



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
MEDICAL AUDIT SPECIALISTS

Spring 2019

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The Monitor

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



Greetings Members, Friends and Colleagues,

This is our first post-conference *Monitor* and the Board of Directors has been in daily contact developing our new Certification. We have been setting up Certification teams, exams and policy and procedures for Grandfathering and new certifications. You will hear separately in this issue from our Certification team: Katie Stanford and Karen Cooper.

On other fronts, we have sent out RFP's to four different cities for our April 2020 conference. As usual, we are shopping for the best deals for you. Theresa Crothers, our Program Director is working with our Executive Director Janet Wilhelms. At the General Membership Meeting in San Antonio we announced that you would hear from us no later than September 1, 2019 regarding the conference time and place so that you can plan your 2020 budgets to include AAMAS. At this conference we will give our first certification exam. A preparatory pre-conference session for those taking the Saturday exam will be offered. The Board will be testing the exam soon, and we admit to a "fear of flunking"!

We have a new board member: Barbara Huewitt. Barbara sits as the chair of social media. Her bio and picture are in this *Monitor*. Welcome aboard Barbara!

Amy Armstrong has again stepped up to complete Katie Stanford's last year as secretary/treasurer because Katie was elected as President-elect at the San Antonio General Membership meeting. Thanks Amy! David Eklof was elected as Nomination chair at that meeting as well. He will also be responsible for Membership committee.

We have three new **mentors** on the Board. Their bios and pictures will be in the next few newsletters. AAMAS needs new Board members running this organization. A mentoring program has worked for us in the past, and so we begin again. Our new mentors are strong, capable and active in the industry and will be present at the Board phone meetings listening and gaining that all-important corporate memory and strategy to bring a new organization into 2020.

Additionally, we hope to partner with other national organizations to bind together and grow in our shared interests. Currently, we are talking with NAMAS, and I am eager to work with Shannon Deconda, President of NAMAS, to see where we overlap and take advantage of that for both our memberships.

You will notice that we are introducing one article on new approaches to auditing in each issue. This issue is an article written by AAMAS member Laurie Laxton on Post Acute Care. This could be our first specialty certification at the 2020 Conference and we wanted to give you an intro about what is happening in that arena. We are hoping to have an article on Contract Compliance auditing in the following Monitor. We encourage you to submit an article on some different reviews you are working on. **Consider this a call for newsletter articles!**

As I said at the San Antonio conference, I have never worked with a better Board of Directors. Under its direction, I am eager to watch AAMAS grow into its 26th year with new vigor and strength. Please join us for an exciting year of growth.

Respectfully,
MJ LaBelle, RN, CMAS
AAMAS President

AAMAS's New Certification



Another AAMAS conference has come and gone, but not without great workshops, education, and announcements of new beginnings. The AAMAS members who attended the conference this year were first hand to hear about our new certification exam, CCFA or Certified Clinical Financial Auditor.

The first step in this launch: CCFA will offer all current CMAS certified members the opportunity to be **GRANDFATHERED** into this new certification. Visit the AAMAS website today and hover over the Certification tab. Click the Grandfathering tab and complete the application: www.aamas.org Don't delay! Grandfathering will only be offered through December 30, 2019.

HOW TO APPLY FOR CCFA CEU'S:

There were a few questions regarding the new exam including, "How does one apply to offer CCFA continuing education units and what is the cost?" The first step in applying for CCFA continuing education units is to submit the educational content to the CCFA committee for review. The CCFA committee will review the educational content and respond accordingly. The certification committee is currently working on the application and further details regarding CCFA continuing education units. If you should have any questions prior to the release of this information, please contact the CCFA committee via email at certification@aamas.org. The certification committee consists of AAMAS board members Katie Stanford and Karen Cooper.

Please note that AAMAS received overwhelming interest at the conference so will be dedicating these next few weeks to processing CCFA Grandfathering applications. Therefore, additional CCFA information will be posted on the AAMAS website by June 30, 2019.

Karen Cooper RN, BSN, CMAS
AAMAS Vice President

8 ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS REGARDING CCFA ANSWERED RIGHT HERE:

The questions below were from AAMAS members who attended our April 2019 conference. The Q&A is also posted on our website along with all the eligibility requirements for both grandfathering, renewal and new exam applicants. Please visit the AAMAS website at www.aamas.org for further information.

Q: What criteria was used to create the test questions?

A: The exam is based on the current job force of AAMAS membership

Q: What can I begin studying to prepare myself for the CCFA exam?

A: A study course will be offered at the conference next year. You may also begin early preparation by reviewing areas such as hospital finance, accounting, basic coding and billing along with regulatory and legislative policy.

Q: My CMAS expires 5/31/19 per certificate. How will this be addressed in the grandfathering?

A: You can grandfather to CCFA with your current CMAS certification and requirements for CEU's. A fee of \$100 will be required if CMAS is expired. Renewal with CCFA will be 3 years and 30 CEU's.

Q: Why is it 30 CEU's to renew instead of 24 like CMAS?

A: AAMAS has mirrored the state nursing CEU requirements and we are also accepting 15 nursing CEU's toward CCFA renewal. The remaining 15 CEU's can be obtained through conference and/or other approved sources including free webinars.

Q: Can I keep both certifications? How does this work if I grandfather to CCFA?

A: Yes, you can keep both certifications. To keep both certifications, you would need to apply for renewal separately for both certifications. At this time CMAS will remain renewable through the CCMA website. CCFA will be through a link on the AAMAS website. Your CEU's could be used for both – just as they are for nursing, coding, and CMAS now.

Q: Wasn't CMAS under AAMAS previously and we were told the association itself couldn't/shouldn't also administer the certification exam? Why did this happen?

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A: Yes, CMAS had oversight by AAMAS for many years. A previous Board made the decision to reorganize mainly to try to attract members from other organizations like AAPC, NAAMAS, etc. but this has not happened. Most professional organizations have oversight of their own certification exams such as HCCA, AAPC, etc. AAMAS is creating the new exam and will retain oversight.

AAMAS would like to provide education but we do not know how to educate our members since we do not know what is on the exam.

It is beneficial to new members as we will offer classes for certification and offer specialty certification.

AAMAS does not know if the CMAS exam has been updated or what is added or deleted. Our world in healthcare changes quickly and updates to both the pre-certification education and the exam will be made on an ongoing basis.

The desire to become a certified auditor is often the reason auditors come to the conferences and why they become members. It is a good relationship to have because AAMAS encourages networking, mentoring and education through the conferences and soon from Webinars being available online.

Q: What happens to the CCFA credential if AAMAS no longer exists?

A: AAMAS would remain as a certification board over the CCFA certification and education only.

Q: Please contact me with essential contacts to take class and exam.

A: The application for the CCFA prep class and the exam will be found on the AAMAS website under the link for certification in late June.

Grandfathering of CMAS to CCFA



Any individual holding a CMAS certification and meeting the eligibility requirements may seek renewal as a CCFA. Documentation of CMAS certification could include, but is not limited to, a copy of certification card, receipt or confirmation letter.

Renewal will be on a 3-year basis and requires 30 hours of CEUs. The CEU content may be clinical for up to half of the CEUs and the remaining 15 must be revenue cycle or compliance related.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

(Proof not required if grandfathering with proof of CMAS)

1. Applicant must be a current member of AAMAS.
2. NEW applicants for CCFA, not grandfathering, must have:

A minimum of 60 college semester units or a licensed health care professional degree.

- Degree in a healthcare field including RN, LPN, PT, OT, ST, RT, Dietician, MD, Public Health, Health Information Management, Health Care Administration.
- Degree in Accounting or other Financial Management.
- Background in Revenue Cycle, such as CDM, UR, QA with 60 college credits.
- Law, compliance or ethics degree.
- Certified Coder with 60 college credits.

3. NEW applicants for CCFA, not grandfathering, must have one year of authenticated audit experience or similar revenue cycle experience.

APPLICATION PROCESS CHECKLIST FOR SUBMISSION:

Please submit:

1. Signed application for grandfathering.
2. Current resume.
3. Proof of current or former CMAS such as card, email, receipt or confirmation.
4. Renewal fee of \$100 if CMAS is not current or due June 2019.
5. No fee required if you have current CMAS renewal. Fee will be due on CMAS renewal date.

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IF APPLICABLE, \$100 FEE IS MADE PAYABLE BY:

- Check/Money order/Credit Card.

Should you have any questions, please send an email to: Certification@aamas.org or call Janet Wilhelms, AAMAS Executive Director at: 414-908-4941 ext 103.

A Great 2019 Conference!



“Dr. Pearl was a true inspiration. Thank you for having him!”

“Overall the speakers were interesting, varied, well prepared. Great conference!”

“Awesome-So glad I came. The presenters were very knowledgeable.”

Based on the evaluations it seems the 25th Anniversary Conference was a success! There were many new members and first time attendees, along with many familiar faces. Thank you all for coming. I know it is an expense, and we strive to make it a worthwhile event for your professional development.

I would like to extend a big thank you to our exhibitors and sponsors, HMS, Escalate, nThrive, BLS, NAMAS, and MRI. Your financial support helps to defray the costs to our members, and provides great network and employment opportunities.

The Founder’s Award was awarded to Joan Alexander for her long time commitment and service to the Association. Joan was unable to attend, and the award will be given to her next year. Joan, we missed you!

Beverly Coleman and Theresa Crothers were recognized for their attendance at every AAMAS conference for 25 years. I can say that attendance at the conferences was extremely beneficial to my career.

We will be announcing the dates and location of the 2020 AAMAS conference in September. There are many great suggestions from the evaluations for topics for next year. **If you have any topics of interest, and are willing to speak on a topic, or have speaker suggestions, please contact me!**

Theresa Crothers
Program Chair

Meet AAMAS’s Newest Board Member!



Barbara Huewitt, RN; *A little about me*

Professional: I’ve been a UM nurse at the University Health System in San Antonio. When I first came on with UHS 3 years ago, I performed inpatient medical necessity and level of care reviews. My current role is the review and appeal of post payment audits and denials. Before becoming a UM nurse

auditor I worked as a telemetry nurse in the hospital setting, a psych/behavioral health nurse at an inpatient treatment facility, a SNF nurse, and a home health nurse.

Experience: Medical necessity reviews, line item audits, and appeals in the skilled nursing facility, home health, acute hospital, and inpatient psych settings.

Personal: I have a very close and supportive family. I have a younger sister, 3 wonderful children, a newborn grandbaby, and parents who have always lifted me up and pushed me to do my best. I’ve been a church pianist since I was 14 years old. In my free time I enjoy cooking, reading, and family game night.

Mentors Join the Team!

Long ago, AAMAS had a mentoring program to foster newer members into considering a board position. This allowed shadowing and a learning opportunity for prospective people interested in serving in some capacity. I’m happy to introduce to you, one of our newest mentors.



Hello! My name is Sandy Tagher and I am mentoring for a possible Board position. I have been a nurse for 27 years. Nineteen of those years were patient care and I have been doing Hospital Bill Audits at Bottom Line Systems for eight. I received the CMAS certification in April 2018. My clinical background consists of Cardiothoracic ICU, SICU, Open Heart

Recovery, OR (in the heart room), and I worked for an Oral Surgeon doing the anesthesia for his in office surgery (wisdom teeth removal, dental implants, etc.). I live in Walton, Ky. with my husband and 3 boys (21, 17, and 15). I also have 2 dogs and 2 cats.

Sandy is also a member of the Nominations Committee, diving in with both feet. Thank you Sandy! AAMAS is lucky to have you join us in improving the state of our organization and foster its growth with new ideas.

David Eklof, Chair
Nominations Committee

Post-Acute Care Update

Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) and Home Health Agencies (HHAs) are subject to audit by both government agencies and third party payers. In this article we will discuss the Prospective Payment System (PPS) for SNFs, its basic components, how it is audited, and most importantly how CMS is turning the industry's PPS system upside down in October 2019.

Currently SNFs are paid on a RUG-IV (Resource Utilization Group, Version 4) case-mix methodology. In its simplest terms, the patient (often referred to as a resident in a SNF) is categorized into one RUG level based on items coded in an assessment completed by an LVN/RN in the SNF. The assessment is called the MDS (Minimum Data Set). The MDS looks at two basic case-mix components under the RUG-IV system: Therapy and the volume of services given, and skilled Nursing services provided. Non-therapy ancillary service specific variations, although coded in the MDS, are not reflected in determination of RUG level. The final assessment score is tallied and a single RUG level is determined. The RUG system is heavily weighted, and SNFs are paid greater per diem rates for residents who require hundreds of minutes of therapy in a 7 day period. Auditors look at all factors that determine a RUG level selection. For each case, they ensure the documentation supports the scoring, and that the RUG level selected is consistent with the scoring. SNFs over the past several years have received target audits focused on therapy minutes and resident medical necessity for therapy. The findings, from both CMS and external auditing companies, revealed that SNFs tend to focus on therapy volume of services, followed by other nursing care that was done.

CMS has announced that the case-mix system under the PPS for SNFs will be changed on October 1, 2019. The new model is called the Patient Driven Payment Model (PDPM) which consists of five case-mix adjusted components. Each component is based on patient characteristics that are data-driven and stakeholder-vetted. Focus will shift from volume of services, to resident goal setting based on individualized need and characteristics. Five case mix categories will be instituted including: therapy modalities, nursing services provided, non-therapy ancillary comorbidity, CMS recognizes that non-therapy ancillary comorbidities often require additional resources and costs (examples being wound infection or AIDS/HIV). All five case-mix components will be scored to come up with a final HIPPS score which will be used to determine the reimbursement payment. These will be made using a "Variable Per Diem (VPD) adjustment", i.e. the per diem rate will be adjusted over the course of the resident's stay. Nurses and auditors across the country are

all learning the complicated components of scoring under PDPM in order to be fully prepared by the October 1, 2019 initiation date.

For more information refer to: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/medicare-fee-for-service-payment/snfpps/pdpm.html>; **Federal Register**, Vol. 83, No. 89, Tuesday, May 8, 2018, Proposed Rules

Laurie Laxton, RN, BSN, CMAS, RAC-CT, IP-BC
AAMAS Member

This delicious recipe is brought to us by David Eklof, our baker on the Board!

BLUEBERRY BUCKLE COFFEE CAKE

Cake Part

2 Cup All-purpose flour
 ¾ C sugar
 2 ½ teaspoons baking powder
 ¾ teaspoon salt
 ¼ Cup shortening (Crisco)
 ¾ C Milk
 1 Egg
 2 Cups fresh blueberries (can use frozen, must thaw and drain first)

Oven temp 375 F / 190 C Grease square plan, 9x9x2 inches or round pan 9x11X 1 ½ inches (I use round cake layer pan)

Blend flour sugar, baking powder and salt add shortening milk and egg. Beat 30 seconds. Carefully stir blueberries, spread batter in pan and sprinkle with crumb topping.

Bake 45 to 50 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Drizzle with glaze. Serve warm.

Crumb Topping Part

½ Cup Sugar
 1/3 Cup all-purpose Flour
 ¼ Cup Butter (soften)
 ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon.
 Mix until all ingredients until crumbly.

Glaze Part

½ C powdered sugar
 ¼ teaspoon vanilla (I use more because I like vanilla)
 1 ½ - 2 teaspoons hot water.

Mix together, should be thin, so you can drizzle over hot coffee cake when it comes out of oven.

This is great with coffee, breakfast or brunch sweet. **Enjoy!**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary Jane LaBelle, *President*
Katie Stanford, *President Elect*
Karen Cooper, *Vice President*
Amy Armstrong, *Secretary/Treasurer*

David Eklof, *Nomination Chair*
Theresa Crothers, *Program Chair*
Barbara Huewitt, *Social Media*
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.