

FRONT LINES

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TENNESSEE HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION TEAMS UP WITH LBMC

The Tennessee Hospital Association (THA) recently announced its recent partnership with LBMC Healthcare Group, LLC (LBMC). This partnership will assist THA in providing HIPAA compliance services to its member hospitals. LBMC was selected due to:

- Their highly experienced team of healthcare professionals.
- Their level of expertise in healthcare regulatory matters as they relate to hospital operations.
- Their healthcare technology expertise.

In addition, LBMC has established strong relationships with top Tennessee healthcare law firms to assist with the legal considerations associated with HIPAA.

The administrative simplification provisions of HIPAA will require hospitals to implement operational, technical and legal changes across the entire organization. THA will work with LBMC to provide this expertise.

The partnership between THA and LBMC consists of two distinct levels of service, Tier 1 and Tier 2.

Tier 1 Services

LBMC's Tier 1 services will act as a "virtual employee" to THA as they assist member hospitals. These services will be **free of charge** to all THA member hospitals and include:

- ◆ Dedicated HIPAA 800#

Hotline/Email Service for Questions and Answers

- ◆ HIPAA Frequently Asked Question Website
- ◆ Sample Business Associate and Other Agreements
- ◆ Guidance with Setting Up Compliance Committee/Privacy/Security Officers
- ◆ Privacy/Security Officer Job Descriptions
- ◆ HIPAA Compliance Checklist
- ◆ Actively Participate in THA HIPAA Education Seminars across Tennessee
- ◆ Basic HIPAA Self-Evaluation Compliance Tool
- ◆ Website Links to Pertinent HIPAA Information (from THA website)

Tier 1 services provide the "basics" to HIPAA compliance, and these services will be available to THA member hospitals free of charge.

Tier 2 Services

Should a THA member hospital desire a more comprehensive package of services, LBMC has the experience and expertise to provide the solution.

LBMC's Tier 2 HIPAA services encompass the entire HIPAA compliance process from initial strategy and education sessions to the implementation of HIPAA-compliant processes throughout the organization, and can be tailored to fit any

hospital's need. LBMC also offers an "a la carte" services listing to meet any healthcare organization's needs. These services are divided into the following categories:

1. Strategy/Planning and Education Sessions
2. Privacy, Security and Transaction Assessment (Gap Analysis)
3. Compliance Plan Implementation
4. Legal Services
5. Support Services

LBMC's services can be purchased individually, or combined strategically to meet the organization's unique situation.

As part of LBMC's overall consulting philosophy, the integration of the client into the process is paramount to the success of any project. For HIPAA, this concept is of even greater importance. HIPAA does not end with the compliance deadlines; it will be ongoing and require every healthcare organization to adhere to its standards in the future. LBMC's approach to HIPAA compliance takes this into account and provides the necessary assurance that the entire organization will continue to be HIPAA compliant beyond the implementation deadlines.

LBMC incorporates web-based tools into the process, making it easy and convenient for hospital staff to participate in the process.

IGI EMPLOYEE SCREENING

IGI Employee Screening has been endorsed by the THA Solutions Group as a preferred vendor with nationwide capabilities for providing professional pre-employment background investigations.

As quoted by John Walsh, **America's Most Wanted**, following the September 11 tragedy: "We have to do business in a different way, we must be street smart. Knowledge is power." By being more diligent in workplace procedures, thoroughly screening applicants and using criminal background checks, criminals will be more easily identified helping to provide a safer workplace.

Every successful background check begins with the collection of vital data on the employment application, including the applicant's full legal name, date of birth, social security number, alias names, times and places of prior employment, and educational history. The applications should ask applicants for past

criminal convictions. Employers should develop written policies and procedures per position to guide managers in determining which criminal activities and convictions are to be considered. The application should also include a signed release form authorizing the background check.

The National Social Security FACS Report is the foundation of the search. This report can be compared to the application to discover falsification and omission of information.

For the most complete and accurate criminal information, IGI recommends using physical courthouse searches of public records in the counties of residence, education and employment from the application and/or Social Security FACS Report for the past seven years. Once the results are received they must be evaluated. To confirm the

applicant's identity with criminal data received, the Social Security FACS report may provide these necessary identifiers.

If adverse action is taken based on information provided by the background screening company, the employer must send the applicant a copy of the report revealing the relevant information and a copy of the "Summary of Rights."



RURAL HEALTH CONSULTANTS

Rural Health Consultants, Inc. was formed in 1991 to assist rural health providers and the communities they serve in achieving and maintaining viable health systems and coping more effectively with a complex and changing environment.

RHC's approach to rural healthcare systems development is based on four important assumptions.

- *Health care is a local product.* The planning and decision-making process for the development and delivery of healthcare services is best retained at the local level. This assures that the healthcare delivery system can best meet the specific needs of the residents of the area being served.
- *Rural is not small urban.* The solutions to rural health problems are not found merely by downsizing and applying urban models. Urban solutions will not meet the specific needs of rural

areas due to differences in social, economic, and geographic factors.

- *For long-term viability, a coordinated, comprehensive healthcare delivery system is essential in rural settings.* A community health system can only survive if it assures access to comprehensive services in the most efficient, client-focused manner possible. This is best accomplished through the development of integrated healthcare delivery networks.
- *Since change is inevitable, the real issue is change management.* Rather than be overwhelmed by change, communities must develop leadership to manage the change process. How change is managed will have a profound impact on the long-term viability of rural healthcare.

Based on these principles, RHC believes development of integrated healthcare delivery systems is critical to the continued viability of healthcare rural areas. Its spectrum of services includes:

- Environmental Assessment
- Identification of Structural Issues and Evaluation of Alternatives
- Development of Alternative Provider Models (e.g., Rural Health Clinics, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Critical Access Hospitals)
- Infrastructure Development for Rural Networks
- Financial Feasibility Studies
- Strategic Planning
- Rural Managed Care Development

RHC works with each client to assess their needs and develop an individual work plan that meets these needs and the client's expectations.

RESOURCE CORPORATION OF AMERICA

Hospital executives in today's economic environment simply cannot afford to let valuable dollars "slip out" of the door – yet increasing numbers of uninsured patients receive services from Tennessee hospitals for which they don't get any payment.

THA Solutions Group has endorsed Resource Corporation of America (RCA) as its exclusive partner for third party eligibility services because of its track history of performance. RCA's record of conversion/collection of **self-pay dollars** is among the highest in the industry, consistently producing results that outperform competitors by normally 8 to 10 percent. *[RCA is also endorsed by the Texas, Georgia and Washington Hospital Associations.]*

Many of their current hospital clients thought they were doing a "pretty good job" in this area. There

are really three crucial questions hospitals should ask:

- **Are you maximizing the dollars which can be collected on self-pay patients?**
- **How do you really know?**
- **Can you afford not to know?**

After considering these questions, a 501(c)3 health system with six facilities in RCA's home market of Houston, TX, agreed to have RCA review only denied claims behind the two primary vendors that were splitting the alphabet of all self-pay claims in the system.

Normally, with two agencies competing in this scenario, performance already should be maximized. However, after only a 90-day period, RCA qualified \$647,000 in the flagship facility alone and over \$1.1 million system wide. This is money that would have otherwise gone unnoticed and UNCOLLECTED!

RCA has structured several programs

that will allow THA member hospitals, whether a large urban trauma center or a sole community provider, to get answers to the above questions and maximize self-pay dollars WITHOUT RISK or out-of-pocket costs.

Contact Michael Jones, Director of Corporate Development, today at (404) 822-4977 or michaelsjones@resource-corp.com to determine if RCA can help you find self-pay dollars.

"RCA has structured several programs that allow THA member hospitals [to be certain they are maximizing self-pay collections]...with NO RISK and NO out-of-pocket costs."

SOUTHERN MEDICAL DISPOSAL

Southern Medical Disposal (SMD) is a privately owned medical waste collection and treatment company. Presently, SMD operates two medical waste treatment facilities located in Nashville and Austin, TX. These facilities process infectious medical waste through a state-of-the-art autoclave/steam sterilization process.

The medical waste collection process includes:

Waste Collection

Collection services are designed to meet the customer's specific needs and requirements. Total collection flexibility; scheduled, reliable pick-ups; and government-specified packaging are several advantages offered by SMD. Additional services such as

consultation, waste stream analysis, and in-service training are available.

Sterilization Treatment

Steam-injected autoclaves operate at 287 degrees under 40 PSI. The automated process controllers ensure consistent compliance for the sterilization process. Having the capacity to process 50 tons per day, SMD facilities are capable of treating medical waste both now and into the future.

Incinerator Treatment

SMD's incinerator is permitted to burn pathological waste and chemotherapeutic waste at 192 pounds per hour. The incinerator is equipped with primary and secondary burners to be used to preheat

the unit until the outlet of the secondary chamber reaches 1800 degrees F. The temperature is maintained throughout burn down.

The proper collection and treatment of medical waste is not just a sideline, it is their only business. Given the opportunity, Southern Medical Disposal will provide dependable waste disposal at a competitive price.

For more information, contact Jerry Kerr, Southern Medical Disposal, 615/255-6001 or 800/485-8981.