

OCTOBER BRIEF FROM THE CHIEF

By Gary Boyd

Winter is approaching and activities are increasing around the Healthcare District, and the town, as we prepare for the snow; you've seen the snow stakes go up and probably heard the tire chains rattling in their racks on the buses. Fall has been busy for us; here are a few things that have been going on:

Helen Shepherd – Trustee of the Year!

Helen Shepherd had been honored by the Association of California Healthcare Districts as a Trustee of the Year. Ms. Shepherd has been a member of the Southern Mono Healthcare District Board since 2002, is the Chair of the Finance Committee, and has served with distinction. Her award was in recognition of her years of valuable service and guiding us through the turbulent financial waters for these past years. This is quite an honor, congratulations and thank you for your years of service.

Clinic Space

We are making some changes in clinic space on the Mammoth Campus. A summary is:

- General Surgery and Urology would relocate to the space occupied by the Internal Medicine clinic and Nancy Akalin. The procedure room there will be used by these specialists.
- The Internal Medicine Clinic will be incorporated into the Family Practice Clinic. The trailer would essentially serve as an addition Family Medicine\Behavioral Health\ Internal Medicine Space with Nancy Akalin being relocated here. Privacy for the BHC practice will need to be respected as space is allocated here.
- Chemotherapy would move to the trailer for more privacy, a better setting, and program development.
- The pediatric clinic will go through some redesign to improve the workspace at the nurse's station and to add another exam room.
- Employee Health will remain in its current location.
- We need to create a pre-registration space to help alleviate some of the space constraints in the clinics.

Our goal would be to accomplish these moves in the next 30 days.

Days in Accounts Receivable reaches all time low

Days in Accounts Receivable (AR) hit a new all time low in September – 75.33days and a reduction when compared to August of over \$1.7M! This number represents the amount of revenue that is waiting to be collected and is measured in revenue we bill per day. It is important that this number be as low as possible and means we are collecting charges for which we are billing. This number is at a *3 year low*, down from about 140 days in the summer of 2007. We have a goal of getting down to 70 days in AR and hopefully can reduce it

further than that. One of the factors that have impacted AR the last 2 months is the State Budget stalemate. Since about the first week in August, we were not being paid for taking care of MediCal patients, but rather receiving IOU's from the State. Late in September the budget was approved and we received payment of \$600,000, which helped considerably. I've been asked if this balloon payment drove AR days down artificially, and the answer is no. AR days were actually artificially high while we were awaiting payment, and this just brought us down to where we would have been had we been receiving timely payment from the state. Thank you all for your time, attention, and contribution to our success; it greatly helps us achieve our mission of caring for the community.

Senator David Cox Visit

Speaking of the budget stalemate, one of my jobs when issues like this arise is to call and email our State Representatives. So, as the stalemate continued I began contacting Senator Cox, Assemblyman Berryhill, and Governor Schwarzenegger. Only Senator Cox called me back and listened to my concerns. A few days later our own Patrick Duggan, Senior Purchasing Agent, asked me if we would like to meet with him personally, and arranged it. Senator Cox visited with us during our Finance Committee and talked to us about the budget and other issues in Sacramento, He also asked us about any problems we are having, and has helped facilitate getting an out of state physician's license for us and helped straighten out the licensing issue in L&D. He said he is in the District twice a year and we hope to visit with him regularly.

Continuity Server

Our project to implement our Siemens MS4 business continuity (BC) server is essentially complete. The BC system provides a full backup of our live MS4 system and will allow us to largely eliminate downtimes due to software and hardware update needs. The BC system also provides roll over in the event of a total failure of the live system or a problem with the facility. Cathy Kelty has been the project lead on the BC system and she completed training in Salt Lake the week before last. She has since configured the software and it has been running for over a week without error. We are working to schedule a test of the system during the next two weeks. The test will involve a full roll over of the live system to the BC system to validate that all is working properly. From now on we plan to run one test a month, during off hours, to verify functionality. Thank you very much to Mark Lind and the IT team for making this a reality.

Staff Recognition

At the September Management meeting we recognized three individuals, Jaymee Thies, Brad Allan, and Kathy Romagnino for their work in preparing us for the Mountain Defender Full Scale Disaster Exercise. They coordinated our preparation efforts and continue to provide leadership for our Emergency Preparedness efforts. We received some very valuable feedback from the drill, had about 40 volunteers signed up to be mass casualty victims, and overall it was a positive learning experience that will help provide the framework for further

education. This was due in large part to these individuals' efforts and we wanted to recognize their great work.

Internal Controls

The Camden Group performed an audit of the internal control measures we have in place. The purpose of the audit is to identify weakness in areas where we have access to cash, assets, or instruments that can be converted to cash.

Areas reviewed include:

- Purchasing and Accounts Payable
- Capital Equipment
- Capital Projects
- Collection Agency
- Credit Cards
- Payroll and Human Resources

Camden has provided recommendations and a work plan has been developed to address all areas risk. Meetings with all affected staff were held the weeks of September 8th and 15th. Many of you may have been involved with these meetings, and most of us are involved with the changes that are being implemented. A few things include:

- Revamping the Capital Equipment and Projects approval and tracking processes
- Locking up check stock
- Implementing review and audit functions to our current processes
- Overhauling policies and procedures in a variety of areas.

There is more to come on this topic as we move through the next few months, but I wanted you all to be aware of this initiative.

I hope you are all having a great fall season. Election Day is coming, so please remember to register and vote for the candidates and initiatives of your choice. Your say is important!