AHDAM Association for Healthcare Denial and Appeal Management

2021 Annual Benefit Report

About Us

The Association for Healthcare Denial and Appeal Management (AHDAM) is a public benefit corporation focused on bringing education, resources, and recognition to those working in the field of healthcare denial and appeal management.

The increasing growth of healthcare insurer audits and claim denials has created an increasing need for providers of healthcare (hospitals, physician's offices, home health care agencies, and the like) to include staff skilled in denial and appeal management as part of their revenue cycle, health information management (HIM) or compliance departments. Yet, today, there exists no nationally recognized standards for education or certification for persons working directly in denial and appeal management. Such persons would include clinical and technical denial appeal writers, utilization management and case management staff, physician advisors, contract management staff, and managed care representatives among others.

The purposes for which the corporation was formed, as stated in the articles of incorporation are:

> (a) To create a general public benefit through a material and positive impact on society and the environment through activities that promote a combination of specific public benefits described in Section (b) below.
>
> (b) To promote education and knowledge sharing in the field of health care insurance denial and appeal management.
>
> (c) To promote the interests of persons who manage insurance claims and claim appeals as an incident to the

WHAT IS A BENEFIT CORPORATION?

Benefit corporations and Certified B Corporations are both leaders of a global movement to use business as a force for good. Both meet higher standards of accountability and transparency. Both create the opportunity to unlock our full human potential and creativity to use the power of business for the higher purpose of solving society's most challenging problems.

https://benefitcorp.net/businesses/benefit-corporations-and-certified-b-corps

purposes stated above.

(d) To provide services, resources, and knowledge regarding medical insurance appeals to patient communities.

General public benefit

AHDAM has an overall vision of creating general public benefit through creating an even playing field where patients and healthcare providers are successful in persuading medical insurers to make proper payment decisions. Creating success for providers begins with educating providers on the rules of engagement in working with medical insurance payers. The end goal is for providers to obtain appropriate payment for appropriate services with as little expenditure of costly resources to achieve that goal.

Healthcare providers are not the only parties affected by healthcare insurance denials. Insurance policy beneficiaries also may incur additional expense for healthcare that is denied payment by the insurance plan. The vast majority of beneficiaries do not know that in certain circumstances they have a legal right to appeal the decision of an insurance carrier to deny coverage of healthcare benefits. AHDAM has a vision to help patients appeal inappropriate insurance denials to avoid the unexpected additional liability that can occur from denied claims. AHDAM would like to provide help through pro bono filing of appeals on behalf of the patient. Thus, the word patient appears in AHDAM's vision statement regarding creating an even playing field with medical insurance payers.

Investing AHDAM profits into providing pro bono work on behalf of beneficiaries is a future goal of AHDAM that will require creation of the platform and processes needed to provide this important work. Members of the denial and appeal community with the right expertise will assist beneficiaries in filing their appeal or will file the appeal on the beneficiary's behalf. We believe success in creating this general public benefit will occur in time when the association has a well-established member base and support from interested parties in creating this benefit.

Specific public benefit

AHDAM set out to provide a specific public benefit. That benefit is articulated in our mission statement. AHDAM exists to support and promote professionals working in the field of healthcare insurance denial and appeal management through education and collaboration. AHDAM has been successful in attracting members and providing educational benefit to those members.

Educational offerings

AHDAM has created a specific public benefit through its educational offerings. Six complimentary 60-minute webinars were offered to both AHDAM and non-AHDAM members in 2021. As proposed in last year's benefit report, AHDAM began posting the questions and answers from webinar attendees on the AHDAM website under the webinar recording,. Handouts of the webinar slides are posted there as well.

Continuing education units (CEUs) were purchased by AHDAM for the AHDAM member attendees. CEUs offered included:

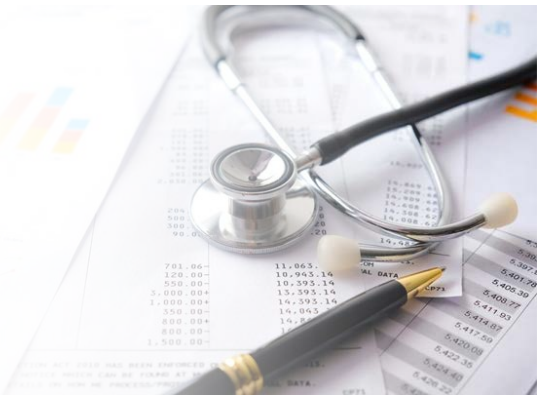
- Association of Clinical Documentation Improvement Specialists (ACDIS): Certified clinical documentation specialist (CCDS)
- National Association of Healthcare Revenue Integrity (NAHRI): Certification in Healthcare Revenue Integrity (CHRI)
- Commission for Case Manager Certification (CCMC): CCM board certified case managers
- American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA): Certified health information management professionals
- American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC): Registered nurses

In total, 563 individual CEU certificates were awarded to webinar attendees. The breakout of CEUs was:

- AHIMA 124
- ANCC 236
- ACDIS 97
- CCMC 88
- NAHRI 18

In total, the webinars hosted 2,099 attendees.

Requesting feedback from webinar participants is a requirement for issuing CEUs. The feedback from webinar attendees was overwhelmingly positive. "Excellent Webinar! Thanks for offering this education. I am in UR doing clinical denials, sometimes billing validation audits and some readmission denials based on DRGs. It was very helpful for me to understand the coding denial process, CDI denial process and strategies." "One of the best and informative webinars I've attended." "I just finished viewing the webinar about standards of care, etc., and truly enjoyed it. Thank you for providing such accessible information; these webinars have improved my appeal writing skills."



AHDAM collaborated with several local American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) chapters to present denial and appeal management educational webinars to the chapter members. South Carolina Health Information Association, Georgia Health Information Association, and Colorado Health Information Association all benefitted from educational webinars presented by AHDAM subject matter

experts. MedLearn Media also was the recipient of a webinar presented by AHDAM subject matter experts. The honorarium was donated to AHDAM.

Knowledge transfer

Twelve monthly members-only newsletters were produced with input from AHDAM advisory board members and other industry experts. A self-guided appeal writing workshop is available to members and is the fourth-most visited page on the website. Other resources provided to members include latest industry news, and a knowledge center with timely articles on current issues in denial and appeal management.

Member support

The first AHDAM member survey was completed in November 2021. The survey was emailed to all active AHDAM members. 91% of members reported being satisfied with their membership. The denial and appeal management webinars was the clear favorite benefit of members. Members felt the appeal writing workshop could use the most improvement. 84% of members are interested in a member's forum where members can post and respond to other posts. The desire for a member's forum was also reported in the 2021 benefit report. In response, the AHDAM Board of Directors has created a goal of creating a member's forum in 2022 in response to member requests.

Other goals for AHDAM, approved by the Board of Directors, include taking the first steps toward creating a certification program, broadening offerings to incorporate outpatient and group practice denial and appeal management and begin planning for a regional workshop in 2023.

Assessment of Societal and Environmental Performance

AHDAM was established as a benefit corporation in the state of Maryland. Maryland State Code, § 5-6C-08, regarding corporations and associations requires benefit corporations to annually complete an assessment of the societal and environmental performance of the benefit corporation. The assessment must be completed in accordance with a third-party standard. Annual benefit corporation assessments using a third-party standard is also a recommended best practice for benefit corporations. The assessment helps benefit corporations understand how they are meeting the intent of benefit corporations which is to provide a positive impact on societal or environmental needs. To meet this requirement, AHDAM recently completed the B Impact Assessment[1] created by B Lab, a global network that creates standards, policies, and tools for business and certifies B Corps[2]. The results of the assessment were shared with AHDAM's Board of Directors at the April 20, 2022, quarterly meeting.

[1] https://bimpactassessment.net/
[2] From their website, https://bcorporation.net/

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As required by Maryland code, this report was shared with AHDAM's stockholders on 4/20/2022.