



Texas Medical Auditors Association

President's Message

A Safe Spring is a Happy Spring!

Hello, TMAA! The board is currently working and planning for our annual conference in Austin. The most important part of our planning is for member safety in this perilous time. While we all hope COVID-19 cases will have subsided by September, we must all do our part to ensure our personal safety.

All members are encouraged to observe CDC guidelines: maintain six feet of distance while in public spaces, wear face coverings over nose and mouth, and wash hands thoroughly and often. Please reference information on the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>. Meanwhile we will continue to monitor for COVID-19 containment and further details/instructions from our local and state government officials.

In these current times, our lives have been greatly disrupted. Moving from working at the office to the home environment has taken some getting used to but is manageable. Ordering groceries for delivery or curbside pick-up has been commonplace. I have never disinfected countertops, doorknobs, or light switches as much as I do now. The greatest difficulty for me was not being able to hug my adult children as well as love and kiss on my grandchildren. I eventually was able to be around my son and his family after three weeks of isolation. I am still waiting for the day I can hold my grown daughter as she is an essential worker and has not felt comfortable getting close. Despite all the changes, my family has been having weekly FaceTime calls where we catch up and support one another. It has been a great moral booster! I hope each and every one has found ways to cope with all the changes and limitations we have been faced with.

As your president, I cannot tell you how much I look forward to seeing everyone in Austin. As you can see, I am optimistic. We are working on exciting, dynamic speakers. I also assure you, the health and safety of all our TMAA members are our paramount concern.

I hope to see everyone soon!



Debra Moore, RN
President

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Happy Spring Everyone!

One of the greatest times of the year, even during a pandemic.

I am so glad to see some beautiful flowers popping up all over my neighborhood as I practice social distancing from my all my neighbors.

The weather is beautiful, and I can work in the yard, clean up the patio, and get the pool ready for summer. There is some positive to come out of COVID-19.

The 2019 annual TMAA conference is now behind us with 10.0 CEUs obtained for nursing and 11 CEUs for CMAS and CCFA.

We had 19 people in attendance at the Hyatt Place hotel in Sugarland, TX, just outside of Houston.

Although we survived a deluge of rain and a program that had many last-minute changes, we still got it done!

The comments on the evaluations were very positive considering we were “winging it” for some of our speakers who could not get to our venue.

Some of the positive comments written multiple times stated that the food was delicious; the staff were friendly; the service was excellent; and the venue was awesome.

Yes, we had to deal with weather issues before and so we decided to think about pushing our conference out until October for 2020.

We have had our share of weather-related incidents, haven't we?

Please feel free to email Cathy Mezmar, Cindy Strait, or myself if you have any questions or if you think of a great presenter we could ask to come speak.

We appreciate your support, everyone!



Connie Vaughan, RN, BSN, CMAS, COC
Nurse Planner, Chair of The Education Committee For TMAA



Greetings TMAA!

Like many of you I have been watching the news with some concern. Many of us know someone who has been affected by the Covid19 Pandemic. Many of us worry for our family or our own potential exposure. Please know that your TMAA president and board are monitoring the situation with an eye toward our proposed TMAA Conference.

However, the work remains, as does our responsibilities as professionals. As an association of professions, we have decided to proceed subject to changing circumstances. To that end, the board has set October 1st and 2nd for our annual conference.

We will meet at the Hyatt Place Austin Airport:

9332 Sprit of Austin Ln,

Austin, TX 78719

<https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/hotel/texas/hyatt-place-austin-airport/auszi>



In consideration of the uncertainty we face, the board negotiated a 48-hour cancellation without charge for TMAA conference attendees. Further, should we cancel, TMAA will refund all conference fees. There is no better value for CEUs. Our room rate is \$139.00 per night.



If you have any issues making a reservation please contact me @ gamezgaye@yahoo.com (please put TMAA in subject line).

We will make it through this pandemic together and will emerge stronger. Thank you for your loyalty and we look forward to seeing you all at our conference.

Excelsior!



Gaye McClellan, RN

Past President, Events Coordinator



Membership Memo's

Hello TMAA members! It is time for our membership drive, so I am asking each of you to take a just a few minutes out of your day today to fill out the membership application and write out that \$60 check to keep you current for 2020. A renewal letter was sent via US mail, but if you cannot find it, there is also an application form on the website. Just type in: www.tmaa.info and find the tab that reads "Membership Application". Fill it out clearly, especially the email address, and mail it into the address listed on the bottom of the application form. Thank you in advance for your continual support of our organization.

I encourage you to introduce TMAA to other auditors that you meet. Remember we accept out of state members too, so just advertise us everywhere you go. Honestly, you cannot find a more reasonable organization to be a member of, and we promise to present a fabulous seminar for our members this fall. We aim to please, and always succeed!

Most of the board members remain from the previous year, but we did add Judy Grandstaff as our new Nomination Chair. Judy lives in Virginia Beach and has been at our conferences for several years now. She was introduced to TMAA by Pat Kirkpatrick, one of our retired members, during an AAMAS conference. Judy attended our conference that same year, and loved our group, so has attended every year since. Please help me welcome her to the board. We are delighted to have her serve with us.

If I can assist you in any way luring a new prospect, please send me an email with the persons' name and email or home address, and I will be happy to do all the correspondence needed.

Here's to an exciting new year. I look forward to seeing your application in the mail and working with you throughout the year. Meanwhile, we will all stay connected via 'email blasts' and thru our newsletters, *The Observer*.

Thank you for believing and supporting TMAA!

Website Wonders

I am back for another year with an updated new look, so please check me out! I have headshots of the 2020 TMAA board on the home page, along with a rotating picture gallery from folks that attended the fall seminar. I also have pictures of the speakers that presented posted under the "At A Glance" tab. All the board members email addresses have been updated and are listed under the "Board Members" tab so you can easily reach them. The membership application is there along with a description of what TMAA is all about so you can recommend TMAA to others.

I am concise, compact, cute, and contain all the information and forms you might need. So please pay me some attention and use me all you want. I am your TMAA website and I am here for you!



Debbie Braddock
Website Coordinator
&
Membership Chair

BYLAW UPDATES

During the General Meeting at our annual conference, TMAA members voted to approve four updates to our bylaws. Below is a summary of the previous wording, and below that, are the updates approved by our members. These updates were made to help the organization grow and change with the times.

Article III Members – Previous Wording:

The membership of this association shall be open to persons retired from or involved in medical auditing and/or cost containment.

New Wording:

The membership of this association shall be open to persons retired from or involved in medical auditing, cost containment and coding.

Qualifications for Officers – Previous Wording:

Member in good standing 2 consecutive years
Attended at least one TMAA or AAMAS conference

New Wording:

Member in good standing for one year

Section 3 Powers of the Board – Previous Wording:

E. To provide for means of financing the operations of the association and its acquisition of property upon approval of the membership for amounts exceeding \$200.

New Wording:

E. To provide for means of financing the operations of the association and its acquisition of property upon approval of the membership for amounts exceeding \$500.

Newsletter Committee Section – Previous Wording:

The Newsletter Committee shall generate and issue a newsletter each quarter containing news, information, and items of interest pertaining to the purpose and objectives of this association.

New Wording:

The Newsletter Committee shall generate and issue a newsletter a minimum of three times per year containing news, photos, information, and items of interest to the association.



Shonna Macaulay
TMAA Vice President and Bylaws Chairman



*It's time
for a
CHANGE*

Are You Smarter Than Your Smart Phone?

When cell phones first appeared, they were used to make and receive telephone calls. But, as technology has progressed, so has the capabilities of these devices. We can track our fitness activities, store thousands of photos, and do our banking with the same handheld device we use to make calls. Much of our personal information, including contact information, texts, and calendars can be found on our phones.

As our reliance on mobile technology grows, the importance of security on our devices becomes even more critical. Because of their portable nature, mobile devices are very vulnerable. Cybercriminals have adapted their methods with the goal of stealing information from credit cards numbers to passwords. For that reason, it is crucial to keep security in mind when conducting business on your devices.

How Can You Secure Your Mobile Devices?

Lock them! When you aren't using your device, make sure unauthorized people can't access it. Engage a pin code, thumbprint, or facial recognition. The options available to you will vary by manufacturer and model.

Keep your devices and apps updated.

Backup your data. Always backup important documents and files with a trusted service provider.

Beware of scams. Criminals target mobile devices through text (SMishing) and voicemail (Vishing). Don't respond to unexpected or suspicious messages and be careful about what information you share over the phone. When in doubt, make a telephone call to verify the legitimacy of a message or request.



Shonna Macaulay, RN, BSN, CC

TMAA Vice President and Bylaws Chair



PROGRAMS

3 Changes in Medicare's 2020 Final Rule Affecting GI Practices

1. Colorectal cancer surprise billing. CMS dropped its proposal requiring GI practices to alert patients of the possibility they may be billed if their screening colonoscopy becomes therapeutic if a polyp is removed.

2. Removal of screening colonoscopy adenoma detection rate from payment system. CMS finalized its rule to drop adenoma detection rate from its merit-based payment system. GI societies expressed disappointment in the decision, saying that encouraging GIs to improve their adenoma detection rate could reduce colorectal cancer incidence and deaths.

3. Collapsing payments for office and outpatient visits. CMS will reverse its rule to collapse evaluation and management levels two through four for established and new patients to outpatient centers and offices in 2021. GI societies and the American Medical Association worked together on a new CMS plan which retains five levels of coding for established patients and sets four levels of coding for new patients.

Resource: The American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Author: Rachel Popa, November 08, 2019



Cindy Strait, PA, CPC, COC, CMAS
Programs



Cathy Mezmar, RN, MSN, CCS, CMAS
Programs

Secretary's Corner

Hello Everyone!

Just wanted to say thank you to those who were able to attend the 2019 Conference in Sugarland, Texas. Members and speakers who were not able to make it were missed!

We are already working on this year's 2021 lineup! Thanks to everyone who put in the time and effort to make the 2019 Conference successful and enjoyable.

*I also wanted to extend a special **Thank You** to Lupita Flores for being my back up on taking minutes during the meeting at the conference.*



Julie M. Diggins
Secretary

THANK YOU

**NOMINATION'S COMMITTEE
CORNER**

Hi Again!

TMAA member volunteer Judy Grandstaff threw in her hat for the Nomination Chair position and the members of TMAA voted her in! We are so excited that Judy will be taking over this position for this year!

Let us give Judy a **BIG WELCOME** and **HUGE THANK YOU** for taking on this role for TMAA.

Also, please respond to her calls and emails when we start ramping up for the 2020 TMAA Conference.

Judy – I think I speak for everyone on the board when I say that we are soooooooooooooooooo excited that you are joining us!



Julie Diggins, LVN
Nominations Chair



Introducing:
Judy Grandstaff



TREASURER REPORT

It is that time of year again but the Conference will be a little later than normal so I am hoping you all will think hard about joining the Board. My term will be up at the conference, so if you are interested contact me now and I will teach you as the year progresses.

I came out of retirement to help out when no one would step-up, but I know this year will be different. I really cannot continue past this year. It is not a difficult job. Everyone on the board will assist you when needed. There is only one time of year that you are busy and then it is not too bad. That is when the conference registrations come in and you log them and keep the board up to date on attendees.

Now that our attendance has decreased in size that makes the job easier.

Look for to hearing from you 😊



Barbara Thompson
Treasurer

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