

# FRONT LINES

## Your First Call Your Best Resource

### THA Solutions Group Staff

James L. Goodloe, FACHE  
Senior Vice President

James E. Byrd  
Vice President

Wes Reade  
Director of Market  
Development

Vickie Lynn Bilbrey  
Vendor Resources  
Coordinator

Donna McArthur  
Executive Assistant

Phone: 800-258-9541  
615-256-8240  
Fax: 615-248-4836  
615-242-4803

We're on the Web!  
[www.tha.com/thasg.html](http://www.tha.com/thasg.html)

## "FOUNDATION ONE" – NEW LOW COST, LIMITED BENEFIT GROUP

The cost, accessibility and sufficiency of health insurance continue to top the headlines. In poll after poll, health insurance is a major concern to most Americans. Yet a substantial number of working Americans go without insurance because: 1) they don't qualify; 2.) they find it too costly and elect not to obtain it; or 3) they simply have no access to it at all.

To offer solutions to these problems, THA Solutions Group (THASG) and Tennessee Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (TNAHSA) looked for a product that would address these concerns. Retaining employees for an effective length of time is sometimes difficult in the healthcare industry. However, by offer-

ing a health plan to employees that do not normally qualify, employers have an effective retention and recruiting tool.

THA Solutions Group identified and now recommends "Foundation One" - a limited benefit group health plan costing about a third of what a major medical plan normally would cost. The limited benefits include flat payments without deductibles, co-payments or co-insurance percentages for office visits, hospitalization, surgery, prescription drugs, accidental injuries, wellness visits and more. Substantial vision, hearing and counseling discounts services automatically are included. Optional dental and life benefits also are available.

Plan rates are pre-published, no census is required, no health questions are asked, and installation is easy and swift.

By working through THASG and TNAHSA, the normal enrollment requirement of 25 covered lives per employer is somewhat relaxed. Fiserv Health, a THA corporate underwriter, has been asked to market and install the **Foundation One** program. To find out more about **Foundation One**, please contact Steve Grimsley, the FiServ health account executive, at:

FiServ Health – Tennessee  
362 S. Washington Street  
Maryville, TN 37804  
865-273-1041  
[sgrimsley@fiservhealth.com](mailto:sgrimsley@fiservhealth.com)

## PMMC BRINGS GOODS NEWS

Managed care and other contracted care arrangements present a dilemma for hospital billing and collections functions. Often, tradeoffs are made between timely and correct billing, promptness and correctness of payments, and minimizing accounts receivable.

How is your hospital managing? Do your processes assure high collection rates? Do you have contract management software? Do you correct billing errors? Does collections understand managed care contracting? Are you learning from your experiences? Are accounts receivable at an acceptable

level?

PMMC provides a measure of how a hospital is doing through recovery services. The service focuses on identifying potential collections the hospital may have overlooked on accounts the hospital has determined have a zero balance due.

The outcome verifies existing processes, and provides additional collections and suggestions for process improvement. PMMC has four requirements to provide this largely unintrusive service: 1) copies of the hospital's managed care contracts; 2) data related to billings and payments; 3) HIPAA compli-

ant dial-up access to the hospital's patient accounting system; and 4) a point of contact for minimal local support.

As of January 2004, PMMC's average collection has been \$172,666 among 27 clients that have matured to the point of completion and/or moneys being received. Collections range from zero to \$775,000. Only three hospitals produced no recovery or a negligible recovery.

For more information, call Roger Shaul, PMMC president, 704-543-8104, [RogerS@PMMCOnline.com](mailto:RogerS@PMMCOnline.com).

## MANAGING CHANGE

It has been said that nothing is constant but change. While this is true in all organizations, it is especially the case in health care. Change seems to come from all sides at once. There are new regulations, new technology, changing needs in the staff and staff development. Combined with the change itself is the increasing rate of change. With new technology, change can be more quickly implemented.

Now enter the human factor. While the technology is new, people are still people. All individuals have resistance to change and varying degrees of ability to deal with change. Therefore, as organizational leadership makes the decisions to change or react to industry changes, they cannot overlook the people that make up their organization. The vast majority of these persons could benefit from a program that helps them deal with changes in the work environment.

For this reason, Russell, Montgomery & Associates has joined with the industry leader in change management to expand its executive coaching services to include special programs in change management. The programs, "Business as Un-Usual," are group programs offered in formats for both exempt and non-exempt employees.

Such programs assist employees in assimilating the change, building or rebuilding a team environment, and enhancing job satisfaction. The organization benefits from these programs in two primary ways. First, there is improved employee morale, which translates into improved productivity during and after the change process. Second, the improved job satisfaction means less turnover. Most experts estimate the cost of turnover at 30 percent of salary. The benefit to both employee and organization is clear.

For more information about these programs, contact Dennis Russell at the Russell, Montgomery office in Nashville, 615-377-9603.



## MAXIMIZING RESOURCES THROUGH MASTER FACILITY PLANNING

By Steve Wiser of META Healthcare

Whenever a healthcare facility considers the possibility of a major expansion or renovation, the first questions to be asked are:

- Will this project benefit the long-term viability of the organization?
- Is it based on a sound business strategy?
- Will it alter the overall functional operations of the institution?
- Will this proposed project be designed in a manner that does not inhibit future growth?

Without proper planning at the outset, chances are that a significant construction project might solve several short-term goals. Many healthcare institutions implement and update master facility plans to avoid expensive problems before they happen. Without periodic updating and revisions, a facility will lose its edge in the community.

Making sound decisions in this critical process is vital. A facility can approve any department expansion with a high degree of certainty it will benefit the organization. But, the expansion could also be an impending detriment if it is not planned correctly. Is it "right sized" and positioned correctly in regard to the overall function and campus inter-relationships? Without a master facility plan these questions are almost impossible to answer.

While providing the direction for a facility's improvement, the master facility plan should be produced via a data-based process. A true master facility plan relies on an in-depth evaluation of a variety of information such as the organization's business strategy, demographics, community trends, utilization volume / demand analysis, and existing condition and equipment assessment. Before any architectural solution is put on paper, the 'needs-based' solution must

first be established.

Many unsuccessful master facility plan efforts have ended in frustration when the final results offer impractical, unaffordable expansion proposals. This has led to some master facility plans not being implemented. Only by starting with 'number-crunching' can the facility plan actually become an effective tool in guiding the decision-making process.

If you would like information about META Associates, please contact Dan Olphie at 615-690-6382 or email at [dolphie@meta-usa.com](mailto:dolphie@meta-usa.com).

## DOC HOLIDAY: A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO PAPERLESS FACILITY MANAGEMENT

What if you could access all of your architectural drawings with the click of a mouse? Update and modify your own customized forms? Enable managers to access your environment of care (EOC) program? Retrieve medical records with a keystroke?

### Architectural Plans and Operating Manuals

The Doc Holiday system can efficiently organize plans, drawings and manuals into an interactive electronic document that provides universal access to authorized personnel. Large, cumbersome binders become searchable online databases that allow staff to quickly locate and use vital information.

### Forms

Doc Holiday edits and customizes the myriad medical forms found in every hospital to ensure they reflect

the facility's needs. The forms are interactive so information can be entered online and uploaded to other hospital databases. Once Doc Holiday designs the custom forms, they belong to the hospital; thus, eliminating the recurring cost associated with third-party vendors.

### Environment of Care

Doc Holiday also organizes all the policies, procedures and other EOC documents into an interactive electronic manual. These documents can be password-protected (which limits editorial privileges), yet still allow all users to have instant access. Besides providing organization to EOC documentation, this system allows multiple users simultaneous access to the information—providing new opportunities for onsite and remote collaboration.

### Medical Records

Medical records archiving is a drain on personnel productivity and storage space. Doc Holiday converts medical records into an electronic database. These records can be sorted and retrieved by using any relevant criterion.

### Mission

Doc Holiday's mission is to provide hospitals with economical, user-friendly and dynamic tools to manage information within their facilities. The Doc Holiday approach to paperless facility management reduces costs and is the perfect complement to any hospital's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement.

---

## FOUNDATIONS--ARE THEY WORTH THE EFFORT?

With the multitude of challenges confronting healthcare executives, why complicate their lives by adding a development program to the list? Can they really justify the additional time and energy required to create a foundation? Would the community be willing to contribute to an already profitable operation? Perhaps the answers can be found in the experience of a nonprofit, community hospital in Lincolnton, NC.

Lincoln Medical Center was struggling with a declining public image, a divided medical staff, significant employee morale problems, aging physical facilities and a large amount of uncertainty as to the future of the institution. The new CEO began the turnaround process by establishing a clear corporate plan and steering the organization toward new goals.

One of the turnaround tools was the newly formed support foundation that had been created to raise friends and funds for the medical

center. The foundation board was composed of visible, enthusiastic individuals representing business, churches, schools, minorities, government, news media and even a medical center employee. Taking advantage of the monthly foundation meetings, the CEO kept the members fully informed of current activities such as physician recruitment, expansion planning, marketing efforts and collaborative programs with other health agencies. This allowed the board members to become advocates for the medical center, and their support helped create a more positive image in the community.

At the same time, the foundation was challenged to participate in these changes by selecting one of the new initiatives and raising funds for it. By implementing an annual giving program, the board was able to solicit the support of employees, medical staff members, volunteers, former patients, community residents and local businesses to help expand the nursery fa-

cilities. The initial campaign resulted in over \$100,000 in contributions designated for the expanded nursery service. Just as important, it helped restore a sense of pride in the medical center among the families and the community it served.

Watters and Associates helped with the planning, organizing and operation of the Lincoln Medical Center Foundation. The company specializes in healthcare development programs and is available to evaluate hospitals' programs. For more information, Watters and Associates at 843-235-2727.