

BEST

## Practice

A PUBLICATION FOR PHYSICIANS' OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF

## OMA Gathers For Annual Celebration

Diversity was the overarching theme of the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Office Managers Association celebration. With more than 200 members in attendances, guests networked with peers and RWJBarnabas Health executives, enjoyed good food and were entertained by actor, writer and comedian Andrew Kennedy.

The evening kicked off with opening remarks from Amy Mansue, President, Southern Region. Ms. Mansue shared some exciting developments with the organization, including the recently announced partnership with Rutgers University. During her presentation, Ms. Mansue also highlighted the importance of patient satisfaction as "consumerism" has made inroads over the past decade with patients having a myriad of choices in their healthcare options.

The evening continued with Trina Parks, Senior Vice President, Corporate Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer for RWJBarnabas Health. Ms. Parks provided the audience with insight on how the RWJBarnabas Health's culture



*Clockwise left to right: Comedian Andrew Kennedy entertains the crowd. Trina Parks, SVP, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, RWJBarnabas Health highlights how the company has embraced diversity. OMA members gather for the annual celebration.*

embraces diversity and inclusion not only in the way that it cares for its patients and the communities it serves, but how inclusivity shapes the organization's overall approach with its employees.

Ms. Parks' comments perfectly set the stage for the special performance of bilingual entertainer Andrew Kennedy. Kennedy, who grew

up in South America, the Caribbean and Asia with a Colombian mother and British father, utilized comedy to promote cultural diversity. "You look at someone and think you know everything about them. You don't," added Kennedy.

While the entertainment each year at the

OMA celebration is well received, it is secondary to the camaraderie that gets built between peers each year at this annual event.

Having attended every OMA celebration since its inception 11 years ago, Diana Rosso, an office manager for Cardiology

Associates of Ocean County, finds that these types of

gatherings are beneficial on so many levels. "The ability to confer with others who hold the same position, share best practices, network and learn about new resources available via hospital vendors in a social and entertaining setting has been invaluable," added Rosso.

Alyssa Ruby-Mako, Regional Director, Physician Relations, reflected to

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# Ask the Practice Management Expert

“Ask The Experts” is a question-and-answer forum featuring leading practice management experts.

**Q: How do you define company/practice culture? Why is this important to physicians and their practices?**

**A:** I believe that company culture is not always directly implied. To me, company culture is an undefined set of acceptable behaviors and attitudes within an organization. Having a healthy, accepted culture is important to our providers because it creates a harmonious environment for patients and allows the physicians to focus primarily on patient care.

**Q: Is it important for the office culture to nurture learning, as well as, reward good performance?**

**A:** I have always believed that every staff member has value and is capable of contributing positively to the workplace. It is our culture at Cardiology Consultants of Toms River (CCTR) and Toms River Cardiology Associates (TRCA) to not only encourage learning, but to seek it and make it part of our workflow.

**Q: Disengaged workers are less efficient, miss more workdays and cost their employers thousands of dollars in lost productivity when compared to employees who are motivated. Keeping employee morale high is one of the best things you can do to instill loyalty and maintain a productive workplace. What recommendations do you have to motivate employees?**

**A:** I believe that the best way to motivate employees is through positive affirmation, support and building their self-confidence. I am fortunate to work with amazing, intelligent, driven people and I make sure I let them know how much I appreciate them and their hard work. I strive to consistently let our employees know how truly valuable they are to our team. It can be as simple as showing gratitude through thanking employees at the conclusion of each day for a job well done. I like to hear those words so why wouldn't others?

**Q: Communication is key to making every member of an office/organization feel valued. What are some best practices that are being utilized that foster greater communication between physicians and employees?**

**A:** When we encounter a problem, I gather the people involved and we immediately devise a solution. All suggestions are considered and then together we come up with a solution to execute immediately. Our collective solution might require some tweaking or modification later, but the key is that we all come together as a team to resolve the problem. Oftentimes, employees are spoken to when they have caused a problem, but we forget that they are the best people to fix things, too. At the beginning of a what we know might be a busy day, we have an employee “huddle” to review the day's agenda, let everyone know where each of the physicians are that day, if there any patients coming in that might need additional attention, etc. At the conclusion of each day, we send a text to the physicians reminding them who is on-call, the schedule for the next day and any other pertinent information they may need to know.

**Q: What role do patients play in the office culture?**

**A:** An office culture takes time to develop and it takes every person in the office to buy into it – from the physician to the file clerk to even the patients. Our patients know how dedicated our staff and physicians are in their overall care. We have had staff members and physicians go above and beyond for patients. Many of these initiatives weren't required or asked of them...it's just the culture we have created. We all want to do the best we can, and that has become the expectation.

## Our Expert

**Laura Cino,**  
**Director, Cardiology**  
**Consultants of Toms River**  
**& Toms River Cardiology**  
**Associates, affiliates of**  
**Barnabas Health Medical Group**



A 20-year veteran of Cardiology Consultants of Toms River, Laura Cino expanded her responsibilities approximately 18 months ago with an additional role at Toms River Cardiology Associates. In her position as Director, Laura oversees all financial matters for both offices including payroll, insurance claims, human resources, physician call schedule and IT. In addition, Laura serves as the liaison to RWJBarnabas Health and handles any escalated patient concerns. Laura earned her Bachelor's of Science degree from Georgian Court University in Lakewood.



"Lose some weight, quit smoking, move around more and eat the carrot."

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## OMA Gathers For Annual Celebration

the crowd in her closing remarks, "Before you leave, take a minute and look around. We, as an association, are an extremely diverse group of professionals. We all bring diverse perspectives, work experiences, lifestyles and cultures, and it gives me great pride to be a part of this remarkable association. As you leave here tonight, I hope you leave with a heightened awareness that diversity may be the one true thing we all have in common, so let's try to celebrate that each and every day."

The evening culminated with a myriad of raffle prizes. Information about the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Office Managers Association Celebration will be included in the Spring 2018 OMA *Best Practice* Newsletter.

## Attracting & Retaining Office Staff

### There's No "I" In Team

Employees are often said to be a company's greatest asset. This notion especially holds true in small businesses, such as physician's offices. While the physician's reputation is what initially attracts a patient, interactions with the entire staff and the overall experience is what will keep a patient coming back or lead them to find a different practitioner.

From the initial response on the phone to the greeting upon entering the office to the billing cycle and all the steps in between, it is important to attract the right employees to your practice. By taking the time during the hiring process to find the "right" candidate, rather than the "right now" one, will save an immeasurable amount of time and money long-term. Managers need to clearly identify the skillset desired for each position, screen applicants carefully to ensure that the candidates possess the necessary qualifications required and that their personalities complement that of the office culture. This process can take time but is essential for long-term success.

Now that you have identified the right employees, how do you keep them? Employees want to know that they are more than just cogs in a wheel but rather they are an integral component to the overall functioning and ultimate success of the organization. The knowledge that their contributions are not only essential but also valued goes a long way to their overall commitment to the practice and their passion to provide superior service to the office. An environment of respect allows employees to not only find pleasure in their work but also challenges them to be more creative and innovative in a safe environment, which could ultimately be to everyone's benefit. To help retain your most talented staff, here are some tips from Dale Carnegie that is worth reviewing with your management team:

- Offer Educational Opportunities – Engaged employees love to learn more about their job, making continuing education a real perk. Offering educational opportunities does not necessarily mean spending thousands of dollars on courses at a local college, but can include online education, on-site training, guest speakers and/or

seminars. Also, high performing employees often leave jobs because they don't see prospects for further career development and advancement.

- Learn How to Motivate Each Employee – No two employees are alike so motivation techniques will need to vary. Almost all employees wish to feel valued and essential to the organization. Small gestures such as praising a worker for job well done, minor tokens such as gift cards for extra effort, praising a worker for job well done and even buying lunch for the team goes a long way in showing appreciation.
- Notice What Your Employees Like to Do – Most employees want to stay in jobs that stimulate their interests. Find out what interests your employees and see how you can match this with their essential job responsibilities.
- Listen To Your Most Talented Team Members – A popular show on television is Undercover Boss, which allows senior management to experience day-to-day activities in the workplace through the eyes that perform the tasks. While this is not always possible in physicians' offices, similar findings can occur through regular conversations with your staff. These individuals know their jobs best so make sure to include their input when making decisions. By fostering a culture that encourages an open dialogue and feedback, regardless of employee's position, your office and patients will ultimately benefit. (Dale Carnegie Training Tips)

Unlike other industries, medical practices face unique challenges when employees leave. In addition to the usual issues of attracting and training qualified candidates, patients are most comfortable with a trusted face and those who are familiar with their medical histories. By creating an environment where staff can continue to grow professionally, feel valued on a daily basis and have the respect to contribute to the overall culture of the office, employees will feel empowered and committed to their employers.

## Physician Management Team

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## CPT Coding Program

**Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 9 – 11 a.m.**

Jack Baker's Lobster Shanty, Channel Drive, Point Pleasant, NJ 08742

**Thursday, February 8, 2018, 9 – 11 a.m.**

Cedar Hill Golf Club, 100 Walnut Street, Livingston, NJ 07039

RWJBarnabas Health Office Managers will be offering a 2018 CPT® Coding Program to get you prepared for the 2018 CPT® code changes.

Jean Buble, Corporate Vice President of Case Management and HIM at RWJBarnabas Health will provide personalized, in-depth instruction with hands-on application of the 2018 CPT® Code and Guideline changes.

### Objectives:

- Comprehensive overview of CPT code changes that include added, revised and deleted codes.
- Detailed explanation of the rationale for any additions, revisions, deletions made to the 2018 CPT® code set.
- Information on changes to the code set and guidelines to prevent potential disruption to claims processing.

2.0 CEU Credits Available

**Kindly RSVP by January 31, 2018, by calling 1.888.724.7123,  
emailing [Teamlink@rwjbh.org](mailto:Teamlink@rwjbh.org) or registering online at  
[www.barnabashealthofficemanagers.org](http://www.barnabashealthofficemanagers.org).**