



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
MEDICAL AUDIT SPECIALISTS

Spring 2021

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The Monitor

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



Welcome to the Spring Monitor!

It is starting to feel like spring with the birds chirping, flowers blooming and the new green grass coming out of the brown carpet. Congratulations, we have made it through another winter!

AAMAS is also coming alive with a great conference line up for all of us to experience virtually. The pre-conference with David Eklof and Laurie Laxton looks great! I will be attending

Laurie's on auditing in post-acute care since I do Rehab audits. David's Auditing 101 will be a full day of the basics and more. The conference days are packed with great speakers and topics beginning with our keynote, Steve Vinson from Michigan Medicine. See Jayne's article for more details or go to the website, aamas.org under Conference 2021. Don't forget to sign in as a member to get the reduced rate. I hope to see many of you at the Zoom 'Meet and Greet' social hour during the lunch break on Friday the 23rd!

Speaking of 'seeing' each other, we have had two wonderful Networking Forums so far with the next one scheduled for May 4th at 6:00PM Central time. It is so great to see members I have not seen since the last conference in San Antonio. I have to apologize for my mistake at the last Networking Forum. There was at least one person in the Zoom 'waiting room' that I failed to let in. I was engrossed in the conversation and forgot my most important job! I am so sorry if any of you were waiting. For future Networking Forums, we are doing away with the waiting room so you will be able to just sign in. If you ever have problems with signing in just call or text me at 618-322-6191.

A few members have emailed about CCFA renewal. Beginning with those due for renewal this year, CCFA members will not renew during the year but will pay \$35.00 in dues with their AAMAS dues at the end of the year. Those due to renew in 2022 will change to annual dues next year at the end of 2022. Those due to renew in 2023 will begin the annual \$35.00 dues the end of 2023. At that point we will all be on annual dues paid at the same time as our AAMAS membership. Please email me at ksj1053@aol.com if you have questions.

Continues on next page...

Virtual '21
Conference
Clinical • Coding • Compliance
Multiple professional CEUs at one conference!

APRIL 21-23, 2021
REGISTER TODAY

ONE STOP LEARNING
Receive multiple professional
CEUs at one conference!

- Hurry -
Registration closes
April 14th

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT *CONTINUED*

Please take a few minutes to read the informative and heart-warming articles in our Spring Monitor:

- **Mary Jane LaBelle**-A heart-warming article about her life as a nurse auditor
- **Evonne Schiappacasse**- Social media overview
- **Mary Stites**- The newest AAMAS calendar of events
- **Laurie Laxton**- Her experience at the Networking Forums
- **Amy Armstrong**- References every auditor needs
- **Jayne (Rudy) Kalbfleisch**- Conference 2021
- **Theresa Crothers**-New policy on benefits for member speakers
- **Pam Price**-Her experience as a Board mentee
- **Pat Hodney-Gould**- Member recruitment
- **David Eklof**- Board and committee positions open for 2021-22. Please consider joining this wonderful group of AAMAS members!

Respectfully,
Katie Stanford, RN, MSN, CCFA
AAMAS President

TELL A FRIEND / COLLEAGUE!

AAMAS welcomes new members interested in this rewarding field of healthcare financial auditing. Gain access to research, networking with other audit professionals, and ongoing education.

Simply have them visit our website; aamas.org or call Janet at 414-908-4941 ext 103

FROM YOUR PAST PRESIDENT A Memoir



Laurie Laxton wrote a wonderful piece about how much fun the AAMAS Networking Forums have been. This last one got me thinking of all that nursing and auditing has afforded my life and I want to share a memoir this month.

I turned 76 this year and have been involved with nursing since I was 18, and with Clinical Review since I was about 36. My training as Massachusetts General Hospital was astounding, mind-bending, scary and fulfilling. Nursing has defined my relationships with family, friends, politics and enemies, and has been mostly nurturing and always joyful. “If it isn’t fun, don’t do it” became my mantra. Nursing is one of the best things I could have done for my life.

During my audit life beginning in 1984, I traveled a lot, covering hospitals from Alaska to mid-California and Hawaii to Utah. I often lost my cars in large University Hospital parking lots. My car always had four “Thomas Guides” so I could find my way. Oh for GPS! AND the mobile phones weighed at least 8 lbs and my roller briefcase carried coding books and Medicare guidelines and other miscellany.

I put between 35,000 and 40,000 miles/year on my car. Then there were my young sons for whom I was responsible. Luckily, my father (after the death of my mom) moved out west to help me while I traveled. I was a single mom from the time they were 3 and 5 yrs old until they graduated from College. One is an attorney and FBI Special Agent; one is a Climate researcher at Oxford University in the UK. I’m proud of them.

My friendships from Nursing School and the Audit world have been long, true and strong relationships. We all gather together annually when possible. I am grateful to AAMAS and to you all for an interesting life. Who would have guessed that being an auditor would be challenging?

I encourage everyone to participate in these networking sessions. They are important on many different levels, and if any of you are prodded (as I have been) to think of your Clinical and Audit memories, please share them in a “Monitor Memoir” article.

Respectfully,
MJ LaBelle, RN, BA, CMAS, CCFA
AAMAS Past President

From Your Vice President



Greeting AAMAS members!

We are gearing up for the 2021 Virtual Conference in a few weeks and couldn't be more excited! The topics look fabulous and always so enriching to our work.

We have now held our 2nd monthly Networking Forum on Zoom and I have to say that it is very enjoyable to talk and meet members. I like hearing

members' backgrounds, experiences and what is happening in other parts of the country. I hope more and more join in each month and enjoy each other's company and the chat! It is everyone's opportunity to share with each other. A board member is the administrator on the call so there is also an opportunity to learn more about AAMAS or the Board if you want to talk about or ask anything. We keep it light, fun and enjoyable.

I want to keep you all up on dates to remember throughout the year for easy reference:

APRIL

- April- No Pulse this month because of the Annual Conference)
- April 6- Spring Monitor (this issue)
- April 13- Board Meeting 5pm CST
(Zoom meeting link upon request)
- April 14- ***Conference Registration closes***
- April 21- Pre-Conference
- April 22-23- Annual Conference

MAY

- May 4- Networking Forum (through Zoom)
- May 11- Board Meeting 5pm CST
(Zoom meeting link upon request)
- May 19- The Pulse

JUNE

- June 8- Board Meeting 5pm CST
(Zoom meeting link upon request)
- June 16- The Pulse

As always, please contact me for any questions you might have about AAMAS. It is my pleasure to help you.

mmarystites@gmail.com

Thank you,
Mary Stites, RN, CRCA, CCFA, CMAS
AAMAS Vice President

FROM A FELLOW AAMAS MEMBER Thank you, AAMAS, for the Monthly Networking Zoom Calls!

I wanted to thank the AAMAS Board for setting up the monthly "Networking Zoom Calls". I thought to myself a couple of times, "oh I need to get dinner on the table, or finish up something at work", but instead I made an appointment in my calendar as if I had any other meeting to encourage myself to attend at least one. I can say that I have now attended both sessions and they are absolutely wonderful. One of the most important parts of the annual conference that has really helped my career has been the networking. Breakfast, lunch, dinner opportunities to mingle, get background stories, learn, and get acquainted with auditors and coders from around the country. Countless times I have "reached out" to my new "friends" for a pointer here or there. I am finding that these "virtual networking Zoom calls" are accomplishing the same thing. In the first call, I met Amy A. who had some questions about PAC audits, and we started up a friendship and have each other now as contacts. In the second call, we learned about some of the backgrounds of us all and focus areas when we were "practicing nurses". Did you know, Mary Jane started out on a Pediatric Burn Unit at Mass General? We also discuss current trends in audits, especially pertaining to the pandemic. Any topic is up for grabs, all microphones and cameras are on as if we are in the same room, and I find it very close to sitting at a round table at lunch at a national conference. I wanted to thank the Board again for setting these up, can't wait to "see" you all again soon, and wanted to encourage our other members to "pop in" if you can on the next one. You may find them just as invaluable as I do!

Looking forward to the conference in April,

Laurie Laxton

Member since 2009

SAVE THE DATE!

AAMAS's MAY NETWORKING FORUM

May 4, 2021
6:00-7:00pm CENTRAL TIME
On Zoom at No Charge!

Details to follow or contact
Katie Stanford at: ksj1053@aol.com

From Your Treasurer



Looking for a LCD or recent OIG report? Look no further! Below you will find a list of some of the websites that are helpful. On the site look for subscription options where you can have updates and articles sent right to your inbox.

[The Medicare Coverage Database](#) (MCD) contains all National Coverage Determinations (NCDs) and Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs),

local articles, and proposed NCD decisions.

See all recent material added to the [website](#), including the latest reports, advisory opinions, enforcement actions, and other OIG news, in one easy-to-access spot.

[OIG Work Plan main page](#)

To help healthcare providers such as hospitals and physicians comply with relevant Federal health care laws and regulations, OIG creates [compliance resources](#), which are often tailored to particular providers.

MLN Connects® Newsletter

Subscribe to our [weekly email newsletter](#) for health care professionals. Our staff compiles news from across the Agency into your single source for:

- CMS program and policy details
- Updates and announcements
- Press releases
- Upcoming educational event registration and reminders
- Claim, pricer, and code information
- Updates on new and revised MLN Publications

MAC Electronic Mailing Lists

Find and sign-up for your Medicare Administrative Contractor's (MAC) [electronic mailing list](#) by selecting your place of business or MAC's name.

In our daily auditing duties, we are bombarded by a number of initials and terms. These websites may help:

Ever wonder what those letters stand for?

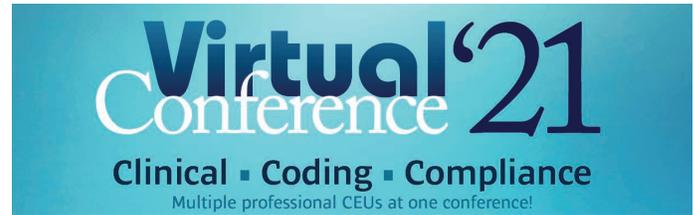
[Click here](#) for a list of 4,420!

And what about that odd term or work that [CMS references](#)? Only 1,029 of those!

A full report of our finances will be communicated during the 2021 Conference.

See you at the conference,
Amy Armstrong, RN, BSN, CPC, CCFA
AAMAS Secretary / Treasurer

Conference Update



We are excited to present AAMAS's Virtual Conference in a few weeks - April 21-23 on the Zoom platform! We have a packed agenda to include a variety of topics and look forward to seeing you all there.

Based on the feedback we received from last year's virtual conference, we are happy to announce there will be a virtual "meet and greet" during the lunch hour on Friday. So, be sure to grab your lunch and take advantage of the opportunity to chat with old friends, and meet new ones.

- Our Pre-Conference Agenda includes a session, Auditing in a Post Acute Care Setting, for auditors to add to their skills set.
- An 8-hour session, Pre-Conference session Auditing 101, is perfect for new auditors and provides an overview for experienced auditors.
- Our keynote speaker Steve Vinson will be discussing the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in our society.
- The program continues with a HEDIS speaker who will be discussing health plan audits.
- We continue with COVID 19 and the coding ins and outs during the COVID pandemic.
- You will enjoy the session from an OIG speaker who will be discussing data fraud, waste and abuse investigations.
- Artificial Intelligence - the common types and benefits used in healthcare auditing and how to pan for A.I. use.
- Moving onto Clinical Documentation Improvement with discussions of the roles of CDI, physician education, and one of our favorite pieces, queries.
- CMS documentation guidelines, medical necessity issues and the 2021 EM levels is a great overview for all of us.
- We will continue the education diving into the Revenue Cycle with reimbursement, effects of financial auditing and working the unbilled inventory.

There is something for everyone and we are extremely excited to have all of these great speakers and content to share with everyone. See you all at the conference.

Jayne (Rudy) Kalbfleisch, MHA, RHIT, CCS, CPHM, CMAS, CCFA
Theresa Crothers, RN, CMAS, CCFA

AAMAS Member/Speaker Benefits



I am excited to announce a new policy regarding members who would like to present at the annual AAMAS conference. We are aware that there are many members who are subject matter experts in their field and have much to offer the Association.

Presenting at a national association conference also provides an opportunity to network, enhance career development, and promote your employer. In addition:

- If you present a preconference workshop that is a minimum of 3 hours in length, or up to 8 hours in length, you are entitled to attend the AAMAS conference for free.
- If you present a general session or a breakout session of 1.5 hours, you are entitled to attend the conference for the amount of the one day rate.

I know there is a wealth of information among our members and hope we are able to “tap into” that knowledge. If you know of a non-member who would be a good speaker, please let us know. While AAMAS does not generally pay a speaker fee, we can negotiate travel expenses.

Next year, Jayne “Rudy” Kalbfleisch will be the Program Chair, so please contact her (jaynekalbfleisch@gmail.com) if you would like to present at next year’s conference, or know of someone who would.

Theresa Crothers, RN, CMAS, CCFA
crothers@charter.net

Virtual
Conference **21**
Clinical • Coding • Compliance
Multiple professional CEUs at one conference!

APRIL 21-23, 2021
REGISTER TODAY

ONE STOP LEARNING
Receive multiple professional
CEUs at one conference!

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From Your Membership Chair

As you know, AAMAS is a nationally recognized organization dedicated to advancing the practice of medical auditing through research, professionalism, and ongoing education. We offer a yearly conference, monthly networking forums, quarterly newsletters, and an opportunity to become as involved as you wish.

We are a certification body and there is opportunity to become a Certified Clinical Financial Auditor (CCFA) by taking the preliminary course followed by an exam. This certification enhances the quality of the Audit Profession, strengthens member relationships with AAMAS and is recognized by National entities.

Our annual conference will be at the end of this month, April 21 -23, via Zoom. Multiple CEUs will be available. A variety of topics will be discussed which lends for a powerful conference.

I'd like to encourage everyone to spread the word that AAMAS offers support and networking opportunities in a variety of ways. We also like to have fun while we're doing it. Should you know of someone who might like to hear about us, please give them our internet address or let us know and we can reach out to them.

You are also welcome to contact me at patricia.k.hodney-gould@kp.org. Hope to “see” you on one of our many Zoom calls or a future onsite conference!

Pat Hodney-Gould, RN CCFA
AAMAS Membership Committee Chair

A Rewarding Experience

I became involved with the AAMAS organization last year after being given the opportunity by my Manager, Pat Hodney – Gould, to attend their first virtual National Conference. I was very impressed with the topics covered as well as the expertise of the speakers. AAMAS was very successful in navigating these unprecedented times, by moving their conference to a virtual format and supporting all the attendees and speakers in the process.

After the conference, I was invited to serve as a mentee on their professional Board and I said yes. Having no experience with “Board meetings” or being a “mentee”, I was not sure what to expect. I have thoroughly enjoyed being in the room and learning from a lot of experienced and smart health care pro’s, who continue to elevate the quality and professionalism of medical auditing.

Pam Price
AAMAS Board Mentee

FROM YOUR NOMINATION CHAIR Positions Open For 2021-22!



It's that time once again, where the board members write their articles for the newsletter. I've written articles as your Vice President, President Elect, President, Past President and Nomination Chairperson. I've been involved in AAMAS for many years, taking advantage of learning opportunities and contributing back when I could.

Now, I'm asking you to consider a member or yourself in one of the two positions open for this year's election slate by submitting a nomination. 1) President Elect and 2) Nomination Chairperson. Each of the positions are excellent for someone with a desire but little experience in board functions and help operating a national organization.

The President Elect position, follows the President, learning the in and outs of the organization and helps shape the future of AAMAS. It's a great way to gain experience in leadership, developing a new skill set which you could utilize in your personal practice. This year's President Elect, whoever you are, will have the opportunity to be mentored by our current President. I can't think of a better mentor.

The Nomination Chairperson feels the pulse of the organization. Even though it's a challenging position, it holds value and helps by reaching out and asking people who have demonstrated even a little interest in being asked if they could serve.

AAMAS is also in need of a new CCFA Chairperson. This position helps the organization by managing the CCFA exam for potential member candidates. You must be CCFA to hold this position. In addition, we will have mentor positions open as a gateway to gain experience for positions on the board. This is a great way to ease in and see the workings of the board and how the organization operates.

The organization has struggled and growth has been slow. That I believe is changing and there's a new sense of enthusiasm in people and I invite you to come and be a part of the reassurance taking AAMAS to the next level.

Come, learn and share. I guarantee you won't regret it.

David Eklof, BSN, CMAS, CCFA
AAMAS Nomination Chair

From Your Social Media Chair



Please join us on LinkedIn—we have a lot to share!

We have had two successful Zoom discussion groups and our Virtual Conference is April 21-23, 2021.

Be sure to register on our [website!](#)



**If you haven't done so already,
please like us on Facebook.**

Respectfully,
Evonne Schiappacasse RN, BSN, MBA, CMAS, CCFA
AAMAS Social Media Chair

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Katie Stanford, *President*
Mary Jane LaBelle, *Past President*
Mary Stites, *Vice President*
Amy Armstrong, *Secretary/Treasurer*
Theresa Crothers, *Program Consultant*

Karen Cooper, *Certification Chair*
David Eklof, *Nomination Chair*
Pat Hodney-Gould, *Membership Chair*
Evonne Schiappacasse, *Social Media Chair*
Janet Wilhelms, *Executive Director*

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Janet Wilhelms

Executive Director
ext. 103

Courtney Harris

Customer Care &
Association Specialist
ext. 125

Liz Kutz

Chief Financial Officer 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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