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GRAY ♦ PILGRIM

A N D A S S O C I A T E S , L L C

SPRING / SUMMER 2015

3rd Annual Golf Outing

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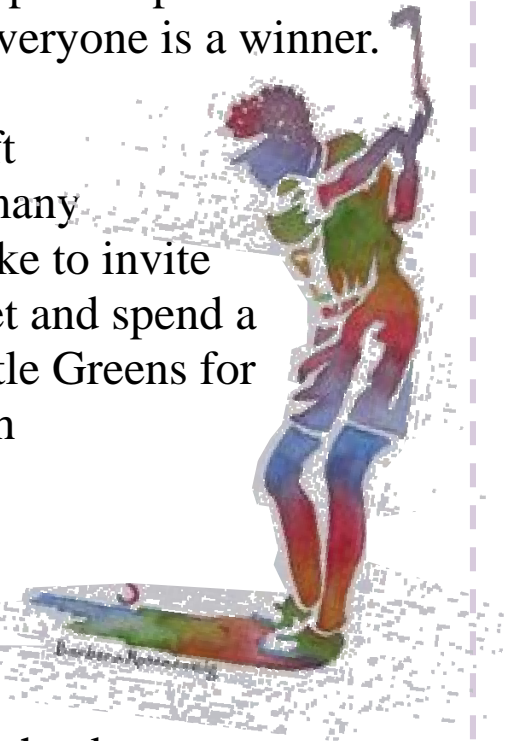
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It is that time of the year to enjoy the weather and spend time with the staff of Gray Pilgrim. On July 17th GPA will be hosting its annual golf outing. The day is for our practice to give back to our clients and associates. Before you say I don't play golf, remember we give every team that participates a prize. This outing is designed to make sure everyone is a winner.

The prizes include an iPad, gift cards, cash, golf apparel and many other items. The staff would like to invite golfers and non-golfers to meet and spend a day with our staff at Greencastle Greens for a Continental Breakfast, Lunch (Picnic Style) and tons of fun.

The fee is \$50.00 a player or \$200.00 for a team of four to cover the greens fees, food, beverages and prizes for the day.

To register contact Kati at 717-263-8713 or email at kati@gpallc.net.



OPTING INTO MEDICARE FOR DENTISTS

Due Date was June 1, 2015 but has been *delayed* until January 1st, 2016.

Most dentists need to opt in just to be allowed to write prescriptions for Medicare B patients and the patient may then be reimbursed. This is the option most will choose. You do not have Medicare billing privileges with this option so you cannot bill Medicare directly. Others will need to opt in for the billing aspect of Medicare so that when eligible services are rendered, they can be billed to Medicare. An example may be sleep dentistry or hospital based practitioners. That would be billed to Medicare directly on behalf of the patient. Medicare has two different levels of reimbursements for Medicare eligible services. You can be a participating or nonparticipating provider.

What does Medicare cover? Hospital based services or those services that stem from disease or trauma. Medicare doesn't cover preparation for dentures and/or removal of diseased teeth in an infected jaw. Medicare will cover services that are an integral part of a covered procedure following an injury or disease or preparation for radiation treatment involving the jaws. They don't cover primary services. These are just a few coverage examples. The application process typically takes several months if everything is done correctly from the start. If they send it back and require more information, the process of course is extended. Don't risk losing your older patients or frustrating them because they can't get a prescription reimbursed. Most dentists will at least want to opt in for the prescription writing choice. For more details, try looking at the ADA site as a start.



New Hire Reporting

One of the most common overlooked steps in the hiring process is reporting your new hire to your appropriate state agency. According to The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 you must report basic information for any new hire or re-hire within 20 days of employment. This includes temporary employees. It is an easy report to complete. If you neglect to report new hires it can result in fines determined by each individual state. One of the main purposes of the new hire reporting program is to aid in the collection of child support from non-custodial parents. Especially those who change jobs frequently. When you report a new hire, the database takes that information and looks for a match in their list of parents who owe child support. If a match occurs the agency immediately sends notification to the employer that child support must be withheld from their wages. This helps to expedite child support payments. The data collected also can help to detect fraud in the unemployment compensation and workers compensation programs which has resulted in the recovery of millions of dollars due to overpayments.

Below is a list of websites for a few states. For a more detailed list please go to www.sba.gov.

PA - www.panewhires.com

MD - www.mdnewhire.com

WV - <http://newhire-reporting.com/WV-Newhire/default.aspx>

VA - www.va-newhire.com

OH - www.oh-newhire.com

DC - <https://dc-newhire.com/>



Social Media Issues in the Workplace



We get asked many times how to keep staff off of social media throughout the workday. Between using computers in the office or their own personal phones, employees many times, seem to spend an inordinate amount of time viewing or posting on social media. The first place to start is to suggest that you absolutely **MUST** have a written policy in place before you try to discipline an employee. Then, when something happens, you must document the event (s) in order to

establish that you have sufficient grounds to discipline or fire an employee.

This isn't a slam-dunk issue. Previously we have heard that employers have requested the login and password to a potential hire's social media account so they could learn more about the person. While there is no federal law yet, many states have taken up the cause. Maryland, for example, doesn't allow you to ask for that information and many other states have pending legislation. Most employers are covered under a law called National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). An oversimplification of this Act is that it forbids employers from retaliating against certain types of employee speech or intimidating those who engage in it.

Examples would be blogging, tweeting, and Facebook comments. You have to be able to determine whether it is protected or not before you take any actions. We have relied on Bent Ericksen & Associates HR Director which is a great HR tool to use in your practice. We can't all be experts in every aspect of our practice, so having a great source for some tasks is needed so that we can focus our attention on other tasks for which we are better suited. Their contact information is www.bentericksen.com or (541) 685-9003 PST.

Travel & Entertainment

Travel and entertainment is a broad area for available deductions on your tax return. Travel can have benefits when your spouse, for example, is expected to accompany you to your destination. Many continuing education or conference locations are selected to provide both required business or educational experiences and the benefit of a prime vacation location. Travel expenses are 100% deductible and could include those expenses of the spouse. Including your staff could be deducted as well and provides a great employee benefit which is not taxable to your employees.

There are numerous opportunities that are overlooked by individuals who have business meals that are not deducted. These are lost opportunities and can add up to substantial savings for meals that you are already having. Examples of such meals would include those with insurance brokers, colleagues, business associates and referral sources. Entertainment is something that when proceeded with or followed by a substantial business discussion can be deductible and help strengthen a business relationship. Taking someone to a baseball game or for a round of golf can provide a longer period of time to discuss business and mix in an element of fun all while helping create a more positive attitude toward your business. These events all qualify for a 50% deduction.

However, certain meals which include those to which all of your staff are invited or which are provided for the convenience of you as an employer and occur on site at your office qualify for a 100% deduction.

The ideas above are not to just get a business deduction to save taxes. They are ideas that are intended to increase your business and the way that your employees, colleagues, patients, and vendors see your practice. Ultimately, the idea is to generate even more revenue and loyalty which will help you gain even more success.



SUPREME COURT RULES AGAINST MARYLAND

A Maryland couple, the Wynne's, filed a claim with the Maryland State and the case ultimately made it to the U.S. Supreme Court. They said that Maryland's taxation policy violated the Constitution because it discriminated against interstate commerce. The couple owns a healthcare business that has income taxable in 39 states. Generally when you have income in other states, your resident state will give you a credit for the tax you paid to the other states. Since Maryland's tax is made up of State and County taxes AND Maryland only



gives you a credit against the state portion and not the county portion, the Wynne's felt that they were subjected to double taxation. The Supreme Court agreed. There are several cities that impose income taxes without providing a full credit for taxes paid out of state as well as several other states. This is just the start of this debate as other states and cities will have to reconsider how their credits are handled, so we will continue to watch what happens next. A big win for some Maryland residents.

Identity Theft

We have written different articles about identity theft and the matter isn't going away. It seems that every day you hear of a different scam. Not even the IRS can keep from being attacked! Taxpayers who had gone onto the IRS site to request a transcript of their tax return were put at risk. The IRS just announced that identity thieves accessed tax information for approximately 200,000 taxpayers. Half of them were unsuccessful attempts but the other half were successful. The site has been taken down and transcripts can only be received through the mail until the issue is fixed. The only way these thieves were able to make these attempts was that they already had in their possession the Social Security Numbers and some other personal information in order for their attempts to be successful. So these taxpayers were already victims of an earlier identity theft. This was just a way that the thieves were able to take the information that they had already, and find a way for it to benefit them financially. The thieves filed bogus tax returns with this information but they can go on to commit more financial thefts against these same taxpayers. The



IRS is alerting the impacted taxpayers by letter and will be offering credit monitoring services. If you don't receive a letter, then you weren't impacted. Remember the Internal Revenue Service NEVER contacts you by e-mail. Letters and phone calls are the normal means of communication. When we go to different web sites and establish accounts, many times security questions are required to be set up so that if you forget your password, you can request help if you can answer the security questions. So for hackers and identify thieves, they can build up a lot of information about you from different sites that they have hacked into and then use it to hurt you financially. The bottom line is that identity theft can be happening anywhere you use your credit card, set up online accounts, use an ATM or deal with the Internal Revenue Service. We can't prevent it altogether, but we can keep our guard up, monitor our bank accounts and credit rating. If you have been a victim of identity theft, our website has information on the steps to take or you can just contact us.