

TACTICAL CONFERENCE HITS THE ROAD - JAXENE HILLEBERT

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2007**

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For the past several years, PREFERRED has hosted an annual Tactical Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona. This year, we are taking the conference on the road. One of our PREFERRED Vendor Partners, *Empi*, will be hosting the Clinical CEU program. Several of PREFERRED's staff will be available to present a network overview, and discuss various other timely issues during a luncheon meeting.

There is no charge to participate in this event; however, space is limited therefore we will accept two participants from each practice*.

The first program will be held in Atlanta, Georgia on Friday, April 13th, at the Atlanta Hilton, starting at 8 a.m. with a Continental Breakfast and member networking session. Registration deadline is Friday, April 6th. Please contact PREFERRED for details or to obtain a registration form. You may also retrieve a registration form from PREFERRED's online Member Center at www.preferredtherapy.com.

Other locations and dates: Orlando, Florida on May 4th and Dallas, Texas on May 17th. Please watch for detailed information in the next few days via mail, email and fax.

*Additional staff may attend at a nominal fee on a space-available basis. Please call for details.

FORGOTTEN PHONE FACTS - CHRISTY BEAUCHAMP

1) SLOW DOWN! Have you ever had to replay a long and detailed voicemail to try and capture the phone number someone spat out at the end in warp-speed diction? Train yourself to SLOW DOWN and speak clearly when leaving your phone number on someone's voicemail. If you really want to master voicemail etiquette, repeat your name and number at the end of each message, making it easy for the listener to jot down your correct information and call you back sooner.

2) AVOID GENERIC. Always, always, always include your clinic name when answering the phone! Believe it or not, many clinics still answer with the old school generic phrase "Physical Therapy". Your clinic has an identity and a good, solid reputation. Including your clinic name every single time the phone rings is free and consistent marketing. It sets you apart from your competition and helps patients and referral sources connect with you on a more personal level. You are unique - let the "other guy" be just plain old "Physical Therapy"!

3) FIRST IMPRESSIONS. The first voice anyone hears when they call your clinic is a key component to your success. That "first voice" person, whether a receptionist, office manager or other team member is critical. They absolutely must be upbeat, helpful and professional - they help set the tone for the comfort level and trust patients and referral sources will ultimately have in working with you. Never underestimate the power of first impressions- give your front office a big round of applause!

COMBINED SECTIONS MEETING - JAXENE HILLEBERT

Cold, cold, cold. Boston was in the middle of a 'Nor'easter', causing flight delays, or in the case of two of our team members, Christy Beauchamp and Shawna Lawrence, cancellation of the flight.

I was fortunate enough to have arrived on Tuesday before the storm began. Many friends and colleagues stopped by our Booth, including several of our network members. Students had great questions about private practice opportunities, and were happy to know that there are resources such as PREFERRED to assist in getting their.... "ducks in a row"!

There are a growing number of facilities participating in the APTA Facility Challenge. You can learn more by calling 800-999-2782 ext. 3393 , and/or receive the registration.

Poster Presentations were outstanding. Unfortunately, I did not have enough time to see them all; this is one of the most interesting elements of the national meeting, in my opinion. Because I am not a physical therapist, it provides me with a grasp of what is happening clinically, and reminds me that the profession is truly remarkable in its value to patient care.

Next year's event is planned for February 6 – 10 in Nashville, TN.

VENDOR SPOTLIGHT : SAMMONS PRESTON

With corporate headquarters in Bolingbrook, IL, Sammons Preston is a company that prides itself not only with the product they provide, but the way in which they provide it.

Their web site, located at www.sammonspreston.com, offers an online catalog with sections for treatment furniture, orthopedics, rehab supplies, pediatrics, aids to daily living, and many more. Each section is broken down into subcategories for easy access, and highlights subcategories, including storage which is an area often overlooked in many offices. The site features include options on managing multiple shipping locations, and even a competitor cross search.

Sammons Preston also offers workshops year round, throughout the United States. Subjects include everything from "Advanced Concepts in Rehabilitating Injuries" to "Splinting in Pediatrics", "Ergonomic and Therapy Interventions for Cumulative Trauma" to "Wound Care in Hand Therapy"... just to name a few. Current course descriptions and registration forms can be printed directly from their web site.

To find a Sammons Preston representative closest to you, call 1-800-323-5547.

FAX ON DEMAND SERVICES 602-234-9303

No two people's schedules are ever the same... and PREFERRED caters to that. A sometimes forgotten feature is PREFERRED's very own Fax On Demand system. Weekends, late nights, holidays... you name it, we're still here for you with a simple phone call.

By dialing 602-234-9303 you will have access to PREFERRED forms 24/7. Add New Therapist Packets, Add a new location application, MCO websites, update forms, even past copies of newsletters are just a few of what can be found on Fax On Demand. If you have a phone, if you have a fax, you can get any form at any time without having to wait for PREFERRED's business hours.

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**STAFF MEMBER SPOTLIGHT ON :
D A W N W I L S O N**

NICKNAME:

DELTA

LENGTH OF TIME AT PREFERRED :

1 YEAR

POSITION:

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES: In addition to providing administrative support to the Management Team at PREFERRED, some of my other duties include tradeshow and travel coordination, marketing projects and vendor relationships.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB: I enjoy having a variety of duties, amiable co-workers (and Management!) and the frequent opportunity to learn something new.

ABOUT YOUR FAMILY: I have been married to my husband John for 19 years this April. We are the proud parents of a black Lab named Crickett. All of us are life-long residents of Arizona.

FAVORITE PASTTIME: My husband and I enjoy hiking, walking, being outdoors & exploring the great natural beauty of Arizona.

**A REMINDER REGARDING DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME 2007
- DAN SARRIA**

“Spring ahead” and “fall back” are two terms we’ve been repeating to ourselves at least twice a year since grade school... and it’s possible (probable) that some of us still do it today. Due to the Energy Policy Act of 2005, there is a change to Daylight Saving Time (DST) beginning in 2007... changing for the first time since 1966, the way in which we observe the time change.

Starting this year, 2007, DST will begin on the second Sunday in March and end the first Sunday in November, here in the United States. (The only states that do not observe DST are Hawaii and Arizona.) Therefore, DST will begin March 11th at 2:00 a.m., and will end on November 4th, also at 2:00 a.m.

For the record:

- The official spelling is Daylight Saving Time, not Daylight Savings Time.
- In the U.S., 2:00 a.m. was chosen as the designated hour because it was practical and minimized disruption... most people were at home, and prevented the day from switching to “yesterday” which would have been confusing.
- This is also the same opportunity that many fire departments would like to remind everybody to change the battery in smoke detectors, using the time change as a simple yet effective stand out reminder... since most of us don’t know off the top of our heads exactly how long a particular battery’s lifespan is.

AN UPCOMING F.Y.I....

Watch for the annual network membership survey, to be distributed in April via fax and email ‘blast’.

Recognizing that your time is filled with enough paperwork, we will make the survey concise. It is important to know your opinion, and the results of this survey are published in our annual Report Card as well.

DID YOU KNOW...?

In an effort to reduce costs to your clinic and free up your fax machine, **PREFERRED** is now offering the **PREFERRED** Network News (PNN) via email. If you would like to receive PNN via email, please contact **PREFERRED** at 800.664.5240 or email: pnn@preferredtherapy.com. You can also read PNN by visiting www.preferredtherapy.com and clicking on **PREFERRED** Network News!

***TRACKING PATIENTS: THE MISSING LINK, PART III OF III
WRAP, TIERED, OUT OF AREA, OUT OF NETWORK***

In Part I of this series, we explored how to better track your PPO affiliations with the applicable “payors”

In Part II, we further examined the difference between a PPO and a Payor

Now, we tackle deciphering various “lease” relationships between PPOs, which also affect your A/R.

PPOs and healthplans “lease” access to other PPO networks for a variety of reasons, primarily to broaden network coverage in areas where they are lacking, and also to obtain additional cost savings for their clients.

First, a couple of disclaimers:

- The information below is generalized. There are no absolute definitions. Terms are interchangeable.
- There are far too many network variations in the PPO industry to nail them all down. This is a very basic look at some of the relationships in the market:

WRAP NETWORK: “fills in the gaps” for other healthplans & PPOs in areas where the primary healthplan or PPO doesn’t have provider coverage. This is usually a legitimate leased arrangement between two PPOs. You might see more than one logo on the patient’s card, and benefits are usually paid in-network at the same benefit level as if the patient were using the primary PPO network.

TIERED NETWORK: providers are divided into categories based on cost and quality; patient’s benefits may vary based on where services are rendered or which type of service is provided.

OUT OF AREA/TRAVEL NETWORK: provides secondary network coverage for patients when they are seeking treatment out of their primary healthplan or PPO’s service area. Benefits are usually paid in-network but may be at a slightly reduced benefit level. You might see more than one logo on the card.

OUT OF NETWORK/WRAP: provides a secondary, wrap arrangement with other primary healthplans and PPOs to offer discounts on out of network claims. Other terms for this type of arrangement are “shared savings”, or “white space management”. This is the most prominent trend causing confusion with providers at this time. You might see more than one logo on the card. If a patient goes out of network, but the provider is contracted with the secondary network, the claim is paid at the out of network benefit level, but with the secondary network’s discount applied. See Q&A below:

- Q: I am not a United Healthcare Provider, but I am a provider for Multiplan. I treated a patient who had both UHC and Multiplan on their card. Does this mean I am in-network?
- A: Most likely, NO. UHC accesses Multiplan for OUT-OF-NETWORK cost savings. UHC is the primary network. The Multiplan logo on the card indicates that you will still be paid at the out-of-network benefit level or a reduced benefit level for this patient, but the Multiplan discount will be applied to your claim.

FINAL THOUGHTS:

ACCURATE TRACKING = ACCURATE PAYMENT. With all of the variables in today’s market, it is CRITICAL to acknowledge which PPO is identified on each EOB, and track that vital piece of data along with each patient record in your billing system.

(Parts I & II of this series can be found in the January & February, 2007 PNN Newsletters.

Go to www.preferredtherapy.com, click on Member Center, enter username & password)