



KANSAS MGMA

The Newsletter of the Kansas Medical Group Management Association

Vol. 7 No. 3

Summer 1996

Healthcare - A Hotter 'n Hell Ride

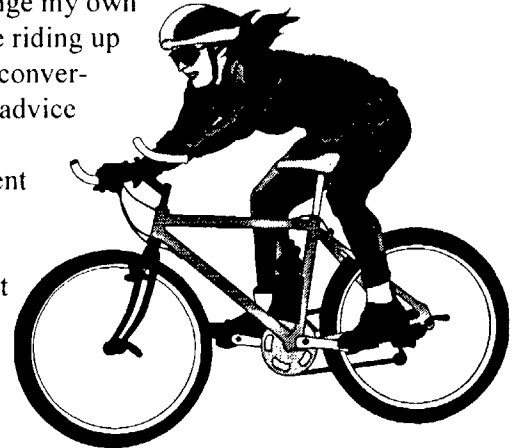
by Kay Gerken, President



The Hotter 'n Hell ride of Wichita Falls, Texas where 10,000 riders show up to ride the 100-Mile Century. The challenge is to finish without an IV along the way! Sounds much like the last 5 years in medicine, doesn't it?

As you ride along the hot asphalt you come in contact with lots of interesting people and make lasting friends. There are head winds, tail

winds, hills that look like black walls with yellow lines, down hills where you feel like you are as free as a bird. The whole experience is exhilarating and your reward is a sense of pride. If you make it to the end of the Century. Everybody offers a helping hand along the way; I have yet to change my own flat tire! People riding up beside to make conversation and give advice talk about the newest equipment on the market. Same kind of people you meet in MGMA circles.



These years in medicine have been equally as challenging and rewarding. We are all seeing different scenery with the fast changes in medicine. Every day offers new exciting experiences and constant changes. Some days there are more "black walls with yellow lines" with sweat getting in your eyes and you wonder, "Am I really having fun?" After you have used every gear on your bike and you are still not at the top of the hill, you wonder, "Is it worth it?"

You bet!

I wouldn't give up my biking and I won't give up my love for working in the field of medicine.

When my grandson says, "Grandma, why do you ride so far on your bicycle?" I answer, "It's exhausting, fun and exhilarating, and when you finish the ride, you have a sense of pride and a great deal of satisfaction." These are the same reasons I stay in the medical field.

Now I have a new medical group, a new bike and a new challenge. Soon I will even have a new grandchild who will probably ask me the same questions!

A Note from the Editor

by Meg Payne

As this issue of the newsletter enters your in-box, the summer will be ending and we will be in the swing of fall!



The political conventions will have ended and we will look forward to another election. New president, new legislature -- new health care reform? Your guess is as good as mine! How much more can we tolerate?

Some of us have had enough re-engineering, redesign, new job or no job at all, new boss and new employer. Studies show that managed care has made the health care system more efficient and, in some ways, more cost effective -- but at whose expense?

As summer turns to fall and the leaves start to change, you may want to give the legislative issues some thought or maybe thinking just gives you a headache! Headache or not, keep on top of the story and make sure that you see the trees before you enter the forest!

Legislation News

by Jo Marsh

So far in 1996 health care issues in the Southern Section of MGMA have been consistent with activity in other sections across the nation.

It seems for the most part, the bills getting the most attention are a result of reactions to our changing delivery system.

Bills dealing with mandatory postpartum length of stays were introduced in every Southern Section state holding a session so far this year. Managed care rights, tort reform and medical savings accounts proposals were also prevalent.

The postpartum length of stay legislation proved popular in state-houses not only because it is fairly simple to understand, but also because legislators risked losing the support of many female voters if they did not support it.

Related legislation, often modeled after the AMA's federal Patient Protection Act (PPA) is being considered in a number of states. PPA bills are a cousin of the Any Willing Provider proposals considered by many states in recent years and may represent a concession in the debate over limitations dictated by managed care plans.

PPA-type bills establish requirements for managed care plans to disclose benefit information to enrollees and create ways by which policy holders and providers can appeal adverse decisions by managed care health plans.



Exhibitors Need Our Support

by Steven J. Perkins - President Elect

The fall conference is right ahead of us. KMGMA is able to put together excellent programs in part due to the support of our program exhibitors. Their support and participation makes it possible to keep our registration fees at a lower level.

It is important that we show our support to the exhibitors at the conferences and throughout the year. Make a meaningful contact with them at the meetings. When you use an exhibitor as a vendor reinforce the KMGMA connection.

The idea of having exhibitors at the meetings is one of convenience to you. In a short time, you can 'scan' a large number of potential vendors for your group, while educating yourself about solutions available in the marketplace.

Please support our exhibitors.

Talk to our exhibitors.

Thank our exhibitors.

This Fall conference our **LUNCH WITH EXHIBITORS** will feature something new. From our membership we will be asking for 'table hosts' to be a catalyst for introductions and visitation at the lunch tables. We will make every effort to spread the exhibitors throughout the room so the membership can become acquainted with these important people. The 'table hosts' will have written, short, "easy to do" job descriptions.

If you would like to serve as a table host, call Steve Perkins at 316.689.9315.

We look forward to seeing you at the Fall Conference.

Welcome New Members

*Sherrie Lynn Rugan
Medical Office Assistant
Great Bend Allergy
& Asthma Care
1031 Jackson Street
Great Bend, KS 67530*

*Shirley Ann Ingham
Accounts Coordinator
Great Bend Allergy
& Asthma Care
1031 Jackson Street
Great Bend, KS 67530*

*Rhonda L. Kellerman
Clinic Manager
Phillips County Medical Clinic
P.O. Box 547
Phillipsburg, KS 67661*

*Tracy J. Jones
Business Manager
Mid-Kansas Heart Center, P.A.
723 N. McClean Blvd., Suite 310
Wichita, KS 67203*

Q&A: What To Do And Say At An Unemployment Benefits Hearing

taken from Personnel Legal Alert, July 22, 1996 issue / submitted by Maggie Mullins

Question: *Are the high costs of unemployment insurance taking a bite out of your bottom line?*

Answer: *Then read the following Q&A on how to successfully contest an unemployment benefits claim.*

Q. *Who should be present at an unemployment benefits hearing?*

A. Evidence brought to a benefits bearing must be presented by a person with firsthand knowledge of it. So employers should bring the supervisor who bandied the employee's discharge as a witness. It may be a waste of company time and money to send a Human Resources manager or lawyer alone; secondhand testimony may not be accepted.

Q. *Should employers retain counsel when contesting an unemployment benefits claim?*

A. Employers should have a lawyer on hand until they become experienced enough to handle such claims by themselves. Lawyers should prepare the employer's witnesses in advance of the hearing by gathering documentary evidence and reviewing testimony with them.

Q. *When is it legal for an employer to contest unemployment benefits to a terminated employee?*

A. An employer may contest benefits to an employee who was terminated for misconduct connected with work. However, poor performance, incompetence, or simple misconduct do not disqualify an employee from receiving unemployment benefits in most states. To successfully contest a claim, an employer must show that an employee willfully, intentionally, and repeatedly disobeyed work rules. Some statutes specify that an employee can be disqualified only for gross misconduct.

Q. *Under which circumstances is an employee who voluntarily quits eligible for benefits?*

A. An employer may contest unemployment benefits to an employee who voluntarily quits for good cause unrelated to work. However, some states define in their unemployment statutes circumstances under which an employee may voluntarily quit and still be eligible for benefits, e.g., if an employee's spouse is in the military and is transferred to another area.

Caution: Some states also define what is not good cause for quitting. Examples Maryland doesn't consider enrolling in school an acceptable reason for quitting and seeking unemployment benefits.

Q. *Can an employer use after-acquired evidence to successfully contest an unemployment benefits claim?*

A. The answer is an emphatic no. Employers must prove that they acted on the basis of knowledge they had at the time of separation to successfully dispute a benefits claim.

Q. *When is it appropriate for an employer to address an employee during a benefits hearing?*

A. Under no circumstances should an employer get into discussions or arguments with a claimant in an unemployment benefits hearing. Employers will have ample opportunity to tell their side of the story and to cross-examine the other side. Therefore, interaction with the employee should be limited to appropriate times during the benefits hearing.

Database information update

If your database information has changed, please complete this form & send it to KIM WEAVER.

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1995 - 1996

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- Federal Legislative Affairs
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