

Heartbeats

Spring 2006

A Community Service of Mammoth Hospital
Published by the Community Relations Department
Lori Ciccarelli, Editor

Siemens Medical Solutions Chosen As Information Technology Partner for Mammoth Hospital

By Gary Myers,
Mammoth Hospital Chief Executive Officer

Many people in our service region have shared their belief with me that area physicians are employees of Mammoth Hospital. This is not the case. Mammoth Hospital does not employ any physicians. However, we do enjoy independent contractor relationships with most physicians in our area who provide services to our hospital and clinics. As part of our close working relationship with our doctors, Mammoth Hospital provides billing services for our independent contractor physicians in the community. The decision to provide billing services for physicians is very unique in the hospital industry and was the result of our desire to accomplish two goals for our patients. (1) We wanted to have all doctors in the community included as "contracted providers" with major insurance carriers to reduce cost for patients; and (2) we wanted to simplify the billing process and have patients receive only one bill from the hospital for each visit that included all hospital and physician services. The latter goal has been very difficult to achieve with our current technology. While the intent was to simplify the billing process for patients, in many cases the process was made more complicated and confusing by combining hospital and physician billing.

Insurance companies require hospitals and physicians to submit their bills separately on different forms even though the services of each were likely provided in the same place at the same time. It is easy to see how a single visit to the emergency department following an accident or acute illness can lead to the generation of several separate bills for the same day. The patient is seen (1) by the emergency department physician, (2) has x-rays interpreted by a radiologist,

may be seen by consultant physicians such as (3) an internist and (4) general surgeon, and may be admitted to the hospital by (5) the physician on-call and have surgery resulting in (6) anesthesia services. This single E.R. visit and admission to the hospital will generate a total of seven separate bills, one for the hospital services and six for all the different physicians. Behind the scenes, hospital billing staff gathers all the documentation necessary to file the various claims to the appropriate insurance company and tracks all seven separate claims individually for processing and payment by the insurance company. In most cases, it is several months by the time all seven claims related to this one encounter have been processed and paid by the insurance company. Once all insurance payments have been received by the hospital, our billing department sends the patient a statement for the final balance owed. The patient, who may not even remember all the different physicians and services from several months ago, is left confused by receiving a combined bill with a single balance with little or no explanation of how it was derived.

With our current technology, the seven separate claims for this one hospital admission cannot be tracked and displayed ongoing as one account. According to Jim Smith, Chief Financial Officer for the District, this has created a very labor-intensive process for hospital billing staff of manually tracking all seven separate claims, follow-up, and payment, and later combining the



Please see "Siemens" page 4

Mammoth Hospital's Mammography Initiative Receives a \$20,000 Donation from Local Grocer, Vons

By Jennifer Hansen, PR Assistant

Mammoth Hospital's mammography initiative is in full swing as the campaign moves forward to raise \$400,000 for a full field digital mammography system. The campaign started off strong with a successful 2005 Festival of Trees event raising \$67,000 toward this initiative. Through generous donations and pledges from service clubs and individuals, \$180,000 has been raised so far.

Mammoth's local grocer, Vons, jumped on the donation bandwagon contributing a \$20,000 donation toward this initiative. Vons held a huge campaign drive during Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October to raise money for this ever important cause. The store held a benefit concert at Sierra Meadows starring musician Doug Haywood. A raffle took place at the concert to help raise money. In store, each register collected loose change and sold pink ribbons throughout the month. Management created an employee incentive program for those checkers that put forth the most effort in selling pink ribbons. Jessie Bowman sold the most pink ribbons during the month. Her incentive was to choose her days off during the busy holiday season. Those checkers that sold at least 25 pink ribbons throughout the month were able to choose a day when they could wear jeans to work. The store held 50/50 raffles and held barbecues to spark as much employee interest and participation as they could. After all their efforts were put forth, Vons



reached their goal of raising \$5,000 by employee and community participation. Lonnie Newbry, Supervisor/ Recruiter for the store, began to write letters to the Vons District to see if there was something they could donate to the cause. The District was impressed by a small town store raising \$5,000 through the efforts of the store employees and community members for one cause. Nancy Monette, Assistant to District Manager Jeff Henges, chose Mammoth Hospital and the mammography initiative as something the District could support. They matched the store's \$5,000 by donating an additional \$15,000. Thank you Vons and

Please see "Donation" page 4

Get Ready to Take a Swing Against Cancer

By Lori Ciccarelli, Community Relations Director

Get ready to play golf for a great cause on Friday, June 23rd at Sierra Star Golf Course hosted by local cancer survivor Brian Venneman. The hospital foundation, The Healthcare Trust of Mammoth Lakes, is sponsoring the third annual Golf Benefit Tournament to raise funds and awareness for the hospital cancer outreach program. Proceeds from this event will help provide support, resources, and financial assistance to cancer patients living or working in



Mono County. Last year's proceeds totaled \$19,000 and to date, the entire amount has assisted local cancer patients. This money helps offset travel expenses while receiving cancer treatment out of the area which include lodging, meals and gasoline. Our goal this year is to raise \$25,000. Join us for a day of fun in the sun. Space is limited, so reserve your space early. For more information, call 924-4200 or visit www.mammothhospital.com.

Mammoth Hospital Joins the 100,000 Lives Campaign

Due to a grant of \$10,000 from the Blue Shield of California Foundation, Mammoth Hospital has joined about 2,200 hospitals across the United States in the effort to save lives through improved health care. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement, IHI, identified six specific areas where improved health care could save lives, and asked hospitals to support one or more of these areas. The goal is to save approximately 100,000 lives between January 2005 and June 2006, and every year after that.

Mammoth Hospital has committed to the goal of preventing adverse drug events. We are working to achieve this through a process called "medication reconciliation throughout the continuum of care." We will do this by making sure that both the patient and the health care provider know exactly which medications the patient is taking whether he is visiting the physician, an emergency room, having surgery, is admitted to the hospital, or being discharged home or to another health care facility. By knowing this, we can prevent duplication, drug toxicities, and drug interactions.

To help achieve this goal, Mammoth Hospital has designed a personal medication record form. We ask that anyone who is taking medications or dietary supplements, fill out one of these cards and keep it with you in your wallet at all times. If you have any problems with filling out the form, your physician, nurse or pharmacist can help you. You can cut out the form from this issue of Heartbeats, or get one from your physician's office or pharmacy. The information should be updated each time your prescriptions are changed or discontinued so that at all times, you can provide an accurate medication profile. For more information, contact Ase McCarroll, Mammoth Hospital Pharmacist at 924-4143.



Look for upcoming information on our June 10th "Spring Fling" Fundraiser at Robin Stater's Servanti house & garden in Bishop to help support the mammography initiative. For more information call Lori Ciccarelli at 760/924-4015 or lori.ciccarelli@mammothhospital.com.

Conditions I am being treated for:

1. _____ 4. _____
 2. _____ 5. _____
 3. _____ 6. _____

Medications Allergies and Sensitivities

Medication	Type of Reactions/Date of Reaction

Name _____

Medical Record No. _____

Address _____

Doctor's Name _____

Doctor's Telephone No. _____

Pharmacy Name _____

Pharmacy Telephone No. _____

In emergency call (Name) _____

at (Phone No.) _____



MAMMOTH HOSPITAL
Southern Mono Healthcare District 

(760) 934-3311

**PERSONAL
 MEDICATION
 RECORD**



Mammoth Hospital's Interpreter Services

By Jennifer Hansen, PR Assistant

Over the past three years, Mammoth Hospital has been working toward the development of an Interpreter Services program to help assist those patients who do not speak English, who are Limited English Proficient (LEP), deaf, or hard of hearing. The implementation process began with hiring an independent consultant to conduct a language needs assessment, evaluate existing delivery of services, and provide a guide to program development. After several months of research, the hospital's Community Relations department developed the policy for Interpreter Services. Now, Mammoth Hospital offers interpreting service coverage 24-hours a day, seven days a week for no cost to those patients that need assistance.

With the implementation of the Interpreter Services program, Mammoth Hospital hosted a 40-hour, five-week training program for hospital and community interpreters. The training was held last fall. There were a total of 13 participants including nine hospital employees (three full-time interpreters and six dual-role interpreters) and four community members from agencies including the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the Mono County Office of Education. There was also a medical student participating in the training. The program leader was Katherine Allen, president of the California Healthcare Interpreting Association (CHIA). Topics in this



training included misconceptions about bilinguals and interpreting; introduction to health care interpreting as a profession; health care interpreter code of ethics and standards of practice; Hispanic culture and communication; community health beliefs and practices; legal issues and reporting requirements; and much more. A presentation was also made by Kathryn Erickson, RN, BSN, Staff Development Director and Infection Surveillance Professional at Northern Inyo Hospital. Her presentation included a discussion on why physicians act and think the way they do; how differing expectations hurt the relationship between doctors and patients; and how interpreters may become recognized as important team members. This training is an integral part of the learning process for the interpreters at Mammoth Hospital. This is the second training of this nature the hospital has put together.

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Mammoth Hospital's Newest Senior Manager

By Jennifer Hansen, PR Assistant

Congratulations to Keely Ferguson, new Chief Information Officer. The Southern Mono Healthcare District's Board of Directors approved a new senior management position for Mammoth Hospital – Chief Information Officer (C.I.O.). The C.I.O. position mirrors the strategic importance of information technology, telecommunications, medical engineering, and management of patient information in the health care system today and in the future. With Mammoth Hospital continuing its mission toward becoming the finest resort community health care system in the country, this position is much warranted to drive the hospital into the future.

Keely Ferguson, former Information Systems Director for Mammoth Hospital, has been promoted to this position. Keely has been a part of the Mammoth Hospital team for seven years. She came to Mammoth Hospital from Samaritan Health Systems in Arizona. She started out at Mammoth Hospital as a systems analyst in 1998.

Since then, Keely has built the information technology systems now in place from the ground up. She has designed and implemented a fiber optic network and assembled a complex web of hardware and software applications that encompass the hospital's information systems. Keely received her B.S. E. degree in Computer Systems Engineering from Arizona State University in 1996 and then continued with graduate studies in Information Systems Management at Western International University in Phoenix, Arizona. "With the continuous advancements of technology now and in the future, Keely's expertise, vision, knowledge, leadership skills and dedication to the district's mission will help us lead Mammoth Hospital to the next level," says Gary Myers, Mammoth Hospital CEO.

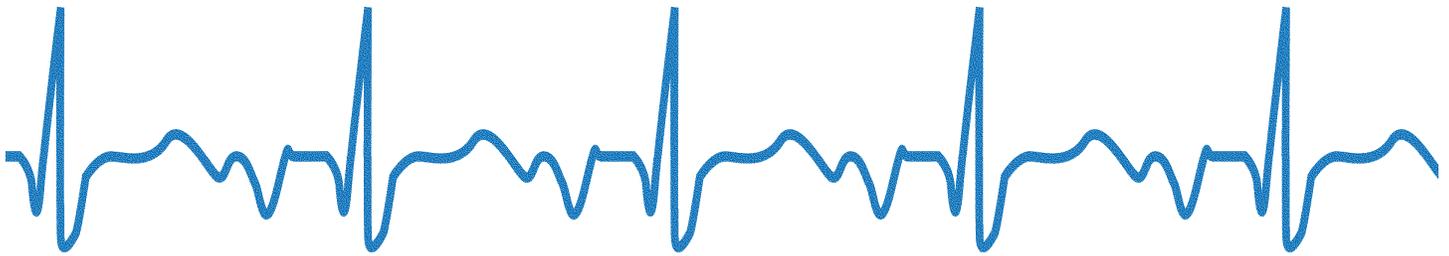




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Interpreter...from page 5

The hospital's interpreters are committed to supporting the delivery of culturally competent care with professionalism and integrity; respect for individuals and their communities while maintaining impartiality, accuracy and completeness. To accomplish this goal, interpreters convert the meaning of all messages from one language to another, clarify words or concepts when their meaning is unclear or because they do not exist in the other culture or language, and alert the patient and provider when cultural terms are used.

For more information, contact Jose Garcia, Interpreter Services Supervisor, at (760) 934-3311 extension 2640.

SIERRA PARK CLINICS

Family Dental	924-4007
Family Medicine	934-2551
General Surgery	924-4014
Internal Medicine	924-4001
Neurology	924-4084
Orthopedic & Sports Medicine	924-4084
Pediatric	924-4000
Physical & Occupational Therapy	934-7302
Urology	924-4102
Women's Health Services	924-4044
Bridgeport Family Medicine Clinic	932-7011

Vision

The Southern Mono Healthcare District is dedicated to excellence in the preservation, enhancement and restoration of the health and well being of all members of our residential and visitor communities.

Mission

The mission of the Southern Mono Healthcare District is to:

- ♥ Deliver excellent, compassionate health care services for our residents and visitors;
- ♥ Provide appropriate health care services which conform to the highest standards of care and are directed toward improving the overall health of our community;
- ♥ Ensure sustainability through sound governance, quality management and financial responsibility; and
- ♥ Facilitate continuity of care through the development of local and regional collaborative relationships with businesses and other providers.

Administration

- Gary Myers, *Chief Executive Officer*
- Jim Smith, *CPA, Chief Financial Officer*
- Joe Bottom, *Chief Operations Officer*
- Kathleen Alo, *RN, BSN, Chief Nursing Officer*
- Keely Ferguson, *Chief Information Officer*
- Nancy Hilmo, *Executive Assistant*

Southern Mono Healthcare District Board of Directors

- Donald Sage, M.D., *Chairman*
- Lynda Salcido, P.H.N., *Vice Chair*
- Helen Shepherd
- Jack Copeland
- Dan Wright

