



Peak News

Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Chapter of the Professional Association of Health Care Office Management, Colorado Springs, CO

Named PAHCOM Chapter of The Year 2009 & 2010

Summer 2011



Practice Transformation: From Colorado Springs Senior Medicine into AgeWell Medical Associates

Health care payment reform is the topic of many current conversations in health care management circles. It stirs a wide range of emotions because it involves the words “change”, “transition”, and “transformation”. For the most part, we understand the rationale behind these sometime heated discussions. Health care costs are dragging down the economy, the current fee-for-service environment is unsustainable, physician shortages loom, millions of uninsured and underinsured people strain the system...the list goes on. Practice managers know, down deep, that change is coming. Management skills that we rely upon in the current environment will likely become the building blocks for new skills that must be learned in order to move the profession forward.

But what will the new system and skill sets look like? No one knows for sure, but there are plenty of smart folks working on it. Ideas are circulating, and some are capturing interest because of the possibilities they present. Somewhere, in the midst of the discussions about accountable care organizations, regional coordinated care, and independent practice associations, is a growing movement believing that patient centered medical homes (PCMH) might just be the key to remaining independent and in control of the quality of patient care.

Jeffrey Kulp, MD and Lori Trivelli, CMM agree that the PCMH model has the capacity to improve both patient care and physician satisfaction. However, agree is too mild a word to use. It is much more appropriate to point out that they are passionate about the work and the opportunities this patient care model presents.

Dr Kulp is the visionary leader at Colorado Springs Senior Medicine (CSSM). It has long been his dream to provide a seamless continuum of care to his elderly patients. It has been difficult, especially in a solo practice with a 100% Medicare population, to make ends meet. The rewards of patient care are often overshadowed by constraints of time

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Congratulations Pikes Peak PAHCOM—10 Years!

From HIPAA to PPACA's Payment Reform, Pikes Peak PAHCOM has provided continuing education, networking, community service, and certification opportunities to practice managers in Southern Colorado since 2001. Along the way, the Chapter has made friends with more than 80 members, 36 sponsors, dozens of speakers and experts, and both local and state medical societies. It's earned its place among the top PAHCOM Chapters in America. Keep up the good work, Pikes Peak PAHCOM!

PP PAHCOM Partners with AAMA

“How do we compete with hospitals for qualified employees?” was the start of a Pikes Peak PAHCOM Breakfast Club (BC) discussion in 2005. As the discussion developed, it became apparent that instead of competing for talent in an existing pool of candidates, we should consider developing relationships with the folks at the beginning of the supply chain... the educators who train medical assistants and medical administrative assistants.

BC is a smaller subset of the Pikes Peak Chapter. It meets regularly, and tackles some of the bigger projects confronting health care managers. Since its earliest days, BC members have actively developed topics of interest to the group.

One of its efforts, collaboration with local schools and colleges, has flourished. In fact, it has grown into a semi-annual event drawing practice managers, local trade schools, colleges, staffing agencies, and representatives from national associations AMT (registered MAs) and AAMA (certified MAs). Several positive changes, including certification and continuing education requirements for employment of MAs, structured externships, performance standards, and advisory board appointments, have come about as a result of these meetings.

In early 2011, BC was approached by the National Past President of AAMA, Boni Bruntz, about a speaking opportunity at AAMA’s Southwest Regional Conference, hosted by the Colorado Society of Medical Assistants, to be held July 22-23 in Colorado Springs. By June, the agenda was set, and three BC members were scheduled to speak.

Judy Boesen, RN, retired practice administrator, consultant, and PP PAHCOM’s education liaison, gave a one-hour presentation with Q&A covering technology and electronic communication in the medical office.

Sandra Robben-Weber, CMM, practice administrator at Colorado Springs Pulmonary Associates, and Janet Burch, CMM, offered a two-hour presentation that provided a closer look at the effects of healthcare payment reform on practice operations—why change is occurring and how MAs will adapt to the new environment.

What a wonderful opportunity to share the knowledge of PAHCOM members!

Practice Transformation: From Colorado Springs Senior Medicine into AgeWell Medical Associates

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and money. But in spite of the difficulty, Dr Kulp manages to provide primary care, hospital care, and nursing home care to his patients, and is recognized as one of the leading physicians in Colorado Springs.

Dr Kulp’s vision for his practice is ambitious. He sees the coming changes as opportunities to improve management of his patients’ care, and in doing so, will see his practice excel. To accomplish this, Dr Kulp is expanding services and adding mid-level providers. He envisions a new building, four times the size of his current office that embraces “green” concepts throughout. CSSM is investing in its first electronic health record and adopting evidence-based clinical guidelines. Data mining and registry reporting are also part of the overall plan to better manage patient outcomes. Even Dr Kulp has changed his approach to patient care. Instead of directing patient care, Dr Kulp now partners with his patients in guiding their decisions about the care they receive.

Dr Kulp is planning strategically for the future and will be offering a new range of services including classes for seniors in wellness, exercise, and nutrition. Eventually, senior services will include a social worker and pharmacist. Along with new services and a brand new name to complement its activities, AgeWell Medical Associates, Dr Kulp anticipates growth with the country’s aging population.

Lori Trivelli, CMM, Dr Kulp’s practice manager, is the magician who manages activities at AgeWell. Lori, too, is passionate about the future and what change will mean for AgeWell. It is impossible to spend 15 minutes with Lori and not be impressed by her intelligence, compassion, and vision that taps into the very cornerstones of health care management: planning, leading, organizing, and controlling. The past nine months have been a whirlwind of activity at AgeWell. Once the decision had been made to pursue PCMH status, it was “game on”.

Lori and Dr Kulp looked at their internal resources, and decided that a project of this magnitude required outside guidance. One of the first steps Lori and Dr Kulp took was a meeting with HealthTeamWorks, a national

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nonprofit collaborative based in Colorado. HealthTeamWorks provides physicians with coaching services and tools to adopt evidence-based clinical guidelines, move toward electronic records and the use of registries, and transition into the patient-centered medical home model. After gaining an understanding of the structured process and resources available, and getting trained in the skills needed to succeed, Dr Kulp and Lori were ready to start implementation.

Once AgeWell's leadership had its champions and a clear understanding of the work ahead, it needed buy-in from the rest of the team. Initially, Lori and the HealthTeamWorks' coach facilitated weekly meetings to train staff. Lori now conducts these bi-weekly staff meetings to communicate events and solicit ideas from staff members. Process mapping, an exercise to identify and improve processes, was one of the first tools introduced to the team. Lori and Dr Kulp understood that working as a team meant teaching staff that they were truly empowered to share their thoughts, implement ideas, make a difference, and have management's support. And, AgeWell's staff has embraced their new role.

One of the first processes that Lori's team mapped was prescription refills. Amazingly, Lori's team discovered a process that, on the surface, appeared efficient because it had been working for years. Yet, when all the moving parts were identified, the process presented an opportunity to improve efficiency by reducing multiple, unnecessary steps that did not add value to patient care. In doing so, the practice ensured that its precious resources, its human capital, could be directed towards more meaningful work. Since that first experience with process mapping and its immediate return on the investment of time, the team has identified multiple opportunities to improve efficiency in daily activities. The exercise is now woven into the fabric of AgeWell.

Deciding what to measure, and how to report and manage the information, was the next challenge presented to Lori's team. As with process mapping, data mining required leadership and facilitation skills to guide the clinical and administrative staff, and Lori's skills were up to the task. Working together, the team

was able to identify critical clinical measures and extract the necessary data from the practice management system and its paper records.

As Lori's team grew more skilled in process improvement, data collection, and teamwork, Lori was able to delegate leadership responsibilities to members of the team. Cross-departmental teams assumed responsibilities for workflow processes, measurements, and researching electronic health records. Interestingly, but not surprisingly, by involving everyone in these activities, and allowing team members to work at the top level of their licenses and certifications, job satisfaction has increased.

Having a well-trained team with committed leaders has been a very important development as Lori's talents are being pulled now in an entirely different direction. Lori's role has rapidly expanded to include managing the building project. Dr Kulp's vision of a green facility was the first step. But, operationally, it was only the beginning. Lori finds her time occupied with realtors, bankers, architects, designers, and project managers. Throughout, Lori participates with everyone on the team working towards PCMH status. Yet Lori still finds time to manage what, in the not-too-distant past, used to fill her days—practice operations.

Lori's experience is a journey, not a destination. She and Dr Kulp represent the fiercely independent group of physicians and practice managers who look towards the future and embrace the opportunities it represents. It takes vision and leadership to see that these steps are necessary for creating patient-centered care, workplace efficiency, and value to the services that practices like AgeWell provides to its patients. The commitment to patient care and the willingness to change are key ingredients as health care transforms practices into efficiently run centers of care.

Pikes Peak PAHCOM
Chapter of the Year 2009 and 2010
Celebrating 10 Years!
2001-2011

President's Point of View

Congratulations Pikes Peak PAHCOM—Ten Terrific Years!

Well done! Who knew that our small group of practice managers would still be standing tall ten years later?

Ten years ago, a dedicated group of practice managers saw a need and acted. Together, they began building an association that could offer education in timely health care management topics, provide an avenue for managers to network and share ideas, and challenge and support one another's efforts to grow professionally through certification. Their partner was PAHCOM.

Just as it was then, Pikes Peak PAHCOM members are active, involved, and passionate about the important role they fill in health care. And, just as it was then, health care continues to change and evolve.

The traditional symbol for the tenth anniversary is tin or aluminum. Why? Because its pliability allows it to be flexible and durable. It can bend without being broken—much like the qualities that are needed to drive health care management forward in uncertain times. Terrific job, Pikes Peak PAHCOM!

Prepping Your Practice for Transformation: New Payment Realities

What if your practice could coordinate care more efficiently—manage patients so that hospitalizations are less frequent, ER visits avoided, there is no duplication of diagnostic tests or prescriptions—would your patients benefit?

Now suppose that your practice is paid by an insurance plan, not as a result of fees for individual services, but instead, for the management of specific chronic disease-related care for the health plan's members. A fixed monthly per patient per month amount would be paid to your practice. Your practice would be responsible for providing or arranging all health care services for the specific chronic disease-related care for which you've assumed management. How would your practice fare?

Or, how would your practice fare if, instead of a chronic care model, the practice's outcomes, performance measures, and its fees, were public and available for comparison with colleagues in the same specialty within your geographical region? Would consumers, patients with high deductible plans, find your practice an attractive value in terms of quality and pricing? Would the physicians who are in a chronic care model and responsible for specialists' payments continue referring patients to your practice once your data is public?

And, is the data that is being reported accurate?

These, and many more equally intriguing possibilities were discussed at "Prepping Your Practice for Transformation: New Payment Realities", a coordinated event on June 30 that included perspectives from several healthcare innovators and was hosted by Pikes Peak PAHCOM.

The Colorado Medical Society facilitated the day's discussion, giving an in depth view of payment reform—what it is, where its pain points are, and how options may translate into opportunities. The El Paso County Medical Society offered panelists from different health care organizations who have been proactive in their approaches to payment reform. Each panelist brought a unique perspective to various payment methodologies.

Following the presentation and panel discussion, attendees broke into facilitated, small group discussions and worked their way through various payment scenarios. From these exercises, managers learned that there are multiple delivery and payment models, and no single model answers all questions. They also learned that even though the task is overwhelming, creative, out-of-the-box problem-solving by the managers produced some very interesting ideas.

All agreed that this is an ongoing effort requiring partnership between physician, manager, and medical societies. There is much more work to be done.

QUITE AN ACCOMPLISHMENT!

Please join Pikes Peak PAHCOM for our

10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

5:00-7:00 pm

Wyatt's Pub and Grill,
806 Village Center Drive, CSC 80919
(SW corner of Vindicator and Rockrimmon)

Heavy hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be provided.
(2 drink tickets per attendee)

Members—No Charge
(Add'l guests \$15/ea)

Corporate Sponsors—No Charge
(1 per organization; add'l guest \$15)

RSVP by July 20th at ppahcom@gmail.com

NOTE: Bring your confirmation e-mail to attend!
Contact Debbie Carlson 719-632-8118 x107 or
Lori Trivelli 719-471-7160 with any additional questions.

PIKES PEAK PAHCOM MEMBER LIST

Pikes Peak PAHCOM proudly recognizes its members and its corporate sponsors.

Welcome to our newest members:

Jeffry Anderson, Christine Beal, Sherrie Butler, Leisle Chung, Dianne Groves, Rhonda Heaton, Mathew Holdt, Dawn Hubbard, Lynne Hugill, Cathryn John, Daniel Karpel, Debra Lewis, Marla Lopez, Meagan Mees, Paula Meissinger, Kenneth Polke, Karen Raper, David Root, Kelley Serafin, Lisa Smith, Judith Spurgeon, Patricia Tappan, and Tamara Young.

We are pleased to have you join us!

We extend our sincere gratitude for the confidence renewing members have placed in this association by referring new members. Our Chapter is successful because of you.

Debbie Adams, Dr. Laura Feldman
Jeffrey Anderson, Colo Dermatology
Julie Ballweber, Consultant
Christine Beal, Retina Consultants
Judy Boesen, Consultant
Vicky Bonato, Colo Spgs Internal Medicine
Kathy Bosche, CMM, Colorado Hearing & Balance
Patti Boughton, Oak Springs Family Medicine
Tracie Broome, CMM, Colorado Springs Neurological Associates
Janet Burch, CMM, Consultant
Sherie Butler, A Family Haven
Debbie Carlson, CMM, Women's Associates
Valerie Chavez, CMM, Women's Associates
Leisle Chung, Vanguard Dermatology
Linda Cisco, RN, Interventional Pain Mgmt
Pamela Dashner, Colo Otolaryngology
Brenda DeLuca, RN, Parkside Cardiology
Eileen Engelbrecht, Retina Consultants
Lisa Farwell, Pikes Peak Cardiology
Kelly Gamblin, CMM, ExoressCare Plus
Debbie Garrett, Colo Spgs Orthopaedic Group
Dianne Groves, Lee Eye Institute
Christine Hall, CMM, Colo Spgs Orthopaedic Group
Rhonda Heaton, Exec Park Eye Care

Diana Herman, MVMG Women's Health
Darcy Hernandez, CMM, AllScripts
Cindy Hildebrand, Front Range Orthopaedics
Georgene Holcomb, San De Cristo Surgical Assoc (Pueblo)
Cindy Holdt, Pikes Peak Cardiology
Mathew Holdt, Pikes Peak Allergy & Asthma
Sharma Holst, CMM, Colo Spgs Orthopaedic Group
Ellen Howell, CMM, Skin Cancer & Dermatology Center
Dawn Hubbard, Assoc in OB/GYN
Lynn Hugill, Exceptional Care for Women
Cathryn John, Front Range Orthopaedics
Stephen Johanns, CMM, Infectious Disease Specialists
Daniel Karpel, Peak Med Mgmt Radiology & Imaging
Lori Kaufhold, Academy Women's Healthcare
Terri Kehr, The Family Practice
Melanie Kinlaw, CMM, MVMG Family Practice
Debra Lewis, MVMG Multi-Specialty
Marla Lopez, CMM, Colo Spgs Endocrine
Amanda Lyons, CMM, Summit Dermatology
Veronica Maes, Cardiodiagnostics
Ellen McMahon, RN, Center Pointe Family Medicine
Jessica McVay, Foot & Ankle Center
Meagan Mees, Lee Eye Institute
Paula Meissinger, Colo Center for Otolaryngology
Stacy Michel, Colo Spgs OB/GYN
Gary Naleski, Pikes Peak Allergy & Asthma
Vicki Newman, Colo Spgs Imaging
Susan Ogden, CMM, Printers Park OB/GYN
Bridget Pieffer, CMM, Matthews-Vu Medical Group
Cyndie Pluid, CMM, Rangewood Orthodontics
Kenneth Polke, MVMG at Powers
Karen Raper, Falcon Urgent Care
Marilyn Rissmiller, Colo Med Society
Sandra Robben-Weber, CMM, Colo Spgs Pulmonary Consultants
Suzanne Roelof, CMM, MVMG FP

David Root, Asthma & Allergy Assoc
Celine Ruiz, Women's Associates
Kimberly Ryan, Assoc in Gastroenterology & Endoscopy
Patricia Scott, MA, Matthews-Vu Medical Group
Kelley Serafin, Front Range Endoscopy
Betty Smith, CMM, Dr. Steven Murk
Lisa Smith, Pikes Peak Physical Medicine
Judith Spurgeon, Colo Spgs Dermatology
AJ Stephenson, Retired
Denise Straub, CMM, MVMG ABC Pediatrics
Mark Sutton, Premier Back Rehabilitation (Pueblo)
Patricia Tappan, Gastroenterology Assoc
Rosa Tellez, CMM, Dr. Ron Pelton
Louise Tillery, Blue Skies Center for Women
Lori Trivelli, CMM, Age Well Medical
Grace Trujillo, Remington College
Cindy Valdez, MH Breast Surgery
Carol Walker, EPCMS
Kevin Watson, CMM, Colorado Otolaryngology
Karen Wheeland, RN, Dr Andrew Elias
Tamara Young, Woodland Park
Arlene Zimmerman, CMC, Colorado Springs Family Practice.



"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."
 —John F Kennedy

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dlambert@bcservices.com

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Deborah Helton
719-576-0126
dhelton@biggskofford.com

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Roger Hernandez
719-325-7021
roger@carrhr.com

Central Bancorp

Jill Webb
719-228-1150
Jill.webb@centralbancorp.co

Colorado Hi-Tech Solutions

Brent Watson
719-264-1384
brent@cohitech.com

CompuGroup Medical

Kevin Brubaker
719-650-6918
Kevin.brubaker@cgm.com

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Julie Boots
719-634-3766
julies@creditservicecompany.com

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Amy Wilson
719-550-6448
awilson@ent.com

The Highland Group

Carolyn Baruch
866-882-4552
medmarketing@highlandgrp.com

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719-235-7838
bob@hold-phone.com

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719-884-0700
Jeff.ahrendsen@hubinternational.com

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Robin Patterson
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Lynn Institute

Dean Rosing
719-632-5966
drosing@ihsi.net

Lewan & Assoc

Aaron Workman
719-482-7205
Aaron.workman@lewan.com

Memorial Health System

Danie Kooch
719-365-5245
danie.kooch@memorilhealthsystem.com

Milestone Profit Mgmt

Scott Harris
719-440-8027
scott@milestoneprofit.com

Moody Insurance Agency

Chris Riley
719-578-3358
criley@moodyins.com

Physician Sales & Service

Mary Beth Yockey
719-432-6000
myockey@pssd.com

Pikes Peak Hospice

Sue Minero
719-200-4303
sminero@pikespeakhospice.com

Pikes Peak Regional Hospital

CJ McCormack
719-686-7893
cjmccormack@pprh.net

RT Welter & Assoc

Todd Welter
303-534-0388
tw@rtwelter.com

Spectrum Rehab

Janine Eldridge
719-444-0381
jeldridge@spectrumrehab.net

UMB Bank of Colorado

Jill Darling
719-442-06303
Jill.darling@umb.com

Wells Fargo Bank

Jay McKeown
719-577-5581
jay.mckeown@wellsfargo.com

WSI Personnel Svc, Inc.

Monica Noland
719-630-7500
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719-534-0908
jschomaker@homeinstead.com

Integra Telecom

Steve Glick
719-434-4838
Steve.glick@integratelecom.com

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Melanie Stahl
719-471-3666
mel@applecoredesign.com

Aspen Resources Partners

Byron McCurdy
719-260-7570
Byron@aspenresource.com

HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital

Lisa Hutton
719-630-7371
lisa.hinton@healthsouth.com

Larsen Wealth Management

Michael Ubben
719-393-5475
Michael.ubben@lpl.com

PJ Promotions

Pam Franz
303-929-1230
pjpromotions@comcast.net



Pikes Peak Chapter of the
Professional Association of Health Care
Office Management
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Who to Contact:

Corporate Liaison, Debbie Carlson, CMM 632-8118
Membership, Susan Ogden, CMM 634-1532
Vice President, Stephen Johanns, CMM 578-5176
Secretary, Kathy Bosche, CMM 442-6984
Treasurer, Lori Trivelli, CMM 475-5065
President, Janet Burch, CMM 533-1149

Sharing Knowledge in Health Care Management

PP PAHCOM News and Events

Saturday, July 23, 2011

8:00am-11:00am

CMM Exam

Pyramid Room, Memorial Hospital

Tuesday, July 26, 2011

5:00pm-7:00pm

PP PAHCOM's 10th Anniversary Celebration

Wyatt's Pub & Grill

Thursday, July 28, 2011

7:30am-10:00am

**Payment Transformation: Process Mapping,
Karen Frederick-Gallegos, Colo Medical Society
Monarch Room, Memorial Admin Center**

Friday, August 19, 2011

7:00am-8:30am

Breakfast Club

Durango Room, Memorial Admin Center

Wednesday, August 24, 2011

7:30am-12:00noon

**2nd Annual Payer Meeting
Clarion Hotel/Quality Inn, I-25 & Bijou**

Thursday, September 8, 2011

7:30am-10:00am

**Annual Open Membership Meeting
(Introduce a Practice Manager to PAHCOM!)
Memorial Admin Center**

Friday, September 16, 2011

7:00am-8:30am

Breakfast Club

Durango Room, Memorial Admin Center

Tuesday, September 20, 2011

7:30am-10:00am

**5010 & ICD-10, Susan Whitney AMRS
Memorial Admin Center**



WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.PIKESPEAKPAHCOM.COM

**BE SURE TO VISIT THE MEMBERS ONLY
PAGE!**

PP PAHCOM relies on several communication channels. In addition to our web site, newsletters, and member e-mails, we enjoy professional relationships with members of the local and regional health care community. The El Paso County Medical Society, Colorado Medical Society, COPIC, Memorial Hospital, and MDNews have been especially generous with their resources in marketing our events. To these very special friends, our heartfelt thanks!

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**Share The Knowledge**

It is a known fact that PP PAHCOM managers are creative. Each of us works diligently to make our organizations more efficient, save time and money, develop new business, and satisfy patients. There are great health care management ideas out there, and we want you to share what you're doing.

Here's the format. Include your name, your organization's name, and describe your management tip in 300—500 words. Explain the issue or problem you identified, the steps you took to resolve the issue or problem, and the outcome of your actions. Submit your completed tip in Word format to Editor, [pppahcomnews@aol.com](mailto:pppahcomnews@aol.com), subject " PP PAHCOM Management Tip".

*Submit your management tip to PP PAHCOM. If we publish your tip, not only will your colleagues benefit from your experience, you could win a \$50 gift certificate!*