

## TEAM = Together Everyone Achieves More

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“Teamwork is working together – even when apart,” Author Unknown. At HCI, we have always viewed our relationship with our clients as a partnership. The main objective of this partnership is to maximize the recovery of your account receivables. To accomplish this objective, we often need to depend on our partners (Clients) and use “teamwork”.

In an effort to continually improve our performance and work more efficiently, our management team has identified some opportunities for improvements! A couple of these opportunities would require the teamwork of our partners.

The first opportunity relates to improved execution of our policy to submit all requests and payment reporting in writing. With a written communication, we are able to maintain a record or “paper trail” of exactly the actions that took place on the account. We realize that this policy can be viewed as additional work or a frivolous task, but the need to maintain accurate records is critical in collections. In collections, many different departments and collectors may handle your collection accounts and having an accurate record of actions available on the account is imperative for our ability to collect your money. A written communication can be defined as a fax, email, or usage of our portal. (If you are not using the portal, contact your sales representative to get signed up!)

The second opportunity for improvement is timely reporting of payments made directly to your office. Reporting payments as soon as possible is important for many reasons, however the most important

reason is so that we can cease our collection activity on a paid account. If a patient, insurance company, or an attorney make a partial payment or pay the account-in-full directly to your office, we need know this information, preferably the same day, so we don't continue calling a patient that might no longer have a financial obligation. It's a “no win situation” for all parties involved when this circumstance arises and it can simply be avoided by a quick fax, email, or use of the portal. Again, our main objective is to maximize your recovery, and it makes little difference to us where the money is sent as long as it IS sent! HCI makes every attempt at having the money being collected sent to our office, but it is out of our control where payments are being mailed. If a payment is sent directly to your office, we will settle up our commission due from the payment at then end of the month. As a reminder, HCI is entitled to a commission on all payments made after the collection account has been placed in our office, regardless of the who pays or time-frame it is paid.

If you have any questions about these two opportunities for improvement, please contact your sales representative. Lastly, Henry Ford defined teamwork as, “Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” We look forward to our continued success!

## What You Need To Know About HIPAA Security Changes

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HIPAA Security has generally been the lesser, oft-forgotten half of the original regulatory environment envisioned by Congress. Most practices are familiar with the goals and requirement of HIPAA Privacy but know shockingly little about HIPAA Security and its required standards. Here is why that is about to change.

### Increased Enforcement

Perhaps the biggest reason the HIPAA Security standards have not been addressed as readily as the Privacy standards is the relatively lax enforcement from CMS. However, the enforcement responsibility for HIPAA Security was moved from CMS to OCR in July of 2009, the same group responsible for HIPAA Privacy enforcement. Enforcement has increased dramatically

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## HIPAA Security Continued...

since that time, including the first HIPAA Security audit in Arizona.

### EHR Adoption

As more practices adopt EHR, HIPAA Security becomes more relevant (practices with EHRs generally store more Protected Health Information in electronic form). The government understands this, and its efforts to subsidize and/or reward EHR adoption are significantly tied to its efforts to create better privacy and security environments in each practice. In addition to providing stimulus money to providers who adopt EHR in the 2009 "Stimulus Bill", the federal government is subsidizing Regional Extension Centers to help practices focus on HIPAA Privacy and Security and adding new HIPAA auditors and resources within HHS to expand enforcement.

### HITECH Act

Congress passed the HITECH Act in 2009 and it became fully effective in February of 2010. The HITECH Act increased both the breadth and the reach of HIPAA. Major changes to HIPAA include the removal of disclosure exemptions for payment, treatment, or continuing healthcare operations as well as new reporting requirements and civil penalties for security breaches and enforcement authority

being granted to State attorneys general (independent of HHS). The reach of HIPAA was expanded to include all business associates of covered entities. Business associates such as billers, third-party administrators, collection agencies, law firms, and clearing houses are now subject to HIPAA Privacy and Security in the same manner as covered entities.

### What can your practice do to protect itself?

The general framework of HIPAA Security has not changed. The law requires practices to maintain security policies in written form that meet the required standards. The law then requires practices to maintain documentation of sufficient training, policy enforcement, and regular reviews to best ensure a secure environment. All documentation and written policies must be kept for a period of six years. If you have questions about HIPAA Security in general, or your obligations specifically, you may contact the author below.

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## HCI Supports the Healthcare Industry.

***For future events call us!!!***

### Past...

**2010 AAHAM Spring Conference - April 15 & 16th, 2010**

**Location:** Laughlin, Nevada

**Attendees:** Joe Spiek

**Type of Sponsorship:** Sponsor and Planning Committee Member

### Past...

**National HFMA Leadership Training Conference - April 16 -20th**

**Location:** Grand Hotel - Phoenix, Arizona

**Attendees:** Dave Chohon

**Dave received training for his Regional Executive role that starts in June.**

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## Our Sales Pitch— Do You Really Know Your Collection Agency?

### HCI Fast Facts...

- HIPAA Compliant
- Experienced, Knowledgeable Management Team
- Serving Clients of All Sizes - Entire Hospital Systems to Individual Medical Offices
- Credit Reporting to All Three National Credit Bureaus
- Medicare Bad Debt Reporting
- Sophisticated Patient Location (Skip-Trace) Resources
- Verified, Accurate Accounting
- Bilingual Collectors
- Long-Term Client Relationships
- Low Employee Turnover
- Active in the Arizona Collectors Association
- Healthcare Industry Exclusive
- Stability and Longevity
- Leading-Edge Technology