



# Western Physicians' Alliance



## NEWSLETTER

March 2013

### WPA Rolls Out Health Care Community Portal

WPA has embarked on a project in partnership with AT&T to connect physicians into a Health Information Exchange (HIE). Work on this project has been on going for months, but on January 29, 2013, over 75 physicians, physician managers, and others came together to hear a presentation from WPA and AT&T about the a cloud- based, Healthcare Community Online (HCO) physician portal. The audience learned that WPA has already established a HIPPA secure portal along with a dedicated website for its members at no cost. The portal allows for a safe direct email with patient information between medical groups and also provides access to JAMA, Epocrates as well as other physician related tools. However, there is a great deal more that can be gained from the HCO portal.

Today physicians are being asked to be more accountable for their work. WPA through AT&T can provide the I.T. capability to measure this type of quality of care. WPA sees the portal to be an essential foundation of any Accountable Care Organization (ACO) structure in the future.

Dr. David Berry, President of WPA recently stated, "We feel strongly that any ACO should be physician driven and that participating at this level will allow for a bigger voice with patient care." WPA has committed to funding the start up costs for its members.

However, many local medical practices have already switched to an Electronic Medical Record (EMR). The challenge is that there are

many different EMR systems, which cannot talk to each other. AT&T has recognized the need for independent community physicians to have the ability to use cloud- based Internet technology to allow for better exchange of information. This technology will allow independent practices in our community to be on the same platform. It will be easier and less expensive, which will allow physicians to remain independent but gain access to a larger virtual medical community.

WPA members can now sign on to the WPA HCO portal or request a free demo of the various I.T. services available through by contacting, Christine Furjanic, AT&T Consultant at 872-202-9594 or email [christine.furjanic@att.com](mailto:christine.furjanic@att.com)

#### Urgent Care Co-pay & Nurse Line added to SMHP ID Cards

Saint Mary's Health Plans (SMHP) members will soon see additional information on their member ID cards. They have added urgent care co-pays to the front of the card to show the difference between urgent care and emergency care co-pay amounts.

Additionally, the Health Information/24-hour Nurse Line phone number has been added to the bottom of each ID card to help remind their members of this service and to encourage utilization when needed.

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## A collaborative model for achieving success

A strong partnership between Saint Mary's Health Plans and the Western Physicians' Alliance paves the way to better patient care, through programs like the **Quality Connect** (P4P) initiative, which measures primary care physician performance, or the **Spine Care Management Program**, which increases quality and reduces costs through best-practice management of spine-related medical issues.

We proudly support our WPA partners and look forward to a strong future, working together to improve the health and well-being of those we serve.

