



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
MEDICAL AUDIT SPECIALISTS

Winter 2019

CONTENTS

President's Message	1
Past President's Message	2
Vice President's Message	2
Don't miss the Pre-Conference Workshops on April 24th	3
Taking your PULSE to Heart	4
Grow With Us!	4
Off to the Future!	5
We Need You!	5
NEW! Retired Membership Category	5
Member Referral Program	5
Q & A	6

The Monitor

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



Greetings Members,

We, your Board of Directors, have been working diligently to provide a new website, a different and more wide-ranging conference, a series of different educational opportunities, a new vision and new certification opportunities to develop and enhance your professional expertise. We meet monthly for Board conference calls and weekly for subcommittee conference calls. This is a hard working Board staffed with clinical Directors, Managers and CEOs of large and small audit companies such as HMS, BLS, MRI, Escalate and others. Over

half of the Board are relatively new to this group.

AAMAS is at a crossroads. **We will either make the organization a success in the next two years or it will close its doors.** You, our members, must ask yourself if this is an organization that is beneficial to you personally and professionally. If your answer is yes, then we encourage you to join us in San Antonio in April. Our Education Chairperson, Teresa Gulino, MBA, RN, Global Healthcare Operations Executive for HMS, has called sixty five clinical auditors and posed the question "does AAMAS offer you what you need professionally?" There have been comments and questions that I will address in this Newsletter in the "Q & A" section. Please read it and offer your own questions or comments.

Meanwhile, we are proceeding as if this organization is vital to our profession. There are many certifications and lines of audit that are compatible with Clinical Audit, but none actually focus on the Clinical bridge between finance and practice. That is where AAMAS focuses. In my companies since I began auditing in 1983, and then started my first company in 1992, I have hired my contractors and employees from the AAMAS and CMAS membership banks. Many of our members have found AAMAS to be a source of work for them through the networking opportunities available. We are valuable.

When we began this organization twenty five years ago in Texas, we built the organization to over 500 members. We developed a certification exam and successfully certified hundreds of CMAS. It was recommended that the CCMA (Certification Council of Medical Audit) break away from the AAMAS board. It did, and now we have concerns with the Council's lack of coordination with AAMAS. Because of this, we are creating a new exam which will require AAMAS membership and remain under AAMAS control and be transparent in its management. AAMAS will present webinar classes to study for the exam(s). CMAS holders will be grandfathered into the new generic certification. Later, sub-specialty certifications will be created. It will take a year to develop this new certification, and hopefully we will be able to test the first group at the 2020 conference.

I personally hope to see many of you back in San Antonio. This is the old but new AAMAS. Come and experience the joy of networking and learning again in an environment where you are appreciated and nurtured. This is a blockbuster of a conference with amazing speakers.

MJ LaBelle, RN, CMAS
AAMAS President

A Message From Your Past President



The holidays are over and we look forward to the changes the New Year will bring. Speaking for myself, there have been many changes, not all good or welcomed but still must be addressed in the columns of good or bad.

Organizationally, we also have had changes and are working on planning a wonderful conference for you in San Antonio in April. Our website has been updated and is more aligned with current technology. The pages are flashy and we are updating information on them a lot more quickly than before. All of the conference information will be available on the website very soon.

At the conclusion of this conference, I will no longer be the Past President. My service to the organization stops. I want, at this time, to thank the organization and the board for all the cooperation and comradery that I've experienced. My tenure on the board starting with VP has been both a learning experience and an opportunity to get to know people on the board and the organization better. Friendships started and mutual respect are the benefits I received as a board member. This doesn't mean that I plan to disappear; I will be present and willing to tackle tasks as assigned as a "regular" member of the organization.

As we try to get our organization to grow and become more relevant to our profession, we rely on members to volunteer their skills to better improve our organization for everyone's benefit. I know we've reached out before but please consider investing yourself into the organization. There are so many ways you could do this, submitting articles to the newsletter for an example. Write papers on audit issues, sharing of yourself and letting us know who you are. Sharing a little bit about you, what you like and perhaps a favorite hobby or recipe. We are professionals but we're people too with all types of likes. I think we grow stronger as people and as an organization when we share our diversity.

I'm looking forward to San Antonio, our conference and seeing friends that I've made over the years. Thank you AAMAS.

David Eklof
AAMAS Past President

A Message From Your Vice President



CONFERENCE 2019 AROUND THE CORNER – DON'T MISS OUT!!

April is just around the corner. Have you made plans to attend the 2019 Silver Anniversary AAMAS Conference in San Antonio? This year is sure to be a fantastic time of learning, networking and some fabulous entertainment. The board has been working very hard preparing education for this year's conference and it's sure to be one of the best!

The benefits of attending the AAMAS conference include:

- Networking with colleagues – there's no substitute for face to face discussion of trends, audit topics and changes in the industry.
- Pre-conference workshops – smaller sessions dedicated to providing a classroom learning environment.
- Dynamic speakers – the AAMAS general session is geared up with some dynamic healthcare speakers.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at conference this year and can't wait to return to this fabulous city.

NEW CERTIFICATION. WHAT'S THE BUZZ ALL ABOUT?

If you haven't already heard, AAMAS is in the development stage of a new certification exam. AAMAS supports education and innovation which is why this board is moving forward to update certification. I truly value my CMAS certification as I'm sure all who have obtained it will agree. As we all know, healthcare is an ever-changing arena and updates are necessary in every field, this includes medical audit. Some AAMAS members may worry about what will happen to their CMAS certification. **Current CMAS who are also AAMAS members will be grandfathered into the new AAMAS Certification that will be announced at the Annual Conference general business meeting in San Antonio on Thursday, April 25th at 4:00 PM.** Our continuing education through conference, CEU's and networking help to keep our knowledge up to date with the changing world of medical audit. The new exam will apply to any new or uncertified AAMAS members interested in obtaining certification. We are working hard to have a modernized certification exam that meets the needs of today's world of medical auditing.

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MARCH 23RD DEADLINE FOR BOARD NOMINATIONS

This is an exciting time to join the Board of AAMAS and contribute to our growth. If you've ever considered a position on the Board of AAMAS or thought about returning to serve the following positions will open soon.

Board Positions Open Spring 2019:

President-Elect

The President-Elect shall be a voting member of the Board of Directors. The President-Elect shall work closely with the President to become familiar with the responsibilities of the office of President. The President-Elect shall perform none of the duties of the President or Vice-President. The President-Elect shall assume the office of President at the end of the annual meeting in even-numbered years.

Nominating Committee Chair

At least three months prior to the annual meeting, the Nominating Committee shall announce that it is receiving nominations for all officers to be elected that year. The Nominating Committee shall nominate those persons they consider best qualified to serve the needs of the Association. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be published to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the annual meeting and will be presented at the annual meeting.

***Members are ineligible to hold an elected position until they have been a member of the Association for two years. Members shall have attended at least one annual meeting. Descriptions of the positions are found on the website and are included for your convenience.*

WEBINAR AND SOCIAL MEDIA CHAIR

This is one newly revised Board chair that will be responsible to coordinate and manage with the assistance of our management company, AEG:

- A new webinar series that AAMAS will develop that will be poised to benefit career growth and training.
- The AAMAS communication through various social media platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn.

Karen Cooper RN, BSN, CMAS
AAMAS Vice President

Don't miss the Pre-Conference Workshops on April 24th



THE ESSENTIALS OF CHARGE AND COMPLIANCE AUDITS

8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Whether payer or provider based, all healthcare auditors need to be proficient in performing charge and regulatory audits. This workshop offers the fundamental and advanced steps to make you an

audit expert from set-up to research to reporting results.

THE ESSENTIALS OF INPATIENT AND OUTPATIENT E&M AUDITS

1:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Whether payer or provider, what you must know to audit E&M Services: Essential Components and Documentation, Inpatient E & M, Time-Based Services, Non-Physician Practitioners, Discharge Day and CMS Changes for 2019.

These workshops are designed for healthcare clinical auditors who need to keep current or learn about coding, charge and compliance audits. If you want to heighten your knowledge don't miss these Workshops. The content will be relevant for both the seasoned auditor and the new auditor looking to become certified. There will be time for hands-on exercises, discussions with the group as well as question and answer.

For more information about these workshops and our entire conference, please visit: <http://conference2019.aamas.org/agenda/>

Hope to see you there!!!

Katie Stanford, RN, MSN, CMAS
AAMAS Secretary/Treasurer

Off to the Future!

As you all are aware, this is the 25th Anniversary of the AAMAS conference, and we will be back in Texas, the state where it all began. In honor of that milestone, the theme of the conference is “Back to the Beginning, Off to the Future.”

We are honored to have Dr Robert Pearl as this year’s Keynote, speaking on the topic of “Fixing Healthcare.”

Dr. Pearl is a former VP at Kaiser Permanente Medical Group, Mid-Atlantic Region, who is a **nationally known author and lecturer on what is happening in today’s US Medical environment**. You are welcome to pre order his book “Misfit” when registering for the conference and he will sign it after his speech. For more information about Dr. Pearl: <http://conference2019.aamas.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Robert-Pearl-Bio-1.pdf>

Other topics include **Auditing and Automation**, the Research and Clinical applications of **Robotics in Rehabilitation**, **Forensic Nursing**, The **Latest Developments and Emerging Issues in the Medical Audit Landscape**, The **Value of a Complete Audit Program, Comparing Physician E&M Codes with Outpatient Levels of Care**. Confirmation is pending from the **Texas OIG**. We also have two **Preconference workshops** scheduled on the **Essentials of Compliance and Charge Audits**, and the **Essentials of Inpatient and Outpatient E&M Audits**. Each are 4 hour intensive, interactive workshops that will provide in depth instruction on the topics.

You can download the full agenda with speaker bios at <http://conference2019.aamas.org/agenda/>

The speakers and topics will provide you with the tools to continue to audit in the ever changing arena of medical reimbursement in the 21st century.

Theresa Crothers
AAMAS Conference Co-Chair

We Need You!

We are looking for a Provider-based auditor to sit on the “Think Tank Panel” that is scheduled on Friday, April 26 from 2:15 PM – 4:00 PM at AAMAS’s San Antonio Conference. He/She will be joining three other panel members, and responding to questions from the audience. If interested, please contact Theresa Crothers via email: crothers@charter.net

NEW! Retired Membership Category

The Board of Directors has just instituted a new category of membership for those of us 65 years of age or older!! We are calling in the “Retired” membership fee. We tossed around how we would define “retired” and decided to simply go with a date of birth. We realize many of our members no longer work as auditors, but are still interested in belonging to the Association they have been active in for years. Alternatively, many of our members who still work are over 65 years of age and we felt that it was time to give them a break (that would include some of us on the Board). So, PLEASE, join us and remain part of the AAMAS family. Here are our 2019 membership rates. More information can be found on our website: <https://www.aamas.org/membership/membership-information/>

Retired:	\$100.00
Corporate:	\$125.00 (over 3 members per company)
Regular:	\$150.00

Member Referral Program

Our members are very valuable to us and we want to express our appreciation for all that you do to foster AAMAS. We have established a Member Referral Program to recognize and reward our members. The referral periods runs from December 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019. Any member who recruits a current non-member to join AAMAS will receive a \$50.00 “gift certificate” towards the 2019 Annual Conference fee. Please note the certification(s) have no cash value, limited to 2 per member, are non-transferable, and are only redeemable for the 2019 Annual Conference. In order to qualify, please send an email to Katie Stanford (ksj1053@aol.com) and copy Janet Wilhelms (j.wilhelms@aamas.org) with the name of the new member(s). We will apply your credit when the new member’s payment is received.

Q & A

You may have received a call or a Survey Monkey from our Education Chairperson Theresa Gulino. Several issues, comments or questions arose during these contacts and we wanted to address them in this volume of *The Monitor*.

1. *I heard that the Board of Directors uses our dues to take free trips and junkets and I'm not going to support that.*

During the first seven or eight years of AAMAS, the Board of Directors covered all their own expenses. As funds became available, the Association picked up half a room charge, then part of the airfare, then the entire airfare. The Board has always had one onsite meeting at the conference site six months before the conference. After year 12 and until year 24, I did not sit on the Board and cannot attest to the finances or what that Board covered. However, now the Board pays for all its expenses, works for nothing and is essentially giving its energy and financing to making this Association successful.

2. *I am an independent contractor and I cannot afford the conferences any longer.*

Many companies cannot pay for their employees to attend the conferences, so even if you are an employee, it is a strain on the budget. The question really is, can you afford not to attend? Where will you find your next job? Where will you learn about what your fellow clinical auditors are struggling with? It is true that the total cost of one of our conferences with room, board and fees can reach upwards to \$2,000. If you are only working part time that is a struggle. No one knows your budget better than you do. Hopefully, we will be able to produce some speakers on a webinar.

3. *The Board is a clique and the same people have been running it forever.*

Not true. The Board of Directors has Karen Cooper, Katie Stanford and Teresa Gulino who are on it for the first year, Mary Jane LaBelle and Theresa Crothers sit on the Board to revitalize it and will step off it as quickly as possible when we get new people to step up. We are doing it for the love of AAMAS, not for the love of sitting on another Board. David Eklof is on is last year. A typical length of a Board President is four years: President Elect; President for two years; Past President.

4. *The conference is too expensive.*

Actually, we have one of the least expensive conferences available. We consistently lose money on our conferences because we try to keep the cost down for our members.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary Jane LaBelle, President

Dave Eklof, Past President

Teresa Gulino, Program Chair

Karen Cooper, Vice President

Theresa Crothers, Advisor and Co-Program Chair

Katie Stanford, Secretary/Treasurer

Janet Wilhelms, Executive Director

YOUR ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT TEAM

Janet Wilhelms

Executive Director
ext. 103

Courtney Harris

Customer Care &
Association Specialist
ext. 125

Liz Kutz

Chief Financial Officer &
Membership Manager at
Association Executives Group
ext. 102

Roy Smith

Vice President of IT at
Association Executives Group

The opinions expressed in The Monitor are those of the authors or persons quoted. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the AAMAS Board of Directors.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL AUDIT SPECIALISTS

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www.aamas.org



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL AUDIT SPECIALISTS

Membership Application

Please Print Clearly:

Name: Dr./ Mrs. / Mr. / Ms. _____ Date: _____

Title: _____ Credentials: _____

Affiliation: _____

Preferred mailing address: Home Business

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Home phone number: _____ Office Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Fax number: _____ E-mail: _____

Referred by: _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES SCHEDULE: Each membership is good for one full-year.

Individual Membership \$150.00 \$_____ Membership Total

Retired Membership \$100.00 \$_____ Membership Total

Corporate Membership If three or more employees from the same organization join/renew, they each receive the discounted rate noted below. Please provide names and contact information on the back of this form.

Total Number of Members: _____ X \$125.00 = \$_____ Membership Total

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Please list other professional organizations to which you belong: _____

EMPLOYMENT SETTING

- Hospital
- Vendor
- Insurance Company/Other Payer
- Other

JOB CLASSIFICATION

- Auditor
- UR/QA
- Case Manager
- Other

BIRTH YEAR

- Prior to 1925
- 1925-1945
- 1946-1964
- 1965-1979
- 1980-2000
- After 2000

Your name, address, and email address will automatically appear in our online membership directory available only to members. Please check if you would like your name **withheld** from the online membership directory:

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Check/Money Order Visa MasterCard American Express Discover

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Name on Card: _____ CVV Code: _____

Signature: _____

Return this form with your payment. Checks or money orders (in U.S. dollars) payable to AAMAS.

7044 S 13th St.

Oak Creek, WI 53154, USA Tel: 414-908-4941

Credit Card Payments can be faxed to AAMAS at **414-768-8001**.

TOTAL DUE: _____

Please FAX or MAIL your application form to the address at left. Or, you may join online at www.aamas.org.