



# *The Collector Beat*

October 2009



## In This Edition:

Healthcare IT News

Healthcare News

Collection News

Tony's Tip of the Month

Seminar Updates



**BOO!** The stores are already decorated in ghoulish colors, and I wanted to follow suit. This month's edition of *The Collector Beat* is filled with tricks and treats just for you! Enjoy & **HAPPY HALLOWEEN!**

## CCHIT to Launch 2011 Testing Next Month

By Neil Versel

The Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology is starting two new certification programs next month with an eye toward helping providers earn federal health IT subsidies starting in 2011. On Sept. 24, the commission will publish criteria and test scripts for both its comprehensive 2011 EHR certification program and a new, modular certification track called Preliminary ARRA 2011. The latter will focus on the proposed "meaningful use" standards that HHS is developing under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Applications for both are set to open Oct. 7.

[Click Here To Read More](#)

## Video: ARRA Updates and Next Steps

by John Halamka, MD

HITSP Chairman, John Halamka, MD, gives advice to healthcare organizations on how best to meaningfully use healthcare IT and apply for stimulus funding in this video, produced for the HIMSS Summit of the Southeast and brought to our attention by eMids.

Halamka also provides an update on ARRA's impact on the healthcare industry and outlines the next steps for the federal government, states and healthcare organizations.

[Click Here To View Video](#)

## Indianapolis Hospital Adds Technology to Boost Productivity

by Bernie Monegain

INDIANAPOLIS – Community Hospital South in Indianapolis is now live with new technology that integrates clinical, financial and administrative functions.

The hospital has deployed GE Centricity Enterprise 6.1 and Monitored Care from GE Healthcare to help streamline workflow and improve productivity across the continuum of care.

[Click Here To Read More](#)

## Healthcare Employment Grew in August

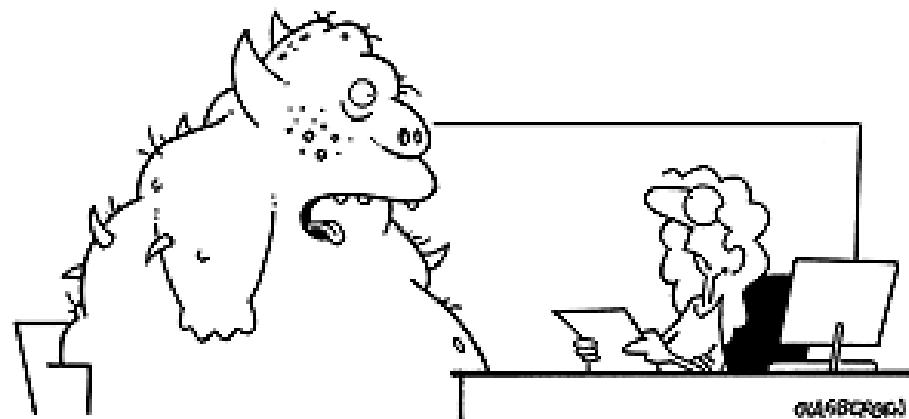
By Richard Pizzi

WASHINGTON – Employment in the U.S. healthcare sector increased by 28,000 jobs in August, while the national unemployment rate grew to 9.7 percent, according to recent data from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The biggest healthcare job gains were in ambulatory care and in nursing and residential care. Approximately 18,300 of the 28,000 new healthcare jobs were in the ambulatory care sector and 10,300 in nursing and residential care facilities.

Overall employment in hospitals actually declined by 700 jobs in August.

[Click Here To Read More](#)



"I'm the monster who lived under your bed when you were a kid. Got any job openings in your Collections Department?"

## Medical Billing Error Created Recurring Health Care Nightmare

By Karen Price Mueller

Imagine going to the doctor for a check-up. Or for a sprained ankle. Or for the sniffles.

After you check in with the receptionist, you hear the dreaded words: your health insurance policy has been terminated.

You'd be surprised. Confused. Worried.

For the past two years, that's what doctor's visits have been like for Theresa Gonnella, a 74-year-old Bloomfield, NJ, widow.

Gonnella is covered under a Medicare Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield plan, and her premiums are paid by the Newark Housing Authority.

[Click Here To Read More](#)

## To Explain Longevity Gap, Look Past Health System

By John Tierney

If you're not rich and you get sick, in which industrialized country are you likely to get the best treatment?

The conventional answer to this question has been: anywhere but the United States. With its many uninsured citizens and its relatively low life expectancy, the United States has been relegated to the bottom of international health scorecards.

But a prominent researcher, Samuel H. Preston, has taken a closer look at the growing body of international data, and he finds no evidence that America's health care system is to blame for the longevity gap between it and other industrialized countries.

[Click Here To Read More](#)

## The Smell of Freshly Cut Grass...and FDCPA Lawsuits

By Tom Sizer

I have a confession to make. Even though I am in the corporate world and work at my desk all day, I really would rather be somewhere else. I'd rather be working on my acreage riding my John Deere. I keep telling my boss that some of my best work is done while I'm cutting my grass; sniffing Kentucky Blue grass clippings up my nose generates some of my best ideas.

For example, in 2007 I was discussing a product idea with a CTO of a collection agency

[Click Here To Read More](#)

## Creditors Are Shifting Strategy: Soon, Less will be More

By Paul Legrady

*As a result of economic pressures, a shift in creditor strategy is taking place in the industry. This change in approach has the potential to reshape many collection agencies in the coming years – in ways that are not at all obvious today.*

Credit issuers seeking recoveries of charged-off debt have grown impressive networks of service providers in recent years. More collection agencies have been hired as volume has grown. Buyer lists for portfolio sales have lengthened, with credit issuers seeking to identify potentially capable buyers. More first party agencies, collection law firms, and even technology vendors have been added to recovery networks as credit issuers have sought to handle more charged-off paper.

[Click Here To Read More](#)

## Tip of the Month

In October, Tony wants each of you to talk uneven... dollars and cents, that is. Not every patient's balance can be a nice, round number; and, most of the time, patients will expect your practice to either excuse any left-over portions of their balance, or will just conveniently not pay the last, small portion. There are ways to avoid this all-too-common occurrence.

Think about this: You are on the phone with a patient who owes your practice \$357.98. You collectively decide to allow that patient to enter into a payment plan of \$50.00 per month to pay off their balance. The first payment for the patient should be \$57.98, and each month thereafter should be the agreed upon \$50.00 payment. This will even out their balance, and avoid any confusion at the end of their payment plan.

Not only will this practice help you collect a little more money up-front, but it will also prevent a headache in the future for both you and the patient. For any more questions, please feel free to [contact me](#) at any time!

## Understanding Debtors in a New Technology Environment

By Patrick Lunsford

The past 15 years has seen one of the largest shifts in personal communications behavior in the history of mankind. Although certain technologies like telephones, radio and television were massive breakthroughs that eventually saw near universal acceptance, nothing has enjoyed a rapidity of adoption like the Internet and wireless communications devices.

Interactions with consumers have changed dramatically due to the adoption of these new technologies. Marketers have certainly adjusted their practices to accommodate shifting consumer behavior. Accounts receivable management companies would be well-served to take a page from the marketers' book.

[Click Here To Read More](#)

## Collector University's Upcoming Seminars:

November 10: New Brunswick, NJ

November 11: Voorhees, NJ

November 12: Philadelphia, PA

(2010's Dates & Locations will be released in the near future. Check the Dates/Locations page at [www.collectoru.com](http://www.collectoru.com) for a complete list. Coming soon!)

## What you'll learn at each free Collector U seminar & luncheon:

### *"Collecting from Patients in a Difficult Economy"*

- 1) Avoiding small payments with long-term arrangements
- 2) How to set up a financial policy that improves cash flow
- 3) Collecting payments at the time of service
- 4) Individual laws for your state
- 5) Collection law updates
- 6) How to overcome objections from patients
- 7) Collection tools & techniques that will have you collect more money on your very next call!



Visit [www.collectoru.com](http://www.collectoru.com) for more information on our seminars!

## Check Out All Of Our Companies:

**Berks Credit & Collections:**  
Your Medical Collections Experts

Visit our website at: [www.berkscredit.com](http://www.berkscredit.com)



**Collector University:**  
Your Experts for Medical Collections Education

Visit our website at: [www.collectoru.com](http://www.collectoru.com)



**PCS Outsourcing:**  
Traditional Values, Outstanding Results

Visit our website at: [www.pcsoutsourcing.com](http://www.pcsoutsourcing.com)

