liz Baptist, Perry Memorial Hospital and Pam Brindley, H & R Accounts/MedPay Management Systems.

#### HAWKEYE CHAPTER OF AAHAM

#### TREASURER'S REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING 3/31/2007

BALANCE SHEET				
ASSETS:	\$15.760.46			
Cash in Bank Certificate of Deposit	\$15,760.46 \$7,500.00			
TOTAL ASSETS	\$23,260.46			
LIABILITIES: Payables	\$0.00			
<b>EQUITY:</b>	\$23,261.41			
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$23,261.41			

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OPERATING STATEMENT				
REVENUES:				
Corporate Sponsors	\$3,300.00			
Interest Income	\$27.38			
Certifications	\$2,100.00			
TOTAL REVENUE	\$5,427.38			
EXPENSES:				
Travel	\$623.59			
Certifications	\$1,590.00			
Miscellaneous	\$0.00			
Membership Dues	\$0.00			
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,213.59			
NET INCOME (LOSS)	\$3,213.79			
BEGINNING CASH BALANCE	\$12,546.67			
ENDING CASH BALANCE	\$15,760.46			
OTHER (INCREASE OR DECREASE IN CASH)	\$0.00			
FUTURE PAYABLES				
ACCRUED CASH BALANCE	\$15,760.46			



Respectfully Submitted, Connie Dudding, Chapter Treasurer

2006 AAHAM Fall Meeting Hawkeye Chapter 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gateway Center / Ames, IA



2007 Officers and Board Members. Heather Hulscher, Chairman of the Board; Luke Gruber, President; Jolene Hansen, Board Member; Liz Baptist, National AAHAM Secretary and Iowa Board Member; Laurie Gaffney, Board Member; Pam Brindley, Vice-President; Connie Dudding, Treasurer; Tara Spidle, Board Member and Craig Lee, Board Member.



AAHAM Past Presidents. Jean Barker, Craig Lee, Liz Baptist and Duane Voshell

### CMS Announces Contingency Plans to Maintain the Flow of Payments

The May 23 implementation date for the National Provider Identifier (NPI), as required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), is fast approaching. The NPI replaces legacy provider numbers that are different for each health plan, with one number to be used on all HIPAA standard transactions for all health plans. While seemingly a simple transition, there are many nuances with implementation of this rule that have made it impossible for the industry as a whole to be compliant by the May 23 deadline.

In response, and to ensure the flow of payment to Iowa hospitals, IHA has been actively working with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and Senator Grassley to implement a contingency plan and to make available a NPI database. Early this week, CMS made an announcement it would allow for a 12-month contingency period, so long as all covered entities demonstrate a good faith effort to become compliant and have a contingency plan.

The agency provided the following as examples of a good faith effort:

- Increased external testing with trading partners.
- For a health care provider, having obtained an NPI and having the ability to use it on HIPAA transactions.

During this 12-month period, CMS will be assessing industry readiness on the May 23, 2007 compliance date, and throughout the 12-month contingency period. As with the implementation of the HIPAA standard transactions, enforcement will be complaint driven, and if the covered entity can demonstrate good faith effort and reasonable cause for its non-compliance, CMS will not impose a penalty.

To accommodate this new information, IHA has moved its NPI audio conference from April 11 to

May 3 from 11:30-1. Dennis Grindle, CPA and Partner with Seim, Johnson, Sestak, and Quist, LLP, will present the latest information on the NPI contingency period, enumeration, implications of the Medicare enrollment process, and more. To register for this program complete the enclosed brochure or visit the IHA Web site at <a href="https://www.ihaonline.org">www.ihaonline.org</a>.

The contingency guidance is enclosed with this week's *Friday Mailing*. The guidance does not address the release of the NPI database, which is presently under review at the Office of Management and Budget. Questions regarding the NPI can be directed to Heather Hulscher (<a href="https://hulscherh@ihaonline.org">hulscherh@ihaonline.org</a>) at IHA. IHA urges hospitals to continue to get NPIs and share them with trading partners.







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## **Don't Forget AAHAM!**

If you've recently had a change to your personal contact information, please let AAHAM know. If we aren't able to contact you, we can't keep you informed of all the great benefits AAHAM has to offer. So please, keep us in mind as your life changes and let us know how to reach you.

To update your local chapter records please contact Kristina Gursky, membership chair:

Phone: (800) 685-0595 ext. 6987 E-mail: kgursky@icsystem.com

To update your national file, please log on to <a href="https://www.aaham.org">www.aaham.org</a>, click on Members Only, and after logging in, click on "Click Here to Update Your Contact Information." You may also fax your change of information to AAHAM, attn: Debra Fernandez, at (703) 359-7562, or you may mail information to:

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#### WEBSITE ALERT

The Iowa Hawkeye Chapter is excited to announce our website for members at <a href="https://www.hawkeyeaaham.org">www.hawkeyeaaham.org</a>. The site includes:

Chapter Officers and Board Members Membership Information Upcoming Events-Calendar of Events Link to the National AAHAM Website Chapter Bylaws Current and Past Newsletters Sponsor Information Photos from past meetings

Watch for more information to be added every month. Since the site is new, we are looking for any ideas for additional information from our members. Please contact board member Laurie Gaffney at Gaffney.laurie@bvrmc.org with ideas.

## **Corporate Sponsors**

The Hawkeye Chapter wishes to thank its Corporate Sponsors for their generous financial contributions that help ensure our Chapter meets its goals and objectives. It allows us to provide educational programs, social functions, training programs for member certification, and the *Hawkeye Highlights* newsletter.

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## Mark your Calendar

AAHAM Hawkeye Chapter Spring Conference May 23rd – May 25th, 2007 Hilton Garden Inn Des Moines/Johnston, IA

#### Fees:

**AAHAM Member Non-AAHAM Member** 

Full Conference = \$115.00 Full Conference = \$125.00 Thursday Only = \$65.00 Thursday Only = \$75.00

Later Registration, add additional \$10 after May 15, 2007 Return To:

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