

The NorEaster



FALL 2023



President's Message

I hope you all have enjoyed the end of our very rainy summer and have plans to enjoy our fall season. Fall is a very beautiful season here in Northern New England and I hope you find an opportunity to enjoy it. The first few months for our chapter year have been busy. We have started planning six happy hour events, hoping to hold two in each state. The purpose of these happy hour events is to encourage our members to network and discuss HFMA, our chapter and how you can further utilize your membership and get involved.

We recently held the Annual Reimbursement Conference at The Regency Hotel in Portland, ME. The conference was a two half-day conference which was well attended. We kicked off with a Tyler Enslin as our Keynote Speaker, and we then had a presentation on the IPPS Final Rule and OPPS Proposed Rule and a CFO Panel. We closed out the first day with a networking reception which also was our first of six happy hour events. Our second day started with National Chair-Elect Marc Scher providing a National HFMA Update. NGS also provided an update and we closed the conference with a Reimbursement Hot Topics presentation. This conference and education sessions would not be made possible without the support of our sponsors.

We have also started planning our Annual Conference which will be held in North Conway, NH on March 28-29, 2024. Be on the lookout for more information on this event soon.

There are a number of ways for you to maximize your membership and get involved in our Chapter, if you are interested visit our website <https://www.hfma.org/chapters/region-1/northern-new-england/> or email me directly zachary.colby@northcountryhealth.org and we can discuss how you can best volunteer in our Chapter. We are looking for future Board Members and members who would be potential Leadership candidates. Our Chapter likes to invest in our members. Members who are on the Board and/or Leadership positions may be provided with an opportunity to travel to national HFMA events such as the Annual Conference and LTC (Leadership Training Conference) to learn and network with other chapters from across the country. As a bonus, these conferences are held in fun cities! The 2024 Annual Conference will be held in Las Vegas. And this year's LTC will be held in Orlando.

As always please feel free to reach out if you have any questions, ideas, or concerns. I am here to support and serve you and would love to connect.

Zachary Colby

President, Northern New England Chapter, HFMA

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The Newsletter is published four times a year. Our objective is to provide members with information regarding chapter activities as well as ideas to help the individual in the performance of his/her duties.

Opinions expressed in articles or features are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Healthcare Financial Management Association, Northern New England Chapter or the editor.

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EHR system implementation: Managing the front of the house during go-live

By: Dan Vogt, Brittney Brinker

Read this if you are considering a system implementation for Electronic Health Records (EHR) or other systems.

EHR go-lives are often years in the making, from the initial process of vendor selection to system implementation and finally launching the system. Achieving go-live is a significant accomplishment and an essential milestone on the path to success for your healthcare system.

Most successful go-lives have a detailed wave master, project plan, and cutover plan covering everything from who will offer to be “at-the-elbow” support for launch, to parking lot procedures for vendors, to food plans to keep your team nourished. An important area that can sometimes be overlooked during go-live preparations is the front of the house, specifically the patient access area (e.g., registration).

Anyone who has visited a busy restaurant or watched competitive cooking shows such as Top Chef will understand the importance of a well-managed front of the house. No matter how amazing the food is, a long wait, poor customer service, or disorganization can ruin the entire dining experience. Similar to a kitchen, high-quality radiology, laboratory, or surgical departments can be thrown into chaos by inadequate patient access throughput at go-live.

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Connie Ouellette



Jeff Walla

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During various go-lives, we have seen 90-minute patient wait times in the patient access area, causing angry patients and downstream problems with clinical care and frustrated departments. This image is not what you want your patients and community to picture when thinking about your new multi-million-dollar EHR system. You spent months communicating that the new system was coming, letting patients know what to expect, and promoting the benefits. Don't let the first impression they have be one of frustration and problems.

Considerations for EHR system go-live success

To help you create an effective and smooth-running front of house during go-live, here are some items to consider:

Leader at the front

Much like a good front of house manager can make the difference between a successful vs. failing restaurant, assigning a strong leader to serve in a similar role during go-live can make a big difference. Asking someone from your leadership team to park themselves in the patient waiting area to monitor for bottlenecks, resolve problems, exude excellent customer service, answer questions, and perhaps even push around a coffee cart, can be helpful. During go-live, your patient access staff may be fully occupied with their tasks and may not have the capacity to notice any issues arising or the power to gather the necessary resources for resolving problems, so adding a leader solely dedicated to monitoring the front of house can be invaluable.

Training and practice

Operational efficiency is the name of the game at the registration desk. A new EHR has the potential to disrupt the workflows that the staff once had with the old system. The old system may not have been any good, but your registration team knew it inside and out. They knew the buttons and terms, and they knew how to fix and work around its issues. That all gets changed with the new EHR. Registration staff can benefit greatly from education, hands-on training, and access to resources such as standard operating procedures and quick references. Additionally, allowing for extra practice time can help ensure a successful go-live.

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Over staff

Even in the face of staffing challenges, consider overstaffing for the first week of go-live. Calling in a per diem or part-time patient access person to increase capacity will help compensate for any slowness while your staff put their EHR practice into play.

Super-user at the elbow

Having a strong super-user at the patient access teams' elbow can be immensely helpful. That person can float amongst the team, answer questions, assist them through the new workflows, and communicate build issues to the command center. The super user helps the team feel supported and confident and better able to provide the best patient customer service.

Pre-registration calls

With all the activities leading up to the go-live for the new system, it can be easy to lose sight of your daily operations. If pre-registration calls are a common practice for your organization, you are normally multiple days ahead of the date of the visit. If your implementation has caused you to fall behind, it will only compound the problem during go-live. Maintaining or even exceeding your typical operations before going live will help create a smooth transition.

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Laminated cards

During go-live, you may need to ask patients to answer questions, scan their insurance cards, and review documentation. Established and regular patients of your health system may wonder why you're asking for this information again. When patients or family members are not ready for the new registration process, this slows down the whole process. Having laminated cards explaining that a new EHR has gone live, the documents the patient should have ready, and the types of questions you will need to cover will help patients be more prepared and understand what to expect when they arrive at your patient access desk.

No maintenance window

This may sound silly but let your maintenance team know the go-live date and that no work should be done that limits the number of patient access desks available to staff. A smooth process is all about maximizing throughput. If planned maintenance reduces the number of teammates who can see patients, it will create an operational bottleneck on an already challenging week.

Customer appreciation set up

Inevitably there will be some patient or family frustration no matter how well you plan and execute your plan. Having a proactive customer appreciation set up in advance (such as a free coffee) and reactive customer recovery kits (such as gas cards, free lunch cards, etc.) on the ready will help your team manage through the new process and assist in creating a positive customer experience.

Much like the front of the house in a restaurant, the registration area is where patients gather, first impressions are made, and frustrations can build, all before they get to the purpose of why they visited you to begin with: receiving care. Focusing on readiness, providing leadership, communicating clearly, and optimizing the go-live process will help you increase the likelihood of success.

About the Authors:

Dan Vogt is a Principal in BerryDunn's Management Information Technology Practice and Brittney Brinker is a Manager in BerryDunn's Revenue Cycle Consulting Practice

Benefits of Volunteering, a Member Story

HFMA's primary mission is to educate its members and subsequently have a forum for excellent networking. I have told many people that you get out of HFMA what you put in. I have been an HFMA member for close to twenty years and have had periods of time where I was not active and others where I have been very active as a member.

The most rewarding time has been when actively participating with the chapter. As many of us can attest, I was voluntold to participate on a committee. It was that initial committee that I joined while a student member that has allowed me to have some of the greatest lifetime relationships.

It was through my role on the newsletter committee where I interviewed a new member that allowed me to build a relationship and subsequently change jobs and grew my career. It was through the support of that organization where I became a board member and subsequently an officer of my local chapter. It was being an officer where I was allowed to travel at the expense of the chapter or association where I began networking outside my chapter. It was my time as president where I meet other chapter leaders and formed relationships that lead me to my current organization and career path. It was through my current employer that supported me, and I took on regional responsibilities which further deepened my national relationships.

Not only has my time on the board or being an officer allowed me to see part of this country that I otherwise would not have seen, it has allowed me to grow professionally and accelerated my career. Volunteering does not have to specifically be an officer, you can also join a committee and help plan a educational or social event. Write an article or speak on a topic you're passionate about. Get back what you put in.

If you would like to learn more about how you can help HFMA help you, please contact me at rgilbert@bnnncpa.com. This terrific organization would not exist without volunteers who have a passion for Healthcare.

Rob Gilbert, FHFMA

Past President NH/VT

Past Regional Executive Region 1

Northern New England HFMA 2023 Healthcare Reimbursement Conference

September 12 – September 13, 2023 at The Regency Hotel in Portland, Maine



Thank you to all our presenters and sponsors!

HFMA Board & Committee Member Spotlight: Chris Mouradian

The NNE HFMA is pleased to announce we will begin a recurring feature in the newsletter, the Board and Committee Member Spotlight. Below is an interview with one of our board and executive committee members that participated in both the 2023 Leadership Training Conference (LTC) in San Antonio, TX and the Annual Conference in Nashville, TN.

1. Who are you and what do you do?

a. I have spent my entire career at BerryDunn, where I specialize in audit and advisory services. My professional journey has led me to work with numerous healthcare systems, hospitals, nursing homes, medical transportation, primary care locations and more. I also chair BerryDunn's Innovation Council, steering our mission towards embracing and rewarding innovation. Currently, we are diving headfirst into researching the impact Artificial Intelligence will have on the employees of our firm, the services we offer, and the clients we serve.

2. What was your first job and how did you end up with it?

a. My first job was at Dunkin Donuts – where I quickly learned that you can in fact eat too many munchkins in a day. During that time, I also worked at a local pizza place and served as a camp counselor during the summers.

3. How long have you been an HFMA member and how has your time as an HFMA member benefited you?

a. I've been a member for over 10 years, but I've been more active on the education committee and the board the past 3 years. Like most things, the more effort you put in the more you get out of it. The enriching content, insights, and deep connections formed with industry colleagues have been instrumental in my professional journey.

4. What led you to become an HFMA Board Member?

a. I was inspired by colleagues Jeff Walla, Connie Ouellette, David Kennedy, Mary Jalbert and others who shared their enriching experiences. From there, I was motivated to contribute and get more insights as an active HFMA Board Member.

5. What was your first HFMA event?

a. My inaugural HFMA event was a reimbursement training conference, over 10 years ago. The speaker was from Seattle, and he discussed the potential benefits of adopting a single-payor model, while noting the complexities and competing priorities of stakeholders in healthcare.

6. What was a key take away from the LTC or Annual Conference?

a. AT LTC, I came away with fresh ideas on social media and event strategies by hearing from chapters across the country. At the Annual Conference, the sessions on AI and Machine Learning in Revenue Cycle,

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Today 2:14 PM

Have you tried EMA?



Continued from page 7

were particularly interesting to me. I left believing that we're in for a transformational overhaul in the workplace, where human and digital employees will collaborate everyday.

7. What do you like to do when you are not working?

- a. Being by the lake or at the beach on a warm day, with friends and family. Oh, and definitely a cold beer and something on the grill!

8. Who do you admire most?

- a. Probably my father. Growing up, I would accompany him to work at the State Capital Building. We'd walk in, and he'd greet everyone by their first name, eliciting beaming smiles every time. From the security guard and janitor to the receptionists and attorneys, his personal touch was universal. His ability to remember names and forge genuine connections left a lasting impression on me. It instilled a desire to emulate his warmth and approachability, aiming to bring a smile to every person I meet.

Chapter Statistics: Membership Count as of September 29, 2023

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP BY TYPE

Enterprise Professional All Access	1,427
Professional All Access	164
Enterprise Business Partner All Access	116
Business Partner All Access	25
Student All Access	11
Chapter Life	8
Retired All Access	7
National Life	3
Faculty All Access	2
Total Membership as of September 29, 2023	1,763

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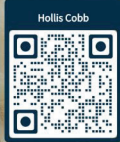
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Visit our webpage for more information about volunteering to be on one or more of our Committees.

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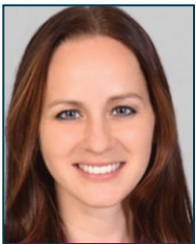
Meet the Leadership Team



Zachary Colby, CRCR, President

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The first two years of our Chapter has been exciting and I honored to serve our Chapter in this upcoming year as your President. I know this Chapter will continue to evolve and grow which is exciting. I am the Patient Financial Services Manager for North Country Healthcare which consists of Androscoggin Valley Hospital, Upper Ct. Valley Hospital, Weeks Medical Center, and North Country Home Health and Hospice. When not working for NCH or volunteering for HFMA I enjoy spending time with my wife, two teenage children and friends. I also enjoy gardening and cheering on the Bruins, Celtics, Patriots and Red Sox. I look forward to see everyone in the near future.



Chelsea Desrosiers, CPA, MBA, President-Elect

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I am honored to serve as President-Elect for our Chapter. As a CFO at a rural hospital in Northern I look forward to networking opportunities that are available to all our members. I envision continued success and growth for our chapter with many engaged volunteers working to expand our educational opportunities and collaboration with other HFMA Chapters, Organizations in addition to students. When I'm not at Cary Medical Center, you can find me with my two adorable (but very active!) children, Livia and Raymond. I enjoy traveling, renovating an old farm house with my husband and quality time in the outdoors.



Andrea Garami, CHFP, CRCR, Secretary

andrew.garami@mahhc.org

I'm thrilled to serve another year on the Northern New England HFMA board and as the chapter's secretary. With each passing year, the benefits of involvement become more evident. I am fortunate to be part of such a great group of knowledgeable and experienced healthcare finance professionals. I am the Senior Financial Analyst for Mt. Ascutney Hospital and Health Center based in Windsor, VT. I enjoy boxing, traveling, ceramics, and cooking.



Michelle Smith, Treasurer

Michelle.smith@mdihospital.org

It is my pleasure and honor to serve as Treasurer for the Northern New England Chapter of HFMA. An organization that provides A+ educational and networking opportunities throughout the Northern New England Region. I am the Vice President/Chief Financial Officer at Mount Desert Island Hospital located in Bar Harbor, Maine and surrounded by beautiful Acadia National Park. When I am not busy at my day job, I enjoy spending time with my family at camp, horseback riding and supporting my community in many volunteer roles.



Wade Gallon, FHFMA, CSMC, Immediate Past President

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I'm really looking forward to continuing to serve the NNE chapter this year! I've found that engaging in this community has better prepared me for my professional roles and has allowed me to make great connections in the healthcare finance space. Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family and getting outdoors whenever possible. Paddling, fishing and running are the current frontrunners out of a long list. I look forward to continuing to work with all the great volunteers in our chapter.

Board of Directors



Wendy Dumais, CRCR, Director

wdumais@crhc.org

I really enjoy being a part of the Northern New England Chapter of HFMA. The Chapter has provided me with excellent educational and networking opportunities. I am excited to continue to serve on the Board. I am the Administrative Director for Revenue Cycle for Concord Hospital Health System. Outside of work, I enjoy reading, traveling, spending time on the water and eating really good food.



Erin Cutter, COC, CPC, CHRI, Director

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Erin is the Director of Revenue Integrity at Concord Hospital Health System in Concord, New Hampshire. She has 13 years of progressive Revenue Cycle and Revenue Integrity experience. Erin oversees Charge Description Master (CDM), charge capture design, optimization, and reconciliation; denial prevention; reimbursement optimization; revenue cycle analytics; and third-party and internal audits. Erin has been a Volunteer of HFMA for the past eight years and served as Chapter President in 2021 - 2022.



Matthew Streeter, FHFMA, FACHE, Director

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My involvement with HFMA started the same year as my career in healthcare. So, for the better part of two decades now, HFMA has played a major role in my professional development and a way to give back to our industry through volunteerism. As Past-President of the Wisconsin Chapter of HFMA, I am excited to now serve on the board of directors for the NNE Chapter of HFMA. My role as CFO of North Country Healthcare also allows me to share the value and importance of HFMA to our 200+ Enterprise members. In my spare time, I enjoy cooking, traveling, and being around friends and family.



Thomas Jabro, CTP, CRCR, Director

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I am excited to continuing serving on the Northern New England chapter board and committees. We have done so much and will continue to achieve more! Professionally, I work for J.P. Morgan serving healthcare organizations and their payment, treasury, and integration needs. Outside of HFMA and my job at J.P. Morgan, I enjoy being in the mountains either skiing or hiking, swimming whenever and where ever I can, craft beer and traveling. I am proud to have visited every single US state and I am seeking to summit the highest peak in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont this summer. I am looking forward to the chapter's continued success!



Tige Monacelli, Director

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I am excited to continue serving this chapter and being a part of this top-notch organization. When I am not working at MaineHealth or on HFMA, I enjoy playing softball, as well as watching football and baseball.

Board of Directors, continued



Chris Mouradian, CPA, Director

cmouradian@berrydunn.com

I'm truly honored to serve as a board member for the Northern New England HFMA chapter. As we look ahead to this year, I'm not only excited to meet many of you in person, but also to bring engaging content and valuable services to our members. As a Senior Manager in the healthcare practice group at BerryDunn, a leading professional services firm based in New England, I'm fortunate to be in a position to apply my experience to the chapter.

Beyond my professional engagements at BerryDunn and HFMA, I love to unwind by the lake or the beach with friends and family. Alongside this, my father and I are avid followers of horse racing. This hobby has taken us to many racetracks across the nation. However, our 2015 trip to Belmont Park in New York stands out. It was there that we witnessed the crowning of the first Triple Crown winner in almost four decades. A memory we both treasure.



Andrew Murry, CPA, Director

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I am excited to be a part of the Northern New England HFMA! I work for Baker Newman Noyes as an audit manager. Outside of BNN and HMFA, I spend most of my time running road races and golfing. I love going on golf trips to see unique courses while losing a lot of golf balls. I look forward to meeting many of you in person this year!



Mark Bonica, PhD, MBA, Director

Mark.Bonica@unh.edu

I am an associate professor in the University of New Hampshire's Department of Health Management and Policy where I teach and oversee the undergraduate internship program. I am also the host of the Health Leader Forge Podcast (<http://healthleaderforge.org>) and I write a weekly newsletter for healthcare leaders (<https://markbonica.substack.com/>). When I am not preparing the next generation of healthcare leaders, you can usually find me paddling my kayak on the Oyster River or somewhere else around Great Bay.



Artem Maksutov, Director

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I am looking forward to another great year serving the Northern New England Chapter HFMA and all of its members. Healthcare Finance is an exciting, ever-evolving field; there is never a dull day. HFMA is a wonderful resources for everyone in healthcare finance, no matter where they are at in their career path, and I'm looking forward to seeing how it will evolve in the future. When not at work, I enjoy fishing, kayaking, bird watching and listening, playing video games, and woodworking. I am proud to be a member of NNE HFMA.



Nancy Pierce, MBA, Director

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I am excited to have this opportunity to collaborate with so many talented individuals who share a common vision and passion for making a difference. It has been beneficial having the support of my HFMA chapter especially being relatively new to healthcare finance in a leadership role. I enjoy being outside in the fair weather in my free time – hiking, gardening, and paddleboarding. I'm not a huge fan of outdoor winter activities, but reading is a passion, so the season is tolerable! I look forward to working with and getting to know everyone throughout the coming year.

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