



Chair Message

*Mary Sheehan, IL-HPCO Chair,
CEO Joliet Area Community Hospice*

We accomplished many things in 2018 both statewide and nationally. Some of the highlights of the year include:

- Providing three audio conferences on Payment & Billing, open to all members
- Engaged IDPH officials in ongoing discussions about POLST
- Increasing bed limit in Hospice Homes to 20 from 16
- Hospice Home Network webinars offered at discount to IL-HPCO members
- Partnership with Weatherbee BootCamp in September
- IL-HPCO's Executive Director sits on NHPCO COS Steering Committee, and chairs NHPCO's Subcommittee on Communications
- IL-HPCO holds two seats on the Palmetto GBA Hospice Council
- POLST has two representatives to National POLST Committee
- Committed Board of Directors, maintaining over 50% Provider Member Directors. Others are Pharmacist, CEO Hospice Analytics, State Senator, CPA from Crowe, past Chair of HOPE Wisconsin, Dignity Memorial Executive.
- Offering WI hospice IL-HPCO member discounts through mid 2019
- POLST IL co-hosted an interdisciplinary roundtable at Northwestern in April to discuss gaps and inconsistencies in statutes governing POLST and substitute decision-making, and generated a distributable summary brief.

Thank you for your support as we continue to work for you to educate and advocate hospice care in the State of Illinois. All of us at IL-HPCO wish you a happy and healthy new year!

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Attend

Audio Conference on Billing
Feb. 12, 8:30-9:30 a.m.
June 18, 8:30-9:30 a.m.
Nov. 12, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

Advocacy Day-Springfield
April 3, 2019
Beginning at 10:00 a.m.

**October 16-17 Annual
Educational Conference**

For more information, contact
IL-HPCO office at pcramer@il-hpco.org
or 847.441.7200

Welcome New Members

**We are pleased to
welcome
Kindred-Chicago,
Vista, and
Heartland-Westmont
as new members.**

- IL-HPCO Regional Meeting

Legislative Update — Betsy D. Mitchell, IL-HPCO Legislative Consultant



At the state level, we are in the “Calm Before the Storm,” indicating that the Illinois legislature is not in session at this time and no

legislation is under consideration. Legislators return to Springfield for a brief *Lame Duck* session in early January before the legislators elected this past November election are sworn into office on January 9, 2019. At noon on January 14, 2019, Governor-elect Pritzker will be sworn into office.

When legislators begin their new session in January, we can look for many bills to be introduced that will impact hospice patients and providers from pain medications, to EPA regulations to changing the definition of Medical Directors. It is anticipated that this next legislative session will be especially a busy one because there will be around 50 new legislators who are eager to make their mark in Springfield.

At the national level, according to Legislative Committee member Ellen Bryne, thanks to everyone’s efforts, both Senator Durbin and Senator Duckworth added themselves as co-sponsors on the Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act along with 20 other Senators from both parties. This bill is not expected to

pass by the end of this year but will be introduced in early 2019 which include the same sponsors. This is great news for hospice.

Also, please contact your legislators during this time while they are in their district offices. Invite them to your holiday office celebrations. Send them a holiday greeting. Continue to develop a good working relationship with them, especially if you have one of the many new legislators in your area.

Happy Holidays

IL-HPCO Regional Meeting-Gurnee

The final Regional Meeting of 2018 was held in early November, hosted by Meridian Hospice in Gurnee, IL Legislative Consultant delivered “The Day After” talk on the Illinois General Assembly election and encouraged attendees to use the time in December, and January to contact new Legislators and talk to them about hospice. She reported there will be 42 new faces in 177 posts. IL-HPCO has speaking points for such meetings and Betsy or Pam Cramer will coach you in communicating with your local Legislator. Lamari Brayboy III and Ryan Klaustermeier presented a riveting presentation on Recruitment and Retention, using concrete data on the impact of

Baby Boomers needing hospice and palliative care and Baby Boomers retirements.



Lamari Brayboy and Ryan Klaustermeier



Betsy D. Mitchell at Regional Meeting

Executive Director ANNUAL REPORT



Pam Cramer,
IL-HPCO
Executive Director

This has been an exciting year for IL-HPCO. We are just finishing the first year of our Strategic Plan that the Board of Directors developed in January, focusing expressly on Education and Advocacy. We have made progress on these goals through implementation of more education on payment and billing practices, and working closely with Legislators and our Legislative Consultant, Betsy Mitchell, in Springfield. One win: Through the efforts of Joliet Area Community Hospice and our contacts in Springfield, we were able to increase the number of beds in Residential Hospice to 20. We also are working closely on bringing the federal laws on Opioid disposal and PAs as attendees into sync with Illinois law. We are collecting data from our Provider Members on how the Room and Board Pass Through practice affects each hospice agency.

Through this office, repeatedly, we have received more than 100 email and phone requests on hospice referral and information. Calls ranged from family members looking for hospice care for a loved one to patients themselves looking for resources after a

terminal diagnosis. Our website tool, "Find a Hospice" draws more hits each year, and our website, www.il-hpco.org, traffic has increased this year to 800-1,000 monthly hits. We delivered 56 webinars, 2 Regional Meetings, 4 Audio Conferences, meetings with MCOs, in addition to the annual conference held in October. All together, we have educated more than 350 hospice providers on trends and issues in order to improve the delivery of hospice services in Illinois.

We continue to work with the Illinois Department of Public Health around the Definition of Palliative Care and are working with Medicaid to ensure providers are paid promptly for their services.

Membership increased this year with the addition of Kindred-Chicago, Vista-Chicago and Heartland-Westmont and the renewal of JourneyCare. This is an impressive figure since the non-profit association industry membership retention average is at 81%, down from the previous year retention of 91%. We have repeatedly been told by providers they have to make tough choices on where to put their dues dollars, and they are clearly cutting back. We are thrilled that most are electing to remain with IL-HPCO.

Mary Sheehan, Chair, and I are

planning meetings with new members and current members in 2019 to learn what you want from your state society and how could we be more effective.

At this close of 2018, I thank you all for what you do. Wishing you peace and joy for the Holidays!



Diane Nowak
and Edo
Banach



A Regional Meeting in Peoria

MARK YOUR CALENDAR Advocacy Day April 3, Springfield

Mark your calendars! Advocacy Day has been scheduled for Wednesday, April 3 in Springfield. We will begin at 10:00 with training and visit Legislators at the State Capitol from Noon-4. More information will be available early in 2019. Each IL-HPCO member is invited to bring up to four guests.

Reimbursement Activities

Carrie Bill, Vice President of Finance at Seasons Hospice, is chair of the IL-HPCO Reimbursement Committee and serves in a variety of positions with IL-HPCO: Member of Legislative Committee; IL-HPCO representative to Palmetto GBA; Coordinator of Illinois Association of Managed Health Plan quarterly meetings with MCOs; and faculty for Billing and Payment Audio Conferences. IL-HPCO Chair, Mary Sheehan, lauded Carrie at the Annual Conference business meeting when Carrie was out of town. She received her award in person last month

from Executive Director Pam Cramer.



Left: Carrie Bill at work. Above: Carrie Bill recognized for efforts of Payment and Billing from Pam Cramer.

Room and Board Pass Through Elimination Task Force

You should have received a Survey Monkey Survey last week on Room and Board Pass Through Billing and how it's affecting your organization. IL-HPCO Legislative Committee and Pass Through Workgroup, chaired by Sara Dado and Kate Proctor, have made elimination of Pass Through in Illinois a laser focus for 2019.

Through this survey, we would like to understand your hospice agency's experience with administering the room and board pass-through for Medicaid beneficiaries who are enrolled in your core hospice program. Our goal with this survey is collect data that we can share with Illinois elected officials and leaders in the

Department of Health and Family Services (HFS), so that the room and board pass-through can be eliminated. Please make sure that the survey is sent to the appropriate person in your organization so we can get data back quickly and turn it into information that will help with the elimination.

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