

Your NC Risk Management & Patient Safety Support

In this issue of the MAGnet, we introduce you to your local risk management and patient safety support. You may not be aware of the breadth of services MAG Mutual provides — free of cost — to policyholders. To see all risk management and patient safety services, including a free on-site risk assessment survey, visit www.magmutual.com/risk/index.html.



Sheila Elliott

North Carolina Risk Management and Patient Safety Consultant

If there's a single word to describe how Sheila Elliott views her work in risk management, it's *proactive*.

"I've worked on both the claims and risk management sides," she says. "Claims is about putting out fires. But what I enjoy most is putting 20 years of experience to use in a more preventive and proactive way."

"I want to be part of the solution before the problem even occurs."

To advise practices on how to ensure consistently good outcomes, Sheila emphasizes preparation — and she makes a point to stay prepared herself. "I work to keep up to date on any new regulations from the oversight boards, so that I can help doctors understand new requirements," she says.

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Risk Management & Patient Safety Dept. Tips Developing Social Media Policies for Your Practice

The improper use of social media in its various forms by healthcare employees and physicians could result in severe HIPAA violations; some of which could damage a practice's bottom line and reputation.

Healthcare organizations should develop social media policies, defining not only what is acceptable or appropriate, but arming employees with the know-how to keep information safe and comply with HIPAA regulations. Employers should scrutinize the use of e-mail, laptops, and handheld devices, which may be used to transmit or store personal health information; state consequences of noncompliance; and develop a "social media incident" response plan.

For an example of what others in healthcare have implemented, read Danbury Hospital's social media policy online at <http://bit.ly/rdZwod>. Other examples include:

- Mayo Clinic (<http://bit.ly/bEmQ36>);
- Cleveland Clinic (<http://bit.ly/mcmhYn>);
- Vanderbilt University Medical Center's toolkit (<http://bit.ly/bxabOK>).

Remember that your vendors are considered an extension of your organization for HIPAA regulations, or "covered entities." Be certain they are informed of your policies.

Physicians who wish to develop and maintain an online presence should consider the American Medical Association's new policy, "Professionalism in the Use of Social Media," published online (<http://bit.ly/bswKCB>).

Look for an upcoming MAG Mutual social networking (online) CME activity for physician policyholders and a companion online "Learning Module" for managers and staff at www.magmutual.com.

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- Commercial Umbrella — An additional layer of protection for your practice above and beyond your other liability coverages.

For more information, contact **Chip Goen** at **800-303-7798** or **CGoen@MAGMutual.com**.

AMA: E-Prescribing Deadline Looms

The American Medical Association in early October urged physicians unable to meet Medicare's E-Prescribing program requirements to apply for a hardship exemption prior to Nov. 1. The AMA also expressed concern that physicians are not being provided sufficient time to get in compliance.

To apply for an exemption, go to <http://bit.ly/qVZMor>. For more information on the e-prescribing program, go to <http://bit.ly/mgbG98>.

MAG Mutual Doctor2Doctor^(SM) Peer Support Program Launched in NC

A growing body of literature illustrates that most physicians will be sued during their career. There also is growing recognition that physicians who have been through the litigation process experience a range of negative emotions, which often last well beyond the jury verdict — emotions that impact physicians both personally and professionally.

To alleviate some of the emotional trauma that accompanies litigation, MAG Mutual is launching its Doctor2Doctor Peer Support Program, which pairs North Carolina policyholders facing a lawsuit with a Peer Supporter. Our Peer Supporters are policyholders, colleagues who have been through the litigation process and understand the importance of having an empathic listener who "has been there" to demystify the legal process and to support those going through it for the first time. They understand the emotions that accompany being sued and they want to help you.

For more information, call the NC claim office at **919-881-4336**.

We've Got You Covered

We know that your time is precious and when you call us about your medical liability or other insurance policy, you want ready information and quick resolution. That's why, beginning in May 2009, MAG Mutual Insurance Agency, LLC (MMIA) undertook a quality improvement initiative. MMIA President **Carol Quaif** says, "We wanted to make it easier for our customers to do business with us." The biggest "disconnect" for customers, she says, was being routed to multiple contacts, leaving voice mails, and waiting for call backs.

"Reducing customer effort became our No. 1 goal," says **Lani Painter**, Director, Customer Service. In the past, calls were routed through one number, but "we have many customers who have many products/policies with us." With new technology and staff, today every one of the 1,500 average incoming monthly calls are answered by account service consultants.

"Each account service consultant is trained in all of the products the agency offers so everyone can answer specific questions — whether those are about workers' compensation or cyber liability policies or accounting or payment questions," Painter says. "There is no waiting for someone to call you back. No phone tag."

"Continuing quality assurance programs will track response and resolution time," Quaif says. Just call **1-800-282-4882** and press option #4.

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