



FLORIDA'S SOURCE FOR IMPORTANT PHYSICIAN INFORMATION

Your Personal Assets Could Be at Risk!

Enron, WorldCom, Tyco and Global Crossing—all large corporate names that have been in the news lately for accounting irregularities. What if you were an officer or board member of one of these corporations? Would your personal assets be at risk for the decisions that were made (or not made)? Can you expect to be named in litigation from creditors, shareholders and employees?

The answer to these questions is YES! But you do not have to be an officer or director of a large Fortune 500 corporation to be sued like one.

Because of these corporate debacles and the general public's increased awareness regarding corporate governance, smaller companies and firms are experiencing increased litigation in these areas. Failure or alleged failure of the directors and officers to perform their responsibilities may give rise to claims for "wrongful acts." Claims can be brought against an officer or the entire board. Nationally, there were 110 companies sued by shareholders in 1996, but 114 companies sued in just the *first six months* of this year.

Directors and officers liability insurance provides protection for "wrongful acts" actually or allegedly committed by the directors and officers of a firm. If you serve as an officer or director for your group or in a similar position with a nonprofit or charity organization, be sure your personal assets are protected.

For more information about directors and officers liability insurance, please call MAG Mutual Insurance Agency, Ltd. at 800-282-4882. ●

HIPAA Privacy Regulation Compliance Date Approaches

Unlike the extension available for complying with HIPAA transaction regulations, there is no extension for the 2003 implementation of the HIPAA privacy regulations for Florida physicians. It is very important that you start working on compliance now. We've listed several tips below to help you get started.

1. Educate yourself about the HIPAA basics
2. Designate a privacy officer and state the job responsibilities of the position. The privacy officer must stay informed of updates and changes in regulations and should always seek a cited reference before implementing any changes
3. Consult an attorney who specializes in HIPAA to assist with your practice's HIPAA implementation strategy
4. Draft a notice of privacy practices and make an effort to communicate the document with patients
5. Implement new HIPAA privacy policies and procedures and revise your current policies and procedures manuals
6. Provide work force and document training
7. Test your personnel and reassess your training program. Document improvements and shortcomings
8. Have a process to validate software, billing and clearing-house vendors
9. Identify business associates and develop a business associate contract that provides for the release of the minimum necessary information

10. Supervise the release of medical records and track the uses and disclosures of protected health information

If you need more information on how to comply with the HIPAA privacy regulations, please call MAG Mutual HealthCare Consultants, Inc.'s George Inman at 706-738-2078. ●

Product News

Did you know?

You are eligible for Long Term Care coverage if you are under age 66 and not presently disabled. MAG Mutual Financial Services, Inc. is currently offering the program to orthopedic surgeons throughout the Southeast and will continue to extend the program, by specialty, to physician owners/insureds in all states over the next several months.

This is a guaranteed issue policy—once it is declined by the physician, it won't be offered again. Long Term Care coverage can significantly reduce retirement cash flow disruptions, so for more information please call John E. Redfearn III, CSA, SPHR, CLU at 800-282-4882.



Do You Have Colleagues in Need?

These are difficult times for the medical professional liability industry. Physicians are having trouble finding protection with a strong, stable insurer—and in some situations, they can't find any coverage at all. At least 25 insurers to date have abandoned this market; others are asking for additional capital from their existing and new policyholders or have stopped accepting new insureds altogether. And while others have abandoned physicians or are struggling to stay above water, MAG Mutual Insurance Company's financial strength was again confirmed with the **2002 renewal of our A.M. Best "A" Excellent** financial rating. We're one of only a handful of medical liability insurers in the nation to receive this rating.

In Florida, Governor Jeb Bush recently created a task force to study and report on why physicians have seen their medical liability insurance bills increase dramatically. The panel is expected to present its findings by January 31, 2003. And as *The MAGnet* went to press, Central Florida doctors were planning to close their offices October 16 and attend a noon rally with the goal of getting the state Legislature to limit awards in malpractice cases.

In the midst of this turmoil, MAG Mutual Insurance Company stands out among our peers. Our position as the Southeast's largest physician-owned mutual medical professional liability insurer comes from the mission we adhere to in all aspects of our operations—providing total solutions to our physician policyholders so they can focus on providing quality care to their patients. So, if you or a colleague is in need of insurance, financial services, office solutions or practice management consulting, you can count on MAG Mutual to provide them. We're here for the long run. Call 800-282-4882 today.●

CME Articles on the MAG Mutual Web Site

MAG Mutual's Web site offers short articles with post-tests. Each offers .5 hours of Category 1 continuing medical education credit to physicians who read the text and take the online test. Current topics are "What Plaintiff Attorneys Hope to Find in Your

Medical Records" and "Women and Heart Disease: CAD Until Proven Otherwise." This educational service is free from MAG Mutual; we mail your CME certificate after you've completed your test and evaluation.

New topics are being added. Coming up next is "Making a Timely Diagnosis of Lung Cancer," by Ralph L. Haynes, M.D. Watch for this and others; be sure to add this Web page to "favorites" in your browser. Questions? Contact Kjones@magmutual.com.●

Getting Paid for the Work You Do?

Cuts to Medicare reimbursement and the proliferation of managed care plans have hit physicians right in the take-home pay. More and more physicians are asking questions like: "How much money should I make?" "How much is too much overhead?" and "How can I legitimately get paid for what I do?"

MAG Mutual HealthCare Consultants, Inc., your practice consulting and medical publication resource, introduces a new service that can answer your number one question, "How can I get paid fairly for what I do?"

The Revenue Cycle Analysis service covers five areas that can significantly change the amount of revenue your practice makes:

- Understanding the reimbursement process
- Understanding EOMBs and EOBs
- Reducing claim denials
- Revenue collections and overhead
- Dealing with accounts receivable

Additionally, our consultants will show you how to analyze the top 10 services you provide. You will learn what you should charge and how to avoid the most common pitfalls in the payment process. Practices will have a clear understanding of why payors deny up to 20 percent of services billed. You will also learn how you can participate in the EOMB/EOB review process with coding and billing staff to reduce your claim denials.

To find out more about improving your revenue, please call George Inman at 706-738-2078 to set up an appointment with one of our consultants.●

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