

MARCH 2020

PINTLER BILLING SERVICES

1st Quarter Newsletter



Nicole Araujo



Mandy Erickson

Welcome to our new staff!

We are thrilled to have added two new billers to our team at the beginning of January. If you haven't had a chance to speak with them yet, you probably will soon. They are looking forward to meeting all of you! And check out our recently updated website at www.pintlerbillingservices.com. We think you'll love our new look!

Nicole Araujo: Nicole is a NAAC Certified Ambulance Coder and brings to Pintler Billing an extensive background in customer service and quality control. She recently left the beaches of sunny San Diego to move back to her home state, Montana. Nicole is very active in the specialty coffee industry; she's a Licensed Q Grader and owns a small coffee roasting company. In her free time, she enjoys adventuring outdoors with her husband and two dogs.

Mandy Erickson: Mandy has become a NAAC Certified Ambulance Biller, and brings years of experience with customer service and working in the medical field to her position here. She is a graduate from the University of Montana with a Bachelor's degree in Communication, Science, and Disorders. When not at work she enjoys hiking, kayaking, backpacking, fly fishing, rock climbing, and snowshoeing with her husband and fur-baby, Marley. They also love to travel and experience different cultures.

COMPLIANCE CORNER **FOCUS ON CREW SIGNATURES** **BY JODI PAINE, CAC & CACO**

Having a current crew log for all current members of your service, including their name, credentials, and signature, is an important part of your service's ongoing efforts to maintain compliance with the guidelines set by CMS. This document also provides a resource for billers when reviewing signatures on the PCR. A match of the signatures on the PCR with the crew members on file in the log provides supporting documentation that the level of service and any interventions that are billed were performed by crew members endorsed and licensed at the appropriate level. As staffing changes, or crew member names and/or licensures are updated, it is important to provide an updated crew log to your billing company and keep a copy in your records.

When it comes to PCR signatures by crew members, remember that the PCR created by your service, including any attachments such as EKG strips, or narrative addendums, is the official medical and legal record of the care provided to that patient. CMS requires that providers of services to a patient must sign the PCR to attest to that care. In addition, by having every crew member present review and sign the PCR, there is another opportunity to verify that the information in the trip report is accurate. This practice can help improve quality of documentation on the front end and avoid trips being sent back for correction by the billing department.

As always, if you have any questions or would like to work on your compliance plan, please feel free to reach out to our office and we'll be happy to help you.

EMT SPOTLIGHT:

CINDY NORRED



CINDY NORRED

AGENCY: Bigfork Fire District, Office Manager

YEARS OF SERVICE: 16 years

CERTIFICATIONS/EDUCATION: Currently Montana AEMT, NREMT-EMT, BLS Provider, Graduated High School, Hours of Training in Bookkeeping, Government Accounting, Labor Laws, EMS classes, Basic Fire Training

Cindy's Background

I was born in Kalispell Montana, raised in beautiful Bigfork Montana by a loving, caring mother & father, along with three wonderful sisters. I have lived and worked in Bigfork all my life so far. In high school I worked night shifts as a CNA in a Bigfork nursing home. After graduating high school, I then married my high school sweetheart and had a daughter in 2000. While raising my daughter, I worked learning bookkeeping and office skills. In 2004 I joined the Bigfork Ambulance and became a volunteer first responder shortly after. Once licensed in the state of Montana, I would respond every chance that I could to an emergency. I was so thankful for all the wonderful colleagues I came across over the years. I continued to learn and broaden my scope as moving up my certification. A few years later the Bigfork Ambulance needed a bookkeeper and I was hired on in the office. Assisted in billing and bookkeeping, office needs while continuing to respond and help where needed. In 2007 I had another amazing daughter. The Bigfork Ambulance joined the Bigfork Fire District in 2010. I then was hired as a billing assistant, back up bookkeeper and responder. In 2015 I was hired as Office Manager for the district.

Today I'm over 40 and proud of all that I have accomplished. I am a mother of two amazing girls and a wife of an astonishing husband. Love spending time with my family and friends every chance I can get. While much of my time is spent in an office now, I do keep up with my EMS knowledge. You never know when you might need to use it. Living in this small community I have had to take care of close family and friends in some very difficult times, which has been the hardest part of EMS for me, but my heart is planted deep into the Bigfork community and I will continue helping when needed.

*"Save one life, you're a hero.
Save multiple lives, you're an EMT."*

3 Ideas to Start 2020 Off Right

Now is a great time to set goals and recalibrate focus to make sure that priorities are staying in order. Here are some suggestions to consider implementing:

- Partner with your billing agency on some interdependent goals. For example, working on reducing the number of days to production of a clean claim.
- Host a "meet & greet" with your staff at your barn, and invite dispatch, ER personnel, billing, and others that work with each other but may never get a chance to really talk.
- Identify and encourage "champions" within your workforce; those individuals who really get things done and inspire others, no matter what their official role or title.

A0998-The Official Treat/No Transport Code: I recently attended a webinar, hosted in part by Anthem, that discussed some of the methods that payers are exploring to lower the cost of emergency medicine. Reimbursing ambulance agencies for this code is one of the ways that Anthem, as well as a few others, have identified as a cost-saver. We are billing for this whenever we can, which is when our clients assign a non-transport trip to us where they responded but did not transport. This can be for any reason, including a patient refusal. (In cases where a patient was treated but not transported due to death at the scene, we still bill the base rate to the insurers.) We have noted a few payments from payers like Anthem, United Healthcare, and PacificSource, and anticipate this trend to continue.

A HIPAA Lesson: In case you missed this, JEMS had a great article by Ryan Stark (one of our favorite lawyers from PWW) about the importance of having a compliance plan in place.

<https://www.jems.com/2020/02/13/first-ambulance-hipaa-settlement/>

As you know, we have a Certified Compliance Officer on staff, and she is available for consultations if you feel your compliance plan could benefit from a review. If you can't quickly and confidently answer "Yes" to the following questions, you probably need to address your compliance plan.

- Have you done a HIPAA Security Risk Analysis?
- Do you train your staff on device security and do they know your device policy?
- Are all of your agency's data and mobile devices encrypted?

Give us a call or send Jodi an email at jodi@pintlerbillingservices.com if you need any help with this.



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