Florida Society of Medical Assistants, Inc.

November 8, 2014

To: Patricia Allen, CMA (AAMA), FSMA President
Executive Council Members
Committee Chairs
Chapter Representatives
Physician Liaison

From: Maria Wiegelmann, CMA (AAMA)
Delegate AAMA 2014 Conference
St. Louis, MO October 17 – 20, 2014

Delegate Report

This was my first time at an AAMA Conference and my first time as a delegate. It was an exhilarating experience – so many committee meetings, so many CEUs offered with topics current for today's medical practice, many fellow CMAs with whom we could share ideas, the opportunity to let AAMA know what we need help with.

The best news at the conference was that candidates for the CMA (AAMA) exam will be able to **enroll online up to 2 weeks prior to their prepared testing period start date!** I was told by Anna Johnson, CAE Director of Certification that it would be available around November 15, 2014. For paper applications allow up to 30 days from receipt by Certification staff. No more waiting 90 days to schedule your exam!

I attended part of the Board of Trustees meeting. The topic of discussion was Assessment Based Recognition – Order Entry (ABR-OE). Some of the audience members were opposed to it stating it threatens the CMA (AAMA) credential. Minutes of the meeting will be on the AAMA website.

I attended 1 hour of the MAERB Forum. New 201X Standards and Guidelines, which is not yet approved, state that a Medical Assisting program director must now be a CMA

(AAMA), RMA, NCMA, or CCMA. Many objected to this new requirement. RNs, LPNs who have been program directors for many years do not think that they should have to have a CMA certification also. Nutrition has also been added to the curriculum.

Everyone got together for the Welcome and Awards Celebration that first evening. There was a parade of state society presidents so that they could be recognized for their service. Mary Morris, CMA (AAMA) was the proxy for our president, Patricia Allen, CMA (AAMA). Winners of the 2014 Excel Awards were announced and all applauded enthusiastically to congratulate them on their achievement. Florida did not win any categories this year – but there is always next year! The list of winners will be on the AAMA website. They were also listed in the Conference Daily (a newsletter highlighting conference activities) the next day.

The orientation for Delegates/Alternates reviewed using the electronic voting method. Credentials check-in is also being done electronically.

At the House of Delegates (HOD) Donald Balasa, Executive Director and legal counsel for AAMA, gave a presentation on meaningful use and the CMS requirement that medical assistants be credentialed in order to be able to enter medication, laboratory, and radiology orders into an EHR. This rule became effective on January 1, 2013 and applies to all stages on incentive programs. Mr. Balasa said that CMS sometimes has callers contact him to see if a particular credential meets the CMS requirement. Doctors' offices are beginning to use scribes to enter patient data into an EHR. Mr. Balasa stated that they do not meet the CMS ruling since they do not take an exam. There are some credentials which Mr. Balasa said do not meet the CMS requirement: the ARMA/RMA in New England and the MA-R in Washington state since neither requires passing an exam. The AAMA ABR-OE (Assessment Based Recognition – Order Entry) program was developed for those medical assistants who are NOT graduates of a CAAHEP or ABHES accredited program to meet the CMS requirement for order entry. They receive an assessment based certificate valid for 2 years. They may NOT use the CMA designation after their name.

Mr. Balasa also answered questions about who is eligible to take the CMA (AAMA) Certification Examination. The following is quoted directly from his blog which can be accessed through the AAMA website:

"Questions have arisen about the 60-month-after-graduation requirement for the CMA (AAMA) Certification Examination, and eligibility to recertify by retesting.

1. Individuals who have graduated from a medical assisting program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) or the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) on or after January 1, 2010, must take and pass the CMA (AAMA) Certification Examination within 60 months after the date of graduation. Individuals who graduated before January 1, 2010, are not subject to the 60-month requirement. In other words,

according to current policy of the Certifying Board of the AAMA, an individual who graduated from a CAAHEP or ABHES accredited medical assisting program prior to January 1, 2010, is not subject to any time limit for taking and passing the CMA (AAMA) Certification Examination and being awarded the CMA (AAMA) credential.

2. Prior to the June, 1998 administration of the CMA (AAMA) Certification Examination, there were eligibility pathways other than graduation from a CAAHEP or ABHES accredited medical assisting program. Generally, those who became CMAs (AAMA) prior to June of 1998 and were not graduates of an accredited program are eligible to recertify by continuing education or retesting. Such individuals are not forbidden from recertifying by retesting because they did not graduate from a CAAHEP or ABHES accredited program."

Mr. Balasa's presentation will also be available on the AAMA website.

We had a chance to meet with the candidates. Mary Morris, CMA (AAMA) placed a notice on the bulletin board saying where and when Florida members could meet with their delegates to discuss the candidates and the 2 proposed bylaws changes.

The HOD elected the following officers:

Vice President	Paula Purdy, CMA (AAMA)
Speaker of the House	Lisa Lee, CMA (AAMA)
Vice Speaker of the House	Debby Houston, CMA (AAMA), CPC
Trustees	Loxie Kistler, CMA (AAMA), EdD, RN
	Deborah Novak, CMA (AAMA)
	Michael Pfeil, CMA (AAMA)

At the President's Luncheon on Monday, October 20, 2014 we were notified that Susan Hawes, CMA (AAMA), MBA, CMPE would also be a Trustee. She was voted in by the Board of Trustees

Nominating Committee	Nina Watson, CMA (AAMA), CPC, Chair
	Jennifer Amaral, CMA (AAMA) - CT
	Sherry Bogar, CMA (AAMA) - TX
	Monica Case, CMA (AAMA) - TN
	Laura Mitchell, CMA (AAMA) – OK

Bylaws amendment 14-01 passed: **the added wording is bolded**
ARTICLE VI – MEMBERSHIP, SECTION 2, Qualifications
ACTIVE – An active member shall be one of the following:

2.Anyone who was an active member on 12/31/87, **who has never been a CMA (AAMA),** and who has maintained continuous active membership. Continuous active membership shall be defined as having dues postmarked or submitted electronically to the AAMA Executive Office by December 31 (the controlling time is that of sending, not that of receiving).

Bylaws amendment 14-02 was defeated after much heated discussion. It would have added a new item under active membership stating that a CMA (AAMA) who has retired from medical assisting, whose CMA (AAMA) is NOT current, who has not chosen sustaining membership, and whose CMA (AAMA) has not been revoked would be considered an active member.

The conference ended with the Presidents Luncheon. Outgoing President Nina Watson, CMA (AAMA), CPC and incoming President Charlene Couch, CMA (AAMA) gave inspiring speeches. It was the perfect ending to an excellent conference.

Here are some of the ideas I heard on how states are trying to increase attendance at meetings and seminars: use of GoToMeeting for meetings and seminars, online CEUs, holding meetings on Saturdays (mostly for local chapter meetings), hold board meeting in the middle of a seminar so that more members attend.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to be your representative at the AAMA conference. I have learned a lot about how the national organization operates and networked with representatives from other states. I will use what I've learned to better serve you.