

Quality Improvement Corner

2011 Medical Record Copying Fee

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. §31-33-3, effective July 1st of each year, the costs related to medical record retrieval, certification, and copying may be adjusted in accordance with the medical component of the consumer price index. The Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) is responsible for calculating the annual inflation adjustment and publishing the revised rates.

Accordingly, the rates effective July 1, 2011 are as follows:

Search, Retrieval, and Other Direct Administrative Costs—up to \$25.88;

Certification Fee—up to \$9.70 per record;

Copying costs for records in paper form—97¢ per page for pages 1-20, 83¢ per page for pages 21-100, and 66¢ per page for pages over 100.

***Note:** Rates do not apply to records requests necessary to make or complete an application for disability benefits program.

Also, please note that the State Board of Workers' Compensation has instituted medical record retrieval rates that apply specifically to workers' compensation cases. For more information on these rates, please contact the State Board of Workers' Compensation at 404-656-2048 or visit the website at <http://sbwc.georgia.gov>.



In the News

HHS Inspector General Recommends Replacing Average Wholesale Pricing For Drugs

In a report dated July 18, 2011, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) recommended that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) develop a national drug pricing benchmark in order to save on Medicaid pharmacy reimbursement costs paid to pharmacies for prescription drugs. OIG Report: "Replacing Average Wholesale Price: Medicaid Drug Payment Policy," (OEI-03-11-00060). According to OIG, the methodology currently used by most states to calculate reimbursement rates, which is based upon Average Wholesale Price (AWP), is "fundamentally flawed," because it overstates a pharmacy's true cost by not taking into account discounts, rebates, or other price reductions available to the pharmacy.

In light of this concern and the fact that First DataBank (the private publishing source relied upon by most states under the current reimbursement methodology) will discontinue providing pricing information in September 2011, the OIG surveyed all fifty states and the District of Columbia in January to determine how they intend to change their reimbursement methodologies once First DataBank no longer publishes AWP data. Of the forty-five states that use AWP-based reimbursement methodologies, twenty indicated that they had not yet made plans as to how they would calculate reimbursement rates after September 2011. Fifteen states indicated that they had "relatively well-developed plans" to switch to a new methodology. Ten other will continue using AWP to set reimbursement rates at least in the short term.

Notably, forty-four states said that they would like CMS to develop a national benchmark to set Medicaid reimbursement for prescription drugs, according to the report. Of these forty-four states, twenty-four specified that they want a benchmark based on pharmacy Average Acquisition Costs (AACs). As noted in the report, CMS concurs and is contracting with a vendor to develop a survey of retail prices and acquisition cost information. CMS expects to use these data to develop an estimate of AAC.

To view the complete report, visit: <http://oig.hhs.gov/oei/reports/oei-03-11-00060.pdf>.

Does your office staff and provider need to update their CPR training?

If so, call [Janet Lathem](mailto:Janet.Lathem@nghs.com) (BLS Instructor) at 770-219-6604 and discuss the option of attending a CPR training at our office building; located at 1405 Jesse Jewell Parkway, Gainesville, GA 30501.

For first availability call today!

PARTNERS PRESS

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SUMMER 2011

WELCOME

Milene J. Argo, MD—Internal Medicine; Heritage Internal Medicine

Rosanne G. Frost, MD—Pathology; Gainesville Regional Pathology Associates

Bertina M. Hooks, MD—Hospitalist; Northeast Georgia Physicians Group

Cynthia J. Libert, MD—Family Medicine; High Mountain Healthcare

C. Anne Patterson, MD—Maternal Fetal Medicine; Habersham OB/GYN Associates

Robert Wesley Wetherington, MD—Dermatopathology; Skinpath Solutions

SAVE THE DATE!!! OSHA Training



As part of Health Partners commitment to our medical community, we are making available once again training to assist your office in meeting the annual OSHA training requirements.

Each attendee will leave with an attendance certificate, packet of information, and a model Exposure Control Plan that can be used in your office. Practice Managers, or a designated representative, should then supplement the training program by providing their staff with an explanation of their office's specific Exposure Control Plan.

This meeting is at **no cost** to your office, and should take no more than 3 hours, so please plan accordingly for the most appropriate representative from your office to attend this training session.

More details will be forthcoming, however, if you are already interested in attending, or sending a member of your staff, please contact Janet Lathem at 770-219-6604, or send an email to Janet.Lathem@nghs.com.

NOTE: *Specific name of attendees will be required to prepare attendance certificates, and a specific headcount will be needed to schedule the best meeting space and to order light refreshments. Thanks for your understanding!*

2011 Credentialing

Committee Meeting Dates:

September 28th
November 16th

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Need CPR Training?

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Health Partners Provider News

Provider Relocations, Changes and Terminations

Dr. Richard Olson (previously with Northeast Georgia Physicians Group) is now affiliated with **Habersham Surgical Services**, along with Drs. Chadwick Thomas, MD and Sharren Wolff, MD. For scheduling, call 706-754-8339.

As of August 1st, **Dr. Michael H. Callahan** will be joining **Northeast Georgia Otolaryngology** and begin seeing patients at their primary location (2406 Lighthouse Manor Drive, Gainesville, GA). Please contact their office for referrals, 770-536-4352.

Please note, the office of **Suzanne R. Green, LCSW** has moved to 1990 Limestone Circle, Suite 110 in Gainesville, GA. The office's phone and fax number remain the same; 770-534-8832 and 770-531-7479, respectively.

The **Pediatric Associates** announced that the following providers will also provide services at their Braselton office (2695 Old Winder Hwy, Suite 200): **Cathryn S. Finch, MD**; **Kevin R. Johnson, MD**; and **Erol Onal, DO**. To refer appointments to any of these providers, please call the office at 770-965-6894.

Matthew B. Kaufman, MD (Ophthalmology; North Georgia Eye Clinic) began seeing patients on June 1st at the Dacula office located at 2089 Teron Trace, Suite 160. This office can be reached at 770-271-0000.

Notification was received by Health Partners in late March about **BJC Medical Center's new D/B/A name change to: Northridge Medical Center**. All other information has remained the same. This hospital can be reached at 706-335-1000.

Provider's Making the News



Mark L. King, PhD, CTTS, recently attended the 18th Annual Mayo Clinic Nicotine Dependence conference in Rochester, MN. Dr. King is a Mayo Clinic trained and Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist (CTTS) as well as a licensed psychologist practicing at **Psychiatry and Psychological Associates, LLC** in Gainesville, GA.

To make a referral to Dr. King for a tobacco dependence assessment, please call 770-718-9790.

On June 2, 2011, the Georgia Composite Medical Board (GCMB) elected Vice-Chairperson **Charles O. White, DO** as the Board's Chairperson for the July 2011-June 2012 term. Dr. White has been a Board-certified family practice physician since 1984 in Georgia, and currently practices in Cleveland, GA at **Mount Yonah Family Practice**.



Dr. White was first appointed to the Board in May 2007 by Governor Sonny Perdue. Over the course of his four years of service on the Board, Dr. White has served on several committees and has chaired the Acupuncture and Impairment Advisory Committees. He was a 2010 recipient of the Falcons Football Club's Community Quarterback Award for his community service as a volunteer physician for the Caring Hands Health Clinic.

-Courtesy of GCMB Newsletter, Volume 2011, No. 3, June 2011; now available online at <http://medicalboard.georgia.gov>.

Please join Health Partners in congratulating these providers on their notable accomplishments.

PLEASE REMEMBER!

Health Partners' requests that your office notify us (in writing) **prior to the effective date of any changes that occur to your providers, or practice. Please submit all additions, terminations and/or changes to Melissa Corral by way of facsimile to 770-219-6609, by email to Melissas.Corral@nghs.com, or use the forms available online at www.healthpartnersnetwork.com.**



Contract News

Great-West Healthcare and CIGNA Network Integration Update



As many of you are aware, Great-West Healthcare joined CIGNA as of April 1, 2008. At that time, Great-West/CIGNA began with integration of many of the facilities and ancillary providers in the Northeast Georgia area, but at that time Great-West/CIGNA was unclear about when or how their physician networks would be integrated...until now.

Recently, Health Partners inquired with our Provider Relations Representative at Great-West/CIGNA for an update, and they have provided the following information:

- Providers participating in the Great-West Healthcare Network should have received notice in late June, or early July, about Great-West/CIGNA network integration plans.
- Included in the notice should be information, such as termination date of the Great-West contract, which is currently held through Health Partners, and information regarding the CIGNA contract and how it will now cover both Great-West and CIGNA members.
- Planned completion date of the physician network integration will be **October 1, 2011**.

Health Partners did approach CIGNA early on about a possible contract on behalf of our network providers and facilities, however, the offer was declined due to the fact that a majority of the providers in our area already had a direct agreement with CIGNA.

If your office has any questions or further concerns regarding Great-West/CIGNA network integration, Health Partners recommends contacting your CIGNA representative and review your current contract with CIGNA. Also, be sure to visit: www.gwhcignaforhpc.com.

For any other questions, please contact Health Partners at 770-219-6600.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Emailers

Email doesn't have to consume your life. Here are 7 ideas for turning email into the tool it is, rather than the be-all and end-all of your days.

1. **Lower the volume.** Ideally your emails should be like eagerly awaited letters in the mail that, as a kid, you used to check the mailbox often for (remember those days?).
2. **Don't ask to be kept "in the loop."** Trust your employees to do their jobs without your constant oversight; if you can't trust them, get a new team.
3. **Return emails in batches.** Rather than answering emails as they come in, set aside time twice a day to crank out several replies at once.
4. **Be clear.** If something could be misconstrued or misunderstood, rather than 20 emails back and forth, pick up the phone or go talk in person.
5. **Spell correctly and use correct grammar.** You never know when an email will be forwarded, or printed, so if you don't type like a tween sending texts then you won't look like a fool.
6. **Leave the iPhone or Blackberry at your desk (sometimes).** You don't need to check your email at the deli counter; instead, speak to the person making your sandwich.
7. **Remember, email is not your job!** Focus on results, not your inbox, and you'll get a lot more done.

How much time do you spend responding to emails daily?

The following providers will no longer participate with Health Partners effective the date listed below:

Provider	Date
Kathleen J. Smith, MD	April 22, 2011
Thomas G. Cobb, MD	April 19, 2011
Ketan M. Patel, MD	May 24, 2011
Saima Syed, MD	May 31, 2011
Maria J. Roca-Martinez, MD	June 27, 2011
Ahmed L.M. Abdussalam, MD	July 31, 2011