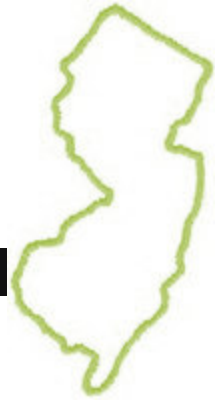


NJSHCA

New Jersey Society for Healthcare Consumer Advocacy

September 2013



President's Pen

Hello to Everyone!

I trust that your summer was a good one and that you did find some time to relax with family and friends!

A very special thank you to Gerry McCloskey and Sister Marion for all the hard work in planning our annual retreat on May 31, 2013. The weather was just perfect, the speaker quite interesting and we had great support from our vendors, as always! And, the food was delicious! Thanks to Eileen Smith for coordinating that part of our conference. If anyone has some ideas for speakers for next year, please let Gerry or me know. Or if you have some suggestions for improving the annual retreat/conference, we would love to hear them!

Now it's time to gear up for our fall sessions!

Our first meeting of the fall is Thursday, September 19, 2013 at NJHA Princeton. We will join a special webinar from 1 - 2:30 p.m. The speakers and the topics are:

Transforming Health Care Leadership: A Systems Guide to Improve Patient Care, Decrease Costs, and Improve Population Health

Michael Maccoby, PhD, President, The Maccoby Group, Washington DC:

Patient and Family Engagements: Using SpeakerLink to Match Speakers and Seekers

Regina Holliday, Patient Rights Art Advocate, Washington DC:

Lessons Learned from a (Reluctant) Speaker/Advocate: a Family Caregiver Educating the Masses

MaryAnne Sterling, CEA, CEO Sterling Health It Consulting

In This Issue

- NewsLink Today on hospital charges
- 2014 SHCA Conference
- SHCA News
- Thank you to 2013 Conference Sponsors

Please email or call Eileen Smith (esmith@jfk.org 732-744-5824) with your RSVP so that we have a count for lunch.

Our business meeting in the morning will include an in-depth discussion about the current status of chapter affiliation with national SHCA. As an organization, we will need to decide very shortly the direction that we want to pursue and the pros/cons of affiliation. Those of you that are national SHCA members may have seen the notices that SHCA will be partnering with ASHRM, the American Society of Healthcare Risk Management for the 2014 Annual Conference. This may be the direction of the future as smaller organizations such as ours partner with larger AHA Personal Membership Groups to insure viability, share resources, and control costs. I expect we will have a lively discussion at our meeting! If anyone has topics for our business meeting, please email me and I will include it on the agenda.

As many of you know, our Committee Chair for Membership, Debbie Parrott, is no longer with us as her position at University Medical Center of Princeton was eliminated. This was a great loss for us and Princeton. If someone is interested in filling this position on an interim basis, please contact me. It doesn't require a lot of your time and your help would be greatly appreciated. By the way, Deb is doing fine and planning a new career path! We wish her all the best!

Save the Date: Our next fall meeting is Thursday, November 21, 2013 and the presentation will be on Accountable Care Organizations and the future of Medical Care, presented by Dr. Stephen Kolesk, Senior Vice President Clinical Integration at Virtua. More details in the November Newsletter. Looking forward to seeing all of you on September 19th!

Corinne



CMS Releases Comparison Information on Hospital Charges

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for the first time today released hospital charges information for the 100 most common inpatient procedures.

Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius said the release of charge information is intended to make healthcare more affordable and providers more accountable. Along with today's release, CMS also announced \$87 million in funding to states to enhance their rate review programs and further healthcare pricing transparency.

CMS has never before released such information, but since 2007 NJHA and its members have voluntarily shared New Jersey hospitals' charges for numerous procedures via the Web site NJ Hospital Price Compare. And while New Jersey providers have committed to pricing transparency, charges information holds little relevance for most healthcare consumers. Charges are not paid by government programs like Medicare or Medicaid, and commercial payers negotiate rates well below charges. Charges may apply only to self-pay uninsured patients who earn too much to qualify for charity care. And as further protection, a 2009 New Jersey law caps hospital charges for most uninsured patients at 115 percent of Medicare rates. These protections apply to individuals earning up to 500 percent of the federal poverty level – or up to \$117,750 annually for a family of four.



Ryan Shares 3 Things N.J. Residents Should Know About Hospital Charges

NJHA President and CEO Betsy Ryan “cuts through the clutter” of this week's headlines about hospital charges with a new blog post directed to New Jersey healthcare consumers.

Prompted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' first-time release of chargemaster information, Ryan tells New Jersey residents, “The overwhelming majority of you will never, ever see a bill that includes hospital charges. Only about 4.5 percent of N.J. hospital patients could potentially be billed at charges. These are the individuals who earn too much to qualify for a subsidized insurance program like Medicaid or NJ FamilyCare and who opt not to purchase insurance on their own.”

It's also important for New Jersey residents to understand a 2009 state law that provides protections against costly medical bills, Ryan writes. The law caps hospital charges at 115 percent of Medicare rates for any individual earning up to 500 percent of the federal poverty level; that's \$117,750 annually for a family of four.

Ryan's final point: “To the small group of individuals who may be billed at charges – or even for those insured patients who face major medical bills that their plans do not cover: Contact your hospital and ask about discounts and payment plans. Almost all New Jersey hospitals have a set of compassionate billing guidelines to work with patients who are struggling with medical bills.”



Member Notice

Advocating in the Name of the Patient



In This Issue

Message from the President

SHCA Update - 2014 Annual Conference

Dear SHCA members:

I am very happy to announce exciting information about our 2014 Annual Conference. In the spirit of collaboration, we will be co-locating our conference with ASHRM, the Risk Management group of the American Hospital Association (AHA). The meeting will take place in **Anaheim, CA from October 26-29, 2014.**

Partnering with another AHA Personal Membership Group (PMG) has several benefits. First of all it gives us the potential to share some wonderful keynote speakers. It also allows us to demonstrate and highlight ways that patient advocates and risk managers work together in our organizations. And lastly it will help us control costs as we work to strengthen SHCA financially.

So please save the date.....more information will be coming soon, but be ready for a fabulous opportunity for learning and networking ~ and some fun in the sun in California!!

Lastly, if you have any questions about the conference please contact SHCA staff at shca@aha.org or call 312-422-3700.

Carol Santalucia
2013-14 SHCA President

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SHCA News - Summer 2013 Edition

It is our pleasure to present you with an electronic copy of the latest member-only newsletter.

[Please click here to download the Summer 2013 Edition of SHCA News.](#)

If you prefer, you may access the newsletter through [SHCA's website](#). Click on the "Current Edition." (Note: you will be prompted to login)

Summer SHCA News Highlights:

- Optimizing Your Advocacy Brand
- SHCA Member Survey - The Results
- Chapter Corner - Reaching Members Through State and Regional Meetings
- 2014 Annual Conference Save-The-Date





Thank you to the 2013 Retreat Sponsors!

Dear Sponsors,

Thank you for being Sponsors at the 7th annual New Jersey Society for Healthcare Consumer Advocacy Conference on May 31, 2013. Your presentations were informative and interesting to the attendees. It was a pleasure to meet all of you in person and learn more about your services.

We appreciate your support of the NJSHCA and taking the time to participate in our conference. We look forward to exploring opportunities with all of you in the future.

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