

The Summit

MountainWest Chapter



President's Message

By Katie Harwood, CRCE-I
Utah MountainWest President

AAHAM Newsletter Winter 2022
New Beginnings
Greetings all!

As we close the 2022 year, there is much to reflect upon, and much to look forward to. We had our first in-person event on October 21, 2022, and we definitely plan to do more in 2023. I can't believe I am writing my final letter as the Utah Mountain West chapter president! It has been an amazing 5 years of serving in this role, and I have learned so much through my service. The opportunity to provide education to our members and be the conduit to the National office is such a privilege. In my chapter president role, I was able to serve on the Practice and Standards committee. This committee taught me so much as well- Responsible for the oversight of the Organizational Constitution and Bylaws and upholding the ethical practices we expect of our members and partners. We are also responsible for the CEU and Membership Dues waiver process, awarded Scholarships, and reviewed chapter websites and bylaws on a regular basis. The skills developed serving in this role have benefitted me in my professional knowledge, which is invaluable. I want to personally thank Shauna Wardrop for her service. She has been an active AAHAM board member and national member for more than 39 years! Shauna was the chapter president prior to me and has been a mentor whom I have learned so much from. She will be retiring in the not-too-distant future, and we wish her the best for the next phase of her life.

Amanda Kelly, who has produced the excellent Newsletter, will also be leaving the board at the end of this calendar year. I hope we can keep in touch. I will transition to the Chairperson of the board, moving to a supporting role as Miguel Garay- Carson begins his two-year term as President.

January 2023 the new and returning board members will be ready to start planning a year of education and networking events. Please share what you want to learn, and I encourage each of you to consider becoming certified in 2023!

Winter

Newsletter Highlights

President's Message

News Article

Chapter of Excellence

Resources

Board Members

ANI Highlights

AAHAM/HFMA

Sponsors

Authors Wanted



IMPROVING ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE COLLECTIONS

Maintaining ample cash flow is vital to the financial stability and success of any healthcare provider.

WRITTEN BY
LYNN MUSSELWHITE
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF
OPERATIONS, ELEVATE PATIENT
FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS SM

Introduction

Maintaining ample cash flow is vital to the financial stability and success of any healthcare provider. It also allows them to grow and continue to provide critical services to the community. A key contributor to cash flow is the effective management of a provider's A/R inventory. However, many hospitals have limited resources to devote to it. A trusted revenue cycle management partner can not only alleviate the burden of stalled claims by handling the follow-up, collecting payments, and recovering overdue claims quickly and efficiently, but improve a provider's internal system for long-term success. These days, it's increasingly difficult for a provider to effectively manage the revenue cycle using internal resources only. From my experience, combining technology, proven processes, and experienced people together is the winning combination for recovering payments.

Understanding Provider Pain Points

When Medicare moved away from cost-based reimbursement to a prospective payment system, I immediately saw the impact on hospitals as they were being paid less than the cost of their services. While this happened decades ago, many would agree that this move impacted hospital profitability significantly ¹, and it's only one example of many that have made it increasingly difficult for providers to maintain a healthy profit margin. One of the biggest pain points for providers is many payers have reimbursement processes that don't pay health providers at the level of their cost, let alone their target profit margin.



Cash is the key driver of success for any provider or health system. It concerns me when providers announce they've lost hundreds of millions of dollars. According to Kaufman Hall's National Hospital Flash Report, released August 29, experts reported that 2022 is shaping up to be the worst year financially for U.S. hospitals and health systems since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report said hospitals are experiencing some of the worst margins since the start of the pandemic, and they lack the federal funds to offset the damage. And the problem is worsening due to the tight labor market, increasing labor costs, and unstable supply chain dynamics. Costs keep increasing. Cash reserves are critical to helping providers get through economic challenges.

Growth in Demand

Even though healthcare systems have announced big losses this year, there is a huge demand for A/R services, with a bubble of inventory growing because there aren't enough resources to handle the demand and work the accounts. What drives many providers to outsource to a vendor is the struggle to find the resources to cover their inventories. Smaller providers and stand-alone hospitals are most vulnerable.

Leveraging Technology

Leveraging systems through automation is a good idea as a tool to augment the expertise of an accounts receivable team. Team members should focus their time on exceptions and the automated system should handle most of the accounts. This approach translates to A/R inventory management as well. As a best practice, specialized technology with well-built processes can handle much of the inventory so that the expert A/R team can focus on the accounts that need a closer look.



Setting Clients Up for Long-Term Success

I'm most proud of the way ElevatePFS partners with clients. We have the people, process, and expertise to work alongside a provider's hospital staff and their system to re-bill payers, appeal denials, and communicate with payers. And as an added value, we find ways to improve a client's revenue cycle claims process and we share those insights with our client. We help them learn where the gaps are and provide the information needed to address those gaps. We want to set our clients up for success and are committed to delivering unmatched service and a truly elevated client and patient experience. We provide the resources needed to impact cash flow for health systems of all sizes, including small to medium healthcare providers, community hospitals, and large academic teaching facilities. This makes a real difference in the lives of so many communities across the country.

About Lynn Musselwhite

With an acute understanding of project management and a proven history of successfully implementing system strategic initiatives, Lynn Musselwhite uses her passion and expertise as executive vice president of operations at Elevate Patient Financial Solutions to help providers increase their bottom line. With more than 30 years of experience in healthcare with specific expertise in financial management and revenue cycle articulation for large healthcare systems, she drives the success of ElevatePFS Accounts Receivable Services, ensuring her team delivers excellent customer service and meaningful results in accounts receivable management for all clients.

References:

1 Robert F. Coulam and Gary L. Gaumer. (1992). Medicare's prospective payment system: A critical appraisal. National Library of Medicine. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4195137/>

2 Erik Swanson. (2022, August 29). National Hospital Flash Report. Kaufman Hall. <https://www.kaufmanhall.com/insights/research-report/national-hospital-flash-report-august-2022>

CHAPTER EXCELLENCE AWARD

The Annual National Institute, more commonly known as ANI was held in Baltimore, Maryland October 12, 14, 2022. A part of the ANI is to have chapters recognized for their accomplishments in the previous calendar year. The chapters are categorized by the number of national members they have. We are in the group 100- 199 National members. The chapters are evaluated on the following:

- 1.Strong Leadership/Strategic Planning
- 2.Financial Responsibility
- 3.Membership Growth, Retention and Engagement
- 4.High Quality Education
- 5.Strong Certification Program
- 6.Valued Corporate Partner Program
- 7.Legislative Issues, Payers and Community

Based on our reported outcomes, we came in Second Place for our division! I am proud of the work the board completed to achieve this outcome, there was much work done to provide education, maintain membership and certification, engage with corporate partners, and participate in the legislative issues important to the Revenue Cycle Industry. In addition, we received 2nd place award for the Quarterly newsletter. A special thank you to Amanda Kelly for her efforts to produce our high quality newsletter, with all the other responsibilities she has.



HELP STARTS HERE

211 is a convenient way to get connected to the resources you need



Get Help, Give Help
United Way Of Utah



211 connects you to expert, caring help. Every call is completely confidential.

Not sure where to start? Call 2-1-1

Thank
you

With the end of the 2022 year, we also see the end of the term for some of our Chapter Board positions. !

While this means my time serving on this board, 18+ years in different capacities has finally come to an end. I love AAHAM and have been a part of it for over 30 years and while I will miss being so heavily involved, I can honestly say that I am so excited for this new board and the great things that will come out of them. I have always been a believer in "getting new blood" on things. It is always fun to see what new and innovative ideas will come. Katie has done a fantastic job as President for 2 full terms and then even stepped in for an additional year while trying to get back on track after the pandemic.

As incoming President and with no one specifically running for Vice President, Miguel has the opportunity to appoint one of the Board Members to be Vice President. This can be from the existing or new board members, and they will fill the term of Vice President for 2023/2024.

Please help me in welcoming this new board and giving a big vote of thanks to each of them for volunteering their time to our chapter.

Also thank you to Amanda Kelly whose current term on the board ends this year, 2022. Amanda has been the source behind the quarterly newsletters, the social media pages, etc. Her talents will definitely be missed. Thank you, Amanda.

Welcome Utah AAHAM MountainWest Chapter new 2023/2024 Board!!

Shauna Wardrop
Chairman of the Board

A Look at the AAHAM 2023 Board Members



Miguel Garay-Carson

Incoming as President 2023/2024

I am the Revenue Cycle Manager for Classic Air Medical. Classic was recently acquired by Intermountain Healthcare, so most of my current responsibilities consist of integration and alignment strategies. Before Classic, I was a Claims Management Supervisor at the University of Utah Health for a little over 6 years where I gained most of my knowledge about medical billing. I have been a member of AAHAM since April 2016, and I am currently serving as the Vice President of the Utah MountainWest Chapter.

Katie Harwood

Incoming as Chairman of the Board
2023/2024

I have been with the University of Utah Hospital since 1995 and currently manage the Registration team members in Admitting and Emergency Registration. My previous experience includes authorizations and financial counseling. In addition to AAHAM, I serve on the NAHAM national board as the Certification Commission chairperson. I hold the CRCE certification for AAHAM and CHAM for NAHAM. Outside of work, I enjoy challenging my fitness levels and spending time with my family.



Noah Carter

Incoming Board Member 2023/2024

I am currently a Revenue Cycle Supervisor with Classic Air Medical - an Intermountain Company - where I oversee operational practices related to payment integrity, denial resolution, and the IDR process. I have worked with Classic since March 2021 maintaining several roles such as a medical biller, coder, and cash poster. Previously, I worked for Elite Coding and Billing as a Medical Billing and Coding Specialist. I joined AAHAM in May 2022 and had the great opportunity to attend the latest Legislative Day where I had the pleasure to meet and interact with other AAHAM members as well as lobby for current legislative issues that impact healthcare.



A Look at the

A A H A M

2023 Board Members



Tony Rossi

Incoming Board Member 2023 / 2024

My name is Tony Rossi and I have been an AAHAM CRCS-I since 2017. I have been employed in the healthcare industry since 2009. I am currently working as a Patient Relations Advocate III in the Self-Pay Business Office for the University of Utah Health and have worked for the organization since 2015. I started my career in the healthcare industry as a Healthcare Representative for Chamberlin Edmonds (now Change Healthcare). In Utah, the company provided services for the Steward Medical Group hospitals, and I worked at the Jordan Valley Medical Center campuses in West Jordan and West Valley City from 2009-2015. I worked as a Customer Service Manager for Continental Airlines from 1996-2010 in Salt Lake City, Minneapolis, and Houston. I have a BA in History from the University of Utah.

Suzane Marshall

Incoming Board Member 2023 / 2024

Hi there! My experience with the medical revenue cycle spans 26 years, which began in 1996. 18 of those years have been with the University of Utah hospital. I have been very fortunate in that I have worked on the professional side (15 years) and the facility side (11 years). I feel I have a solid understanding of the importance of every aspect of the revenue cycle and how it affects our patient care from start to finish. My role began as a medical administrative assistant, which then led to medical billing and then eventually led to my current role as a coding supervisor. I have enjoyed different positions throughout my years in this field, which have included scheduling, prior authorizations, financial counseling, coding, billing, claims adjustments, payments, appeals, and resolution. I have worked directly with our patients, clinical staff, insurance companies, and other revenue cycle professionals. For the last 11 years, I have supervised the outpatient coding team for our institution. My certifications are as follows; Certified Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA), Certified Professional Coder (CPC), Certified Revenue Cycle Professional (CRCP), as well as Licensed Massage Therapist (LMT). I have 3 beautiful children and 3 lovely grandchildren whom I have been completely blessed with. I love traveling, family time, golfing, paddle boarding, and anything that takes me outdoors!



A Look at the AAHAM 2023 Board Members



Junko Fowles

Incoming Board Member 2023 / 2024

Junko Fowles, B.A., CRCP-I, CHAM is a supervisor of the patient financial advocate in the division of Revenue Cycle Support Services, University of Utah Health. She has 19 years of experience focused on serving patients at risk of financial toxicity. In FY 2022, with a collaboration with Huntsman Cancer Hospital's multidisciplinary team and RCSS leadership, her team successfully implemented a cancer patient financial screening program, an effective intervention to tackle financial toxicity, a 'side effect of cancer.'

Melissa Guerrero

Incoming Board Member 2023 / 2024

I joined the University of Utah in 2013 as a Health Information Representative at the Department of Pediatrics. During my tenure at the DOP, I assisted with process development and improvement as well as the development of the quality assurance metrics for Scheduling, HIM, Referrals, Prior Authorizations, and Templating. I took the opportunity to join the Revenue Cycle Support Services Department as an Emergency Registration Supervisor in 2019, where I focused on process improvement cohesively with Admissions and Financial Counseling. I enjoy learning about different departments and organizations through professional development to further my knowledge and experience.



Debbie Tuthill

Incoming Board Member 2023 / 2024

I have been working at the University of Utah since October 2008. In November 2018, I took and passed my AAHAM CRCS-1 exam. I worked for the billing department until January 2019. At this time, I am the Oncology Financial Advocate at the Huntsman Hospital. I think the knowledge I gained from the CRCS exam has helped me become who I am today.



A Look at the AAHAM 2023 Board Members

Teleisia Lelea

Returning as Treasurer 2022/2023

I've been a member of AAHAM since 2017 & joined Mountain West AAHAM Chapter Board 2020, currently serving my first term as the chapter treasurer. I am passionate about the revenue cycle and continue to learn through networking, education events, and colleagues.



Adrienne Christiansen

Returning Board Member 2022/2023

A Look at the AAHAM 2023 Board Members



Elizabeth Williams

Returning Board Member 2022/2023

Margaret Zdunich

Returning Board Member 2022/2023

My name is Margaret Zdunich. I currently work for OnSite Care as the Director of Billing Services. We run primary care clinics on employer work sites. I have been with this company for 8 years, prior to that I worked in various billing roles at Granger Medical Clinic for 20+ years, including billing manager. I have been a member of AAHAM for 2 years and enjoy serving on the board.





Katie Harwood & Sia Lelea, Baltimore MD

ANI Highlights

2022

A small but mighty contingent of Utah Chapter members was in attendance at the ANI. Katie Harwood, Teleisia Lelea, and Amy Mitchell enjoyed the education and networking with other national members in Baltimore. Topics focused on the interest of Revenue Cycle professionals, such as Improving Staff Engagement through Authentic Communication
Outsmarting the Moving Denial Target
Best practices in managing the uninsured and underinsured patient population
Non-traditional Revenue Capture

This is a brief list of topics, I encourage you to consider attending the ANI in 2023, which will be held in Hollywood California!

In Person Event: AAHAM/HFMA Joint fall conference



October was a busy month for our chapter! We hosted our first in-person event since early 2020, and it was amazing! We collaborated with the Utah HFMA chapter to host Expanding your Career Horizons and Professional Perceptions at the Utah Hogle Zoo. We heard from speakers on the following topics

- The Importance of Perspective in Communication - Brandon Cresswell
- Leading, Managing, and Training Your Next Generation of Leaders- MJ Clark
- We Care- Culture and Well-being- Kim Lopez and Shannon Kinsey

HFMA President Kimberly Telford introducing Keynote Speaker MJ Clark
Margaret Zdunich, AAHAM Board Member - greeting our attendees!

In addition, we had fun learning about the Zoo and some of their residents featured below





THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

**You are a integral part to our
Success !!**

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

PLATINUM



Payment Assurance for Hospitals



PLATINUM SPONSORS



Front-End Revenue Cycle Intelligence

Patient Intake, Engagement & Access

One integrated, digital solution to improve
safety, satisfaction and revenue

www.accuregsoftware.com/patient-engagement
engage@accuregsoftware.com | 866-872-7498

MERCURY GLOBAL
Efficient Outsourced Business Services

- A WORLDWIDE SOLUTION
- 25 YEARS EXPERIENCE
- GET A FULL-TIME TEAM
- SCALE FAST



**Save
Money
Save Time**

Call (877) 890-1168
sales@mercuryglobalservices.com

www.mercuryglobalservices.com

RCM MADE EASY

PLATINUM SPONSORS

ELEVATESM

PATIENT FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS

*A proven revenue cycle
management partner **you can trust.***

For more than 40 years, we've provided an innovative approach to revenue cycle management for healthcare providers. Our national reach and local expertise deliver exceptional results and an elevated client experience.

- **Medicaid Eligibility & Enrollment**
- **Complex Claims**
- **Self-Pay/ Early Out**
- **A/R Services**

ElevatePFS.com

AUTOMATE

CLAIMS MANAGEMENT FOR HOSPITAL,
PHYSICIAN, AND DENTAL BILLING



AUTOMATE CLAIM
EDITING & REDUCE
MANUAL WORKLOAD



INCREASE CASH
REDUCE COST
REALLOCATE FTE'S



DIRECT EDI CLAIM
SUBMISSION TO
ALL MAJOR PAYERS

AUTOMATE CLAIM EDITING • DIRECT EDI CLAIM SUBMISSION
AUTOMATE REMITTANCE POSTING • DENIAL MANAGEMENT
CONTRACT MANAGEMENT • INTERFACE WITH ANY EMR/EHR/HIS

PLATINUM SPONSORS



BART SHEA, CRCR
VP of Business Development

602.615.4987

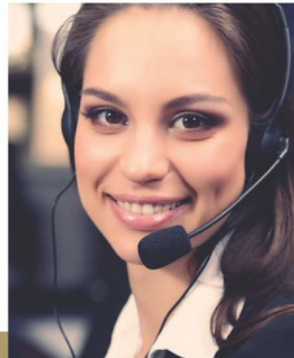
BSHEA@ICSYSTEM.COM



Improve Reimbursement & Increase Patient Satisfaction

*Family-Owned & Operated,
Bad Debt Collections Since 1938*

- ✓ Thousands of clients in all 50 states
- ✓ Over \$500 million in annual client placements
- ✓ More than five million accounts managed monthly
- ✓ After call survey results with a 98% positivity rate



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

GOLD



enablecomp
complex claims revenue solutions

GOLD SPONSORS



enablecomp
complex claims revenue solutions

From registration to reimbursement,
our focus is managing your complex claims.

Veterans Administration
Workers' Compensation
Motor Vehicle Accident
Denials Prevention & Resolution

www.enablecomp.com



**If you are interested
in being a sponsor**

CONTACT US

 aahamtnwest@gmail.com

 www.aahamtnwest.org

 [AAHAM Utah Mountain West Chapter |
Salt Lake City UT | Facebook](#)



AAHAM

Mountain West Chapter

THIS NEWSLETTER IS CREATED BY VOLUNTEERS & DISTRIBUTED FOR MEMBERSHIP USE. PLEASE REQUEST PERMISSION TO USE THE CONTENT FROM THE CHAPTER OR THE AUTHORS OF THE WRITTEN MATERIAL IN THE NEWSLETTER.

- CORPORATE PARTNERS SHOULD SEND ANY UPDATED ADVERTISING TO OUR EMAIL
- AAHAM MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT ARTICLES OF INTEREST ON EDUCATION TOPICS FOR PUBLICATION IN OUR CHAPTER NEWSLETTER.

AAHAMMTNWEST@GMAIL.COM

