



Volume 11, Issue II • SPRING 2005

Special Points Of Interest:



Check out the NANI website at
www.kidneyphysicians.com

Blue Ribbon Achievements for NANI

Rockford Region

Charles Sweeney, MD attended the DaVita Medical Director's annual meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona in January 2005. Rockford Nephrology Associates won the "DaVita Spirit of Partnership Award" for 2004. The award is given to the top nephrology practice (affiliated with DaVita) in the country.

Rockford Nephrology Associates (RNA) has been associated with DaVita since May 2003; RNA physicians serve as medical directors of seven DaVita dialysis units in the nine county Northern Illinois Area. RNA also partners with DaVita at the three Rockford hospitals providing inpatient dialysis services. Another facet of RNA is DaVita Care, a new program for management of chronic kidney disease. The care team consists of a nurse practitioner, registered nurse and dietician working with a physician. DaVita Care Education stresses chronic management of early kidney disease along with patient education.

Central Region

Kathy Dorgan, RN/NP was recently awarded the quarterly Someone You Should Know Award by the Medical Staff Office at West Suburban Hospital Medical Center/Resurrection Health Care. Kathy was recognized for her years of loyalty to the institution and her dedicated service to the health and well being of her patients.

Kathy was also nominated to receive the Muehrcke Award. This award is given annually to recognize the nurse who stands out with an excellence in nursing at West Suburban Hospital. An interesting fact about Robert Muehrcke (the namesake of the award), is that he is one of the founding members of the West Suburban Dialysis Unit, NANI. Ltd. and WSKC. He was also the first physician that Kathy worked for in the units.

Corporate

Over the past three months 18 employees of the Corporate Office (Oak Park) participated in a friendly (and voluntary) weight loss challenge. Participants paid \$10 each to participate and weighed in with a partner each week-the collection became the winners "pot". Over the thirteen week challenge the group collectively lost 123 pounds and in the end our winner, Cynthia Boyd, lost 25 pounds and collected the winnings. Every participant used their own weight loss system, diets, exercise, combinations and green tea! We even have Walking Teams still going strong almost every day!

Post diet every employee was asked to go through their closets and donate to big (or small) clothing. We donated 10 large boxes of clothing to a local charity supporting women and children shelters as well as a no-kill animal shelter. What a great way to support our co-workers and our community.

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR OF BILLING

OBSERVATION CODES

If a patient is admitted to observation one day and discharged from observation the NEXT day code 99218-99220 should be used the first day and 99217 (Observation discharge) should be used the second day. Be aware that there is no admitted to observation code.

An error in charges is commonly made because physicians are thinking that the patient is admitted to observation so they should charge an admitted to hospital code (99221-99223), this is not correct, those codes are only to be use when a patient is being admitted to the hospital as an inpatient.

MULTIPLE PRACTICE CONSULTATION RULES

If a NANI physician is asked to do a consult and a day or two later a different NANI physician receives a request to do a consult, codes 99251-99255 can not be charged the second time because both doctors are from the same group (NANI) even if they are not from the same practice. Codes 99261-99263 (follow-up consult) are appropriate.

ADMIT AND DISCHARGE SAME DAY

If a patient is admitted to observation and discharged from observation on the same day or admitted to the hospital as an inpatient and discharged the same day the following

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notes from the director of billing contd.

codes should be used to bill these charges: 99234 – 99236. Billing an admit (99221-99223) and a discharge (99238-99239) on the same day will either cause your claim to be denied or payment on one of the codes and denial on the second one.

Be aware when you are entering charges you must change the place of service to outpatient if the patient was admitted/discharged from observation.

A New Anemia/Aranesp Clinic in Fort Wayne Indiana!

In April, the Fort Wayne office made the decision to treat their early stage Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) with anemia in their office rather than outsource to the surrounding community hospital outpatient clinics as a means to better manage overall patient outcomes – including anemia.

Anemia is extremely common in patients with (CKD) and can start as early as Stage 1. The primary cause of anemia in patients with CKD is erythropoietin deficiency. According to Obador et al., most patients do not receive comprehensive anemia management before starting dialysis. In this analysis, over 131,484 CKD patients' stages 1-4 were studied. 67% of these patients were severely anemic at the initiation of dialysis (Hct <28%) yet only 23% had received an erythropoietin agent to treat their anemia before starting dialysis. Not treating anemia can lead to serious cardiovascular consequences and there seems to be a complex relationship between anemia and cardiovascular disease. Reduced Hg/Hct leads to tissue hypoxia, which leads to increased cardiac work, which after time leads to LVH; resulting in worsening of CHF, angina pectoris and MI according to Metivier et al. in Nephrology Dialysis Transplant 2000. In patients with CKD, anemia should be treated as aggressively as hypertension, diabetes, and dyslipidemia.

Establishing an anemia clinic in the office setting optimizes the care of patients with Chronic Kidney Disease!

HELPFUL HINTS FOR ARANESP

Insurance Verification

- When verifying patient's primary insurance (non-Medicare/non-Medicaid); use the Amgen Insurance Verification Form and include the following:
- Place in the upper right hand corner
ATTENTION: MARIE SAYSON
- Be certain all 3 boxes are checked or circled for "settings of care you would like research" this insures all settings are reviewed so as to determine the most economical means for the patient to receive their Aranesp injection
- If the Amgen Reimbursement Connection is not responding in a timely fashion (3 days) Contact the Director of Operations **IMMEDIATELY!**

Stephanie Curran

858-352-2336 – direct number

She will research each and every form that has been faxed in and get an answer to you right away



A note from our IL Malpractice Brokers.

Our goal is to help you save hours of needless hassle and avoid premium increases at the same time. You can help by calling us whenever a question arises. Sometimes, when a doctor or staff calls the insurance company directly, problems can arise.

For example, we had a physician call an insurance company underwriter to ask if they were covered for a particular procedure. The underwriter, being conservative and not fully understanding the question, immediately changed his classification, and raised his premium. We ended up having to step in and explain how the previous rate class was correct, and that the premium increase was unjustified. In another case, an insurance company immediately issued a non-renewal to a doctor who was only inquiring about performing a new procedure!

We deal with malpractice issues every day, and understand the underwriting rules better than some underwriters. We help you add physicians and Allied Health Professionals to your policy appropriately, know the financial implications of performing certain procedures, and understand how a specific answer on an application might change your premiums. Our goal is to provide you quick, consultative and money-saving answers to any questions you may have. Contact the Bruce Whitmore at 630-530-8400 *333 directly.



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ISSUE: How will HIPAA Security be enforced?

TIP: We will answer this question twofold. First, on March 25, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) published a notice in the Federal Register on non-privacy HIPAA enforcement procedures, including security complaints. This notice is effective April 25, 2005. Complaints can be filed electronically or via mail with CMS for non-privacy HIPAA matters. The Office of Civil Rights will continue to investigate Privacy complaints.

One important point in the notice is that voluntary compliance is encouraged. If you receive a complaint, we would recommend that you respond to the complaint within 30 days. If you fail to respond, CMS likely will issue a subpoena and if a violation exists, pursue other options including civil money penalties.

You can find the entire notice at:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/pdf/05-5795.pdf>

Second, on April 18, 2005, the Department of Health and Human Services published a notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the Federal Register, which proposes the bases and procedures for imposing civil money penalties on covered entities that violate any of the HIPAA Administrative Simplification Rules. The department has requested public comments on the rule, and are due by June 17. The NPRM is entitled: Civil Money Penalties: Policies and Procedures for Investigations, Imposition of Penalties, and Hearings

The Secretary of Health and Human Services is proposing rules for the imposition of civil money penalties on entities that violate rules adopted by the Secretary to implement the Administrative Simplification provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Pub. L. 104-191 (HIPAA). The proposed rule would amend the existing rules relating to the investigation of noncompliance to make them apply to all of the HIPAA Administrative Simplification rules, rather than exclusively to the privacy standards. It would also amend the existing rules relating to the process for imposition of civil money penalties. Among other matters, the proposed rules would clarify and elaborate upon the investigation process, bases for liability, determination of the penalty amount, grounds for waiver, conduct of the hearing, and the appeal process.

**Good News Regarding NANI
Medical Malpractice Premiums!**

This past year (2004-2005) we were fortunate to have fewer new claims reported during the policy period and many of you attended the fall Malpractice Liability Seminar presented by ISMIE. Because of these things, we have been able to get ISMIE to agree to reduce our debit (additional charge) to nothing! Previously, we were subjected to a premium surcharge due to our past claims. In these days of carriers increasing premiums and reducing premium credits, our efforts as a practice and through our consultant/broker is really paying off!

While ISMIE did not apply an across-the-board rate increase for July 1st of this year, they changed the base premiums for specific specialties, resulting in 6.4% rate increase for Nephrology, No Minor Risk Procedures/No Surgery. Through the efforts of the above and the number of NANI physicians participating the in home & on-line studies, we have actually increased their loss-free discount. As a result, most of our "mature" physicians (doctors in private practice for 7 years or more) have ended seeing a reduction in their premium!

For this coming year, we are encouraging all of our physicians to take greater advantage of ISMIE's loss prevention seminars, home-study courses and on line programs. By so doing, we could reduce the average mature-rated physician premium by as much as 15% this next year, depending on changes in base rates.



Nephrology Associates Of Northern Illinois/Indiana

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NANI Today is Edited By Kelly McDonald

Coming Attractions & Events

NANI COMPLIANCE/BILLING TRAINING MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2005

Office Managers and Billers are required to attend all Billing/Compliance meetings. Meeting location has been changed to the Oak Park Business Office at 9:00 a.m. (unless otherwise notified). Please mark the following dates on your calendar:

June 24th • August 19th • November 18th

National Kidney Foundation Walk-a-thon dates Fort Wayne:
Saturday June 4th
American Cancer Society's Relay for Life dates Brookfield:
June 10th-11th

NANI Contact Information

Use these Facsimile Numbers to reach the department you need:

Account Representatives/Billers
708-386-2394

Business Office Management
(Carrie, Roz, Kelly)
708-763-0970

Accounting Department
(Brendon, Dan)
708-386-2878

Administration
(Cindy, Rosamond, Doctors Balter,
Carbon, Morris)
708-386-2606

Cash Application/Accounts Payable
(Bonnie, Alida, Bena)
708-386-8409

Technology 708-386-2394

Don't forget to give our patients the
Toll Free Number to contact the
account Representatives:
866-288-6264

Using our Toll Free Number (or Corporate Office Phone Tree)

When giving patients our Toll Free Number for questions about their bills you may also want to give them information about contacting the account representative to assist them. Please do not give out direct extensions for the account representatives. Specific people may not be available due to illness, training or vacation and it is our goal to return phone calls as promptly as possible.

Call 1-866-288-6264

Press "2" to reach the Account Representatives.

The next prompt will direct the caller to the appropriate region.

Press "1" Illinois, Press "2" Indiana, Press "3" Rockford (The physician names will be given at that time to confirm that the caller chose the correct prompt).

Please let your patients know that they may get a voice mail. Calls are returned within 72 hours when possible.

Odds & Ends

PLEASE WELCOME.....

Debbie Masengill (Rockford) Medical Records Clerk
Margaret Hardy (Naperville) Secretary
Jessica Archibald (Rockford)
Medical Records/Web-site development

NEW NANI FAMILY MEMBERS.....

Courtney Emma Hvostik, born March 15, 2005
Xavier V. Rivera, born May 5, 2005
Brady London Robinson, born March 9, 2005
(Kelly's Nephew)
Meredith Wren Loney, born April 26, 2005 7LBS
Nina M. Ray, Born April 2005

Mark Forkner (Ortho Bio-Tech) and his wife welcomed, Margaret Kathryn on Saturday May 7th, to their family. Congratulate Mark next time he stops into your office.

KEEP THEM IN YOUR THOUGHTS:.....

Theresa Parham (Rockford)
lost her mother to illness in March
Laurie Orozco (NW Indiana)
was in a car accident in February
Rose Sanborn (Business Office)
lost her brother to illness in May

RETIREMENT/RELOCATION...

Thank You for your years of service.

Anita McDonald (Naperville)
April 2005, Anita will be moving to Dallas with her
Denis DiCampli, MD (DuPage)
Will be relocating to the East Coast with his family in
June.

Hugh McHugh, MD (Rockford)
Will be leaving RNA to work with Rockford Memorial
as a Hospitalist this Summer.

ANNIVERSARY...

We appreciate you being part of our success.

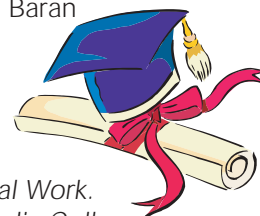
Diane Castro 15 years April

CONGRATULATIONS!...

Best wishes to Dorene and Rich Baran on their wedding (May 6).

YOU FINALLY DID IT!.....

Brian Florian (Business Office)
Finished his course work and
internship for a Masters in Social Work.
Brian will graduate from Concordia College
(Oak Park) later this month.





Please welcome
Michael Robertson, MD
to the Rockford Practice.

Doctor Robertson was born in Rockford IL and will be returning there in July to join our growing practice in that region. Graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago with his Medical Degree and went on to complete his Residency and Fellowship at that location. He is Board Certified in Internal Medicine and will take his Nephrology Boards in late October.

Michael has held teaching appointments at the University of Chicago and is a member of the RPA and the ASN.

He and his wife recently purchased a home in Rockford and will begin work in that region in July.

Please welcome
Awad El-Magbri, MD, MRCPI
to the Rockford Practice

Doctor El-Magbri will be re-locating from the Washing DC, where he is currently completing his fellowship at Georgetown University Medical Center. He completed his residency at Yale School of Medicine and graduated from the National University of Ireland/University College Galway.

Awad will be joining a wonderfully motivated team and will begin rounding at hospitals and DaVita Dialysis Units in Rockford, Freeport, Kishwaukee, Dixon and Sterling in early

Doctor El-Magbri currently holds memberships with the ACP-ABIM, AMA, ASN, SHM is married and has a daughter.

Please welcome
Richard Lee, MD
to the Elk Grove Village Practice.

Dr. Lee was born and raised in the Chicago Area (Orland Park) and completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He graduated Medical School (University of Illinois at Chicago) and went on to complete a residency and Fellowship at Rush University Medical Center.

Richard enjoys, running, biking, swimming, snowboarding, scuba diving. Although I've been sworn to secrecy, I would like you to know that he has been bungee jumping and skydiving.

Dr. Lee will be joining the Elk Grove Village practice in July.

Please welcome
Tina Han, MD
to the Glenview Practice

Dr. Han completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Chicago and Medical School at the University of Pittsburgh. She went on to do an Internship, Residency and Fellowship at Rush University Medical Center (Chicago) and will be joining our Glenview practice in August.

Tina worked with Medical Clinics in Nicaragua (Managua).

She has applied for Medical Staff Privileges at Lutheran General, Holy Family and Northwest Community Hospitals. She will round at local FMC and Renal Care Group Dialysis Units.

Please welcome
Ernest DeJesus, MD
to the DuPage Practice.

Completed undergraduate studies at University of Michigan, Med School at Ohio State University. Residency and fellowship at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago. Dr. DeJesus is married his wife's name is Carey, they have an 11 month old named Owen.

He will be joining the DuPage team later this summer. He has applied for Privileges at Central DuPage Hospital, Edwards Hospital, Marionjoy Rehabilitation Center,

Please welcome
Kathleen Capriola,
Certified Nurse Specialist
to the Rockford Practice.

Kathi has been an ICU nurse for 15 years in the neuro trauma intensive care unit of Saint Anthony's Hospital (Rockford). In 2001 she became the clinical nurse specialist and was the clinical "liaison" for the contracted dialysis company, instrumental in the development of the hemo-dialysis room at OSF.

She has been married for 11 1/2 years and have 2 wonderful kids (Alyssa-6, Nicholas-2). Her hobbies include: traveling and shopping.

Kathi will join the rapidly growing Rockford team on June 1st and looks forward to her new position with NANI.