



Board Meeting ~ Oakland

October 2006

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Below is a report from the California Dialysis Council's Board Meeting held October 20, 2006 in Oakland, California.

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• **LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

Michael Arnold delivered the legislative report. The current 2-year legislative session has reached its conclusion. Any bill not yet passed is "dead." The 2007-08 Legislative Session will begin in December. There will be a minimum of 48 new legislators in Sacramento. Michael urged facilities to contact the new people and suggested that while candidates are campaigning for office there is a ripe opportunity for getting them to come for a dialysis facility visit. Michael stated that it looks as if the Bonds on the ballot are more likely to be voted in by the electorate if the amount of the bond is small. At this point the bonds for housing and disaster seem to be faring best. The propositions around cigarette tax and the oil industry have spun off huge advertising campaigns and the cost of advertising has increased as a result.

Michael distributed both the usual Legislative Status Report and his 2006 Legislative Highlights to those in attendance. He then briefly reviewed the budget bill as follows:

AB1807 is the budget trailer bill that covers many areas of the recently approved budget. There was a change in the license renewal fee for hemodialysis facilities to a flat \$1500 per year. A Stakeholder Meeting was held on October 12 by the Department of Health Services. The meeting reviewed the amended Health & Safety Code

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section 1266 that establishes licensing fees. For the 2006-07 fiscal year, Dialysis Clinics were assigned a \$1,500 fee per facility but that amount is subject to annual review and up date in February. The Department is seeking written comment no later than November 1, 2006. Michael feels that the licensure fee for Dialysis Clinics could feasibly double in February of 2007. Michael further stated that Kathleen Billingsley is replacing Brenda Klutz as Deputy Director for Licensing and Certification. Ms. Billingsley stated that the Department is hiring people to fill the 141 open positions but that the new surveyors have to be trained in the East by CMS. Michael requested input from those in attendance. One suggestion was that a larger fee for new facility licensure be put in place with the requirement that the Department survey a facility that is completely ready for survey within 21 days. Fees might be \$10,000 for each licensure and certification but the fee would be reduced \$1000 per day for each day beyond the 21st day. Michael Arnold will develop a plan and send it out to membership for comment.

• REGULATORY REPORT

Michael Arnold continued with his report into the regulatory issues.

Sheryle Paukert informed the Board that she had interviewed two prospective Certified Hemodialysis Technician (CHT) employees who had completed a dialysis training program under the name of The Hemodialysis Training Program in which the trainees never touch a patient. The "hands-on" part of their experience is completed with real dialysis machines and water treatment system, but with dummy arms. Those in attendance felt that this training does not meet the intent of the regulations and asked that the Network report the issue to CMS and the State via their regular ROSAN (Regional Office, State Agency, Network) meeting. Annual Utilization reports. Sheryle Paukert had requested at the last meeting that Michael Arnold check into the need for continued preparation of this report since licensure fees are now a flat rate. Michael reported back that the report is required and must still be completed. However, he also stated that there is a great deal of information on the OSHPD (Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development) website as a result of these reports. He suggested that membership check out the site at: www.oshpd.ca.gov then click on ALIRTS under "featured links."

• NRAA REPORT

New NRAA Board members are now in place and committees are being finalized. Katrina Russell is the new Western Regional Director for the NRAA. Cindy and Katrina are working together planning the program for the 2007 Annual Fall Conference in Huntington Beach, California. The meeting will be held September 27-30, 2007

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A common concern at the NRAA meeting was related to survey and certification delays. Cindy stated that despite the fact that CDC has been working on this issue for some time, in certain counties, particularly Los Angeles there has been no improvement.

Cindy asked that facilities be encouraged to contact their Congressional representative to support the 2.65% composite rate increase. This can be easily accomplished via the NRAA website at: www.nraa.org and clicking on the "CapWiz" link and then a letter is already available to send to representatives by zip code.

NRAA has a new "Job Board" which is a career link through the internet. It is a service similar to Monster.com. Currently, there is a 20% discount for those using the service in addition to a discount for NRAA members. A large volume discount is also available. The service is free to the jobseeker and the employer pays the fee. The service went live on September 1, 2006 and the fee is \$199 per position per month. It is located on the www.nraa.org website under "NRAA Career" link.

• KIDNEY CARE PARTNERS REPORT

Marc Chow delivered the Kidney Care Partners report.

- Subgroups of the KCP are working on identifying other bills (in addition to the Kidney Care Quality and Improvement Act) that the group would have an interest in supporting.
- With regard to recent criticism of the Erythropoietin Monitoring Policy (EMP), the KCP has decided not to make a statement. This decision was made based upon the varied membership of the organization.
- KCP has decided to attempt to get NIH (National Institutes of Health) to increase the funds available for kidney disease research.
- Home dialysis manufacturers are working on the bill for daily home dialysis and KCP is evaluating their participation in this.
- The Renal Leadership Council has changed its name to the Kidney Care Council.

• NETWORK REPORT

The report was delivered by Allison Kregness. The Western Pacific Renal Network has relocated its offices to Novato. The new address is 505 San Marin Drive, Building A suite 300, Novato, CA 94945. The telephone number is (415) 897-2400. Ms. Kregness reported that the new Network has hired a social worker who will begin work in November and that they are now looking for quality improvement staff. The Network is interested in working together with the CDC for the January, 2007 educational meeting and

the first Medical review Board meeting will be held next Tuesday (10/24/2006). The Board of Directors will consist of a few representatives for Network #17 that will be added to the existing Network #15 Board.

Allison reported that the Fistula First prevalent rate for the Network is 49% (5th in the country) despite the fact that the Network has not had an active program for the past few months. The CMS goal for 2006 is 49.1% fistulae so the Network has almost met the goal.

• **MEDICARE / MED-CAL REPORT**

Cindy LaMunyon delivered both reports as follows:
Medicare. The EPO HCPC code (J0886) will change on January 1, 2007 to Q4081 as outlined in Change Request 5216. This will also implement the change from the billable units of 1000 units to 100 units. National Provider Identifiers (NPI) as established under HIPAA will become a requirement on 5/23/2007. The UB04 will replace the UB92 and will be effective that same date (5/23/2007). The NPI will also be required for referring physicians and for non-Medicare claims. The NPI will be a required field on the UB04.

EMP system fixes are scheduled to be in place on January 2, 2007 for Home EPO claims. EPO administered in-center will still be subject to EMP rules.

MediCal. MediCal is transitioning to J0886 with EPO at 1000 units and J0882 for Aranesp effective 11/1/2006. (See Bulletin 386, September 2006). The EPO reimbursement rate has increased to \$18.57 from \$18.43 for the first 1000 units and \$14.11 for subsequent 1000 unit increments effective 10/1/2006. There will be a California DHS Meeting in Sacramento on 10/25/2006 from 1:30- 3pm. This is a National Drug Code (NDC) Roundtable Discussion for non-retail pharmacy drugs. The Department is recommending that MediCal interim X-codes be converted to the NDC codes effective 1/1/2008. Cindy reported that this would include the requirement that drugs administered be coded with the NDC that is on the medication box and will result in additional work for staff nurses. She requested that Michael Arnold or a representative of his office attend the meeting. He agreed to have someone in attendance.

• **PROGRAM REPORT**

Mary Brattich reported that the 2007 CDC Annual Meeting will be held at the Hotel Zoso (the old Marquis Hotel) in Palm Springs April 26-28. Mary stated that one mission for the Annual Meeting is to provide education and networking opportunities to our membership, not to mention, generate a profit for CDC. Mary reviewed some of the evaluation comments with those attending and stated that

the evaluations of the meeting were great. The panel continued to be well received, and having a patient speaker was well received. Mary stated that it is time to begin planning for next year and that Gail Wick was well-liked and we will invite her back and continue the panel. She additionally stated that we need to partner with our vendors for financial support. She asked that anyone with ideas for speakers please send them to her.

- **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mike Paget presented proposed meeting dates and locations for the first half of 2007. Based upon space availability, the following were agreed upon by consensus.

January 12, 2007 ~ Oakland
Educational Meeting in conjunction with Network #17
February 16, 2007 ~ Los Angeles
March 14, 2007 (Wed) ~ Sacramento- Legislative Day
April 26-28 ~Palm Springs- Annual Meeting
May 18, 2007 ~ Sacramento
June 15, 2007 ~ Los Angeles

Mike will report back regarding availability in those locations.

- **NEXT BOARD MEETING**

December 1, 2006 ~ Los Angeles
Please note the change of date !

For more information and a registration form, please visit our web site at: www.caldialysis.org/next_meeting.htm

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