

Online Resource for OM *continued from page 4*

access, languages spoken, public transportation, etc. Web updates are available online, as office managers can check information listed for their practices through the Physician Find and make any necessary changes.

Those physicians not participating in the Physician Referral program are noted as such online and their practice and specialty information listed is provided by their affiliated hospital's Medical Staff office. To learn more about the Physician Locator Update, call Nancy Cornelius at 732.557.3941 or e-mail her at [ncornelius@sbhcs.com](mailto:ncornelius@sbhcs.com).

To learn more or provide feedback on the Web site, visit [www.sbofficemanagers.com](http://www.sbofficemanagers.com) and click on the "Contact Us " link.

Upcoming Events: *CPT Coding Updates*

Wednesday, January 21, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.  
Jumping Brook Country Club, Neptune

Wednesday, February 4, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
Forest Hill Field Club, Bloomfield

Call 888.724.7123, prompt #1, to register or learn more about these programs.

Members, let us know what you would like to see in upcoming issues of *Best Practice* by calling 1.888.724.7123, and pressing 1.



To join the Saint Barnabas Health Care System Office Managers Association complete this card and return it to:

Saint Barnabas Health Care System, 368 Lakehurst Road, Suite 304A, Toms River, NJ 08755.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Practice: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital(s) of Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

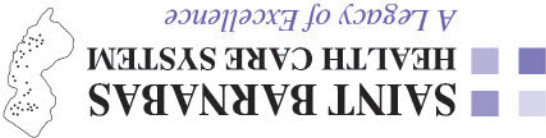
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics of Interest for educational seminars and lectures:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- Directors of Physician Services  
The Saint Barnabas Health Care System provides physicians and their office staff with a direct link to our hospitals through the directors of Physician Services.
- Shari Beltrame Saint Barnabas Behavioral Health 732.914.3805
  - Judy Webster Saint Barnabas Ambulatory Care Center 973.322.7345
  - Audrey Petersen Community Medical Center 732.557.3940
  - Fran Monteleone Clara Maass Medical Center 973.450.2997
  - Cheryl Wittek Monmouth Medical Center 732.923.7523
  - Alyssa Ruby-Mako Kimball Medical Center 732.557.7168
  - Lydia Spangler Saint Barnabas Medical Center 973.322.2827
  - Patricia Gillen Newark Beth Israel Medical Center 973.926.5534



A Publication for Saint Barnabas Health Care System Physicians' Office Administrators and Staff



Piecing Together 'Puzzling' Human Resource Issues

Crucial staffing issues such as hiring the right people, conducting effective performance evaluations and disciplining and motivating office employees were the focus of a recent Saint Barnabas Health Care System Office Managers Association program.

Beatrice Anzur, vice president of human resource development for the Saint Barnabas Health Care System, who offered the program as a part of the Office Manager Series at three locations in September, stressed that office managers should follow the "80/20 Rule" when interviewing job applicants.

"Employment experts agree that interviewers shouldn't speak more than 20 percent of the time," she said, adding that managers should keep in mind that interview behavior is likely the best they will see from the candidate. "You can ensure that the candidate does most of the talking by asking open-ended, probing questions." Anzur noted that these questions typically start with words such as, "Explain . . .," "Describe . . .," "How would you . . .," and "Tell me about . . ."

Performance management, including evaluating and disciplining staff, should follow the "SMART" model, according to Anzur who notes that "effective performance goal setting is all about having goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound."

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Saint Barnabas Fetes Office Managers Association at First-Anniversary Celebration



Holding a copy of the book, "Chicken Soup for the Soul's Life Lessons for Women: 7 Essential Ingredients for a Balanced Life," the self-help book written by keynote speaker Stephanie Marston that was a gift to all attendees, is Mary Yankowski, office manager for Clara Maass Medical Center physicians Robert S. Spira, M.D., and Joseph DePasquale, M.D., of Essex Gastroenterologist Associates. She is pictured here at one of the vendor tables with Community Medical Center staff members Lesley Stewart, Physical Therapy, and Mary Tesoriero, the administrative director of Radiology.

opportunity to gather with system colleagues to discuss topics of mutual concern. He noted that the association has devoted itself to numerous medical practice management initiatives both internal to the system and external to the ever-changing health care environment.

Following the welcome, Mike Slusarz, vice president, corporate marketing and public relations for the system, presented the first-year accomplishments of the 785-member strong Office Managers Association — highlights that include a quarterly newsletter featuring articles on office practice management and quarterly programs provided for members with topics selected in response to surveys completed by office managers.



Community Medical Center office managers gathering with Community Medical Center physician liaison Audrey Petersen, are, from left, Donna Pino, with Water Street Physicians, Carol Dinetz, with James McCaughan, M.D., Diane Castner, with Richard Dias, M.D., and Barbara Fogarty, with Tun Chu, M.D.

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## Enhance Your Professional Expertise: Become a Certified Coder

Obtaining certification as a professional medical coder can bring physician practice managers to the next career level.

The American Academy of Professional Coders (AAPC) and the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) provide certified credentials to medical coders in physician offices, enhancing the professional expertise of office practice managers by ensuring professional standards of excellence.

A certified professional coder is an individual of high professional integrity who has passed a coding certification

exam sponsored by organizations such as the AAPC or the AHIMA. Founded to improve the quality of medical records, these certification agencies focus on ensuring that certified coders have achieved a measurable level of knowledge and expertise in reviewing and adjudicating coding of services, procedures and diagnoses on medical claims.

Professional resources such as audio conferences, workshops, national conferences and e-newsletters providing the latest news from the coding industry is available on line at [www.aapc.com](http://www.aapc.com) and [www.ahima.org](http://www.ahima.org).

## 'Puzzling' Issues *continued from page 1*

She said that the key to effective documentation components in performance analysis include describing the date and specific example of any performance incident, as well as any impact the incident had on the office. Action plans that were taken should be described, and any follow-up should be indicated. Keeping scrupulous employee records is key, she said.

When conducting performance evaluations, managers should focus on the employee's behavior, not the employee and make comments carefully and objectively.

"Evaluation pitfalls relate to inconsistency," Anzur said. "A lack of formal and/or updated performance appraisals, failure to conduct formal performance reviews at least once a year and inconsistent evaluations that don't match day-to-day behavior have legal ramifications, as they provide discharged employees with an incentive to sue."

Turning her attention to the key points of disciplining office staff, Anzur said the primary concern of any disciplinary policy should always be to produce a better employee.

"Managers should focus on correcting improper employee actions and keep in mind that positive, progressive discipline is best," she says, adding that determining just cause must always be determined. (See related box on "The Seven Tests of Just Cause.")

In conclusion, Anzur touched upon Labor Laws such as The Fair Labor Standards, Family and Medial Leave and Americans with Disabilities acts as they relate to employee relations. Policies on harassment and discrimination, health and safety, confidentiality and wrongful discharge are all key to effective employee relations, she said.

"The bottom line in managing people is the 'three R's' — Reward, Redirect and Reinforce," she said. "And managers should always keep in mind that for staff, it takes three positive to one negative in order to provide perceived balanced feedback."

To learn more about this program, including tips on motivating employees, visit [www.sbofficemanagers.com](http://www.sbofficemanagers.com).

## Fun, Eco-smart Tips for Throwing a Greener Office Birthday Party

The New Year has always been a time to reflect on the changes we want to make and resolve to follow through on those changes. If you have resolved to make 2009 a greener year, here are simple ways to make the year's birthday celebrations in your office more environmentally friendly.

### Bake A Cake

If you or a co-worker can make the cake at home instead of buying a ready-made from the supermarket, you'll have control over the ingredients, so you can opt for organic, fair trade, sustainable products. Plus, if you're secretly (or openly) a wizard in the kitchen, it's a great chance to show off your skills and impress your colleagues with a super-tasty cake.

### Choose Green Decor

Instead of balloons that'll clog landfills after they deflate in a couple of days, grab a more sustainable option, like a "Happy Birthday" banner that you can re-use in the future. Not only will you help save the planet, you'll save money in the long run, and you'll save time and trouble by always having a ready-to-go party-in-a-box instead of having to run all over town to get the decorations.

Think of ways to build office traditions that reflect all who work there.

Source: [www.treehugger.com](http://www.treehugger.com)

## THE SEVEN TESTS OF JUST CAUSE

- ❖ Does the employee know the rules?
- ❖ Are the rules reasonable and relevant to the job?
- ❖ Was there an investigation?
- ❖ Was the employer's investigation conducted fairly?
- ❖ Is there proof that the employee was guilty as charged?
- ❖ Are the rules being applied fairly and without discrimination?
- ❖ Does the penalty fit the offense?



Monmouth Medical Center office managers Donna Brady, left, of Jersey Shore Cardiothoracic & Vascular Surgery, and Barbara Trotta, of Neurosurgical Associates of N.J., visit the vendors.



Shari Beirne, physician liaison for the Saint Barnabas Behavioral Health Center, with basket winner Linda Gwozdek, office manager for Newark Beth Israel physician James Lee, M.D.



Enjoying the festivities are Clara Maass-affiliated physician office managers Linda Cafone, with neurologist Michael Brand, M.D., and Madeline Zamarra, with the Femino-Ducey Orthopaedic Group.

## First Anniversary Celebration *continued from page 1*



Noted motivational speaker Stephanie Marston, a best-selling author and work/life balance expert, provides the keynote address.

"We have also established Office Managers Advisory Councils at each facility in an effort to identify issues that create obstacles between the hospital and office practice, and to find ways to address these issues and to help plan programs that focus on identified office management needs and concerns," he said. "Additionally, "Training to Go," an ongoing series of management training resource CDs, were sent to members and are available on the Website."

The establishment of the Office Managers Web site was another accomplishment for the association's first year, and Slusarz noted that traffic to the site — which was launched last May — has surpassed 20,000 hits and 1,000 visitors.

A highlight of the celebration was a dinner presentation by noted motivational speaker Stephanie Marston, a best-selling author and work/life balance expert dedicated to providing people with tools to reduce stress, balance work and family and make time for what truly matters.

All those in attendance received a copy of her book, "Chicken Soup for the Soul's Life Lessons for Women: 7 Essential Ingredients for a Balanced Life," a self-help book loaded with sensible secrets to help women value themselves, savor everyday experiences, and find time to live with more joy and peace in a chaotic world.

During the cocktail reception, office managers were able to visit the 20 vendor tables representing a host of Saint Barnabas Health Care System programs and services, as well as affiliated organizations. Gift baskets, spa and other gift certificates and a Samsung 32-inch LCD television were among the many raffle prizes.



Winning a flat-screen LCD television — the grand prize at the celebration — is Lorraine Hubbard, office manager for Kimball Medical Center physician Steven Streit, M.D. She is pictured with Alyssa Ruby-Mako, assistant vice president of physician services.

## Web Site Expands as Online Resource for Office Managers

The Saint Barnabas Office Managers Association Web site is dedicated to helping office managers in a host of practice management areas.

Online resources of the Web site — [www.sbofficemanagers.com](http://www.sbofficemanagers.com) — include industry news, events/meeting calendar, education and training and resource links, as well as information on joining the Saint Barnabas Office Managers Association that outlines member benefits.

The 2009 Meeting and Program Schedule provide office managers with a direct link to a host of practice management classes.

The Saint Barnabas Health Care System Web site also offers an online Physician Find feature that includes a listing of physicians affiliated with the Saint Barnabas Health Care System. This service is free of charge and physicians participating in the Physician Referral program appear on the site with an extended profile and are noted as "participating in the program and accepting new patients."

The extended profile may include medical education, insurances accepted and practice attributes such as handicap