

THE RISK JOURNAL

A PUBLICATION FOR MMRMA MEMBERS

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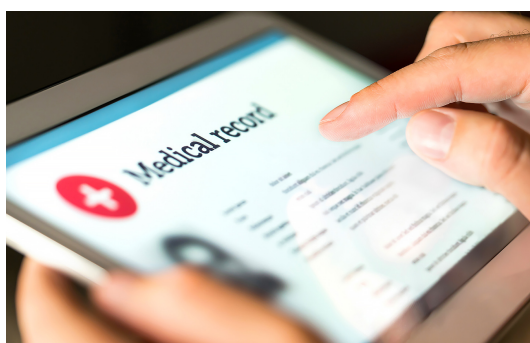
RISKS IN MEDICAL CARE, PART 2

Develop and Follow Sound Policies to Minimize Operational Risks

by Cindy King, Director
of Membership Services
and Human Resources

NEARLY 70 MEMBERS OF MMRMA are medical and mental health treatment providers across Michigan. Collectively, they offer a wide array of medical services, often supplementing the services of county health departments, many of which are also MMRMA members. The list of services provided is long and includes autism care, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, occupational and physical therapy, respite care, and speech/language therapy.

Some members provide treatment for chronic conditions such as diabetes or COPD, in-home care, transition services, housing assistance, immunizations, STD prevention, HIV testing, and hospice care. Other services may include hearing and vision screening, infection control, food protection, Meals on Wheels, and help for victims of elder abuse.



Medical care providers' responsibilities extend beyond health services to include cybersecurity, property and vehicle maintenance, and more.

Medical care providers also respond to emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic, floods, severe storms, winter weather, hazardous chemical releases, and utility disruptions. Some offer nursing home or assisted living services, memory care units, hospital beds and other inpatient medical care.

Beyond patient care and treatment

Offering such an extensive array of services to protect public health inherently comes with risk. And while patient care is obviously a top priority, medical service providers are also responsible for managing many other operational functions, includ-

ing cybersecurity, employee conduct, property maintenance, the safe operation of motor vehicles, and other areas that pose risk.

Managing operational risks

Management Study Guide (MSG) defines operational risk as "the potential loss which can occur because an organization has failed or inadequate processes, inadequate or failed systems, and/or incompetent people in the organization."

Broadly speaking, operations management is "overseeing the day-to-day practices of a healthcare facility that impact the client experience and organizational goals...

and operations often require unique solutions based on a variety of factors." ¹

Leadership lays groundwork

According to BFW, a firm that provides technology and equipment to hospitals, risks from operational deficiencies include "documentation errors, staffing issues, lack of structure, and procedures not being followed." ²

The primary responsibility for managing operational risks rests with leadership—directors, managers, and supervisors—since they are tasked with holding employees, service providers, and systems accountable for performance.

¹ <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/operational-risk.htm>

² <https://www.bfwinc.com/risk-management-in-healthcare/>

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Grant Program Updates Offer Additional Member Benefits

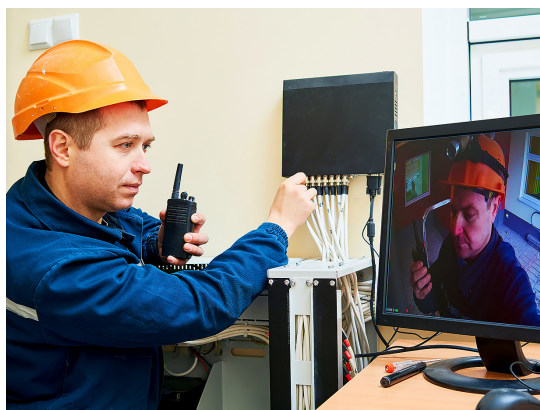
by Cara Ceci, Member Resources Manager

MMRMA'S NATIONALLY recognized and award-winning risk management programs are designed to help members reduce the risk of adverse occurrences and subsequent claims. Risk Avoidance Program (RAP) and Certification and Accreditation (CAP) grants are among the premier benefits of MMRMA membership.

Since the inception of RAP in 1997, MMRMA's grant programs have provided more than \$22 million to help offset member costs for equipment and training, and to help manage risks. In August, the Membership Committee approved a number of updates and revisions to the grant program guidelines. Most notable is the Maintenance Assistance Grant (MAG).

New Grant Type to Meet Specific Needs

MAG was designed to provide funding assistance for maintenance-related projects to address issues that pose an imminent danger of catastrophic loss; applications must include supporting financial documentation reflecting economic hardship. Additional details will be forthcoming about eligibility and the application process for this grant type.



Since their inception in 1997, RAP and CAP grants have provided more than \$22 million toward members' risk management efforts.

Updates to Current Grant Guidelines

The following updates were also made to current RAP/CAP guidelines:

Retroactive Funding

The timeframe to apply for retroactive funding of completed projects has been extended from six to 12 months.

Court Compliance Safety

Maximum grant funding has increased to \$20,000 per member.

FBI-LEEDA Training (law enforcement)

50% tuition reimbursement after completion of any course in this program.

Body Scanners for Corrections

1/3 funding up to a maximum of \$50,000 per member.

Mail Scanners for Corrections

1/3 funding up to a maximum of \$30,000 per member.

A new Maintenance Assistance Grant provides funding that members can apply for under hardship status.

Mileage and Lodging Training Assistance

Tiered reimbursement helps offset the cost of traveling to training/certification courses and workshops.

Grants for Cyber Risks

As a reminder, MMRMA offers several standard grants for risks related to cybersecurity and data breach. In addition, the RECTify (Remediate Emerging Cybersecurity Threats) Vulnerabilities Grant was introduced earlier this year to further assist in this emerging area of risk.

Members who discover a need for assistance with specific new vulnerabilities rated high or critical in the National Vulnerabilities

Database (NVD) of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) can email cyber@mmrma.org for more information on cyber risk and related grant opportunities.

Grant Applications To Go Digital in 2023

MMRMA is also excited to announce the upcoming rollout of an online grant application process.

Members will be able to complete and submit grant applications via the member portal at mmrma.org. Stay tuned for future updates on the online grant application in 2023.

Meanwhile, we encourage member employees who have not already done so to request a portal login for access to current RAP grant documents as well as dozens of sample policies and other essential resources for reducing risk in public entity operations.

Operational Risks in Medical Care, continued from page 1

Bartek Woroniecki at Skedulo, a developer of workforce scheduling software, writes: “At its core, operations management is the planning, organizing, and supervising of internal processes to keep an organization running smoothly.”³

Effective leaders understand the importance of managing employees and external contractors, starting with due diligence during the hiring process or when negotiating vendor contracts. Employee candidates or contractors must be thoroughly vetted and have the requisite skills, credentials, certifications, and/or licenses to perform the work for which they are hired.

Training, supervision, staffing

Once someone joins the team, conduct thorough and proper orientation processes and commit to daily and ongoing supervision of employees and contracted staff.

The ability to attract and retain talent is more challenging than ever for members across the state, and medical providers are no exception. Augmenting staff with contractors may be one way to alleviate pain points and meet a facility's needs.

It is critical that new and seasoned staff alike receive proper training and are informed about—and acknowledge their understanding of—new or updated



procedures. Ongoing training informs employees about existing and new procedures and ensures they can perform associated tasks, while also reinforcing their value to the organization.

Policies, procedures are key

Policies governing operations must be current and reflect best practices, and procedures written so employees can understand and reliably follow them. (See sidebar for a sampling of suggested operational policies and procedures.) These practices can reduce the potential for errors or mistakes and help staff develop “muscle memory” to perform tasks consistently.

This is especially important for incidents in which proper documentation is needed to protect against liability, reputational harm, financial loss, and other undesirable outcomes. It is essential to develop and implement policies and systems to keep electronic data, including patients' medical records, safe from cyber threats, and to provide services in compliance with federal, state, and other laws and regulations.

Facilities and fleets

Two other important operational areas are buildings and vehicles. It is important to address and monitor the physical security, cleanliness, and maintenance of premises and to properly maintain and service vehicles on appropriate schedules.

Documenting all routine tasks, such as building security checks, maintenance activities, and automobile service records are essential in managing these risks.

Develop a management review process to track incidents and help identify areas for improvement. It is advisable to require written reports to document slips and falls, possible or actual security breaches, and other potential incidents, particularly those related to patient safety.

Be sure documentation meets all requirements of the policy. Errors that might seem minor could be viewed as sloppy or even fraudulent, which could be costly—especially if such issues come to light during an investigation.

Policies and Procedures Checklist

Cybersecurity Policies

- Cybersecurity framework
- Vendor protocols
- Incident response plan
- Identity theft protection
- Integrating physical and cybersecurity
- Password authentication
- Proactive email monitoring

Employees/Contractors

- Legally compliant employment application
- Background investigations
- Reference checks
- Verification of required licenses, certifications
- New hire orientation and onboarding process

Employee Code of Conduct

- Distracted driving
- Document retention/control
- Employee safety
- Investigating complaints
- Reporting wrongful acts
- Use of email, social media, cell phones
- Workplace harassment
- Workplace violence

Vendor Contracts

- Bidding process
- Contract language
- Legal review
- Reference checks
- Verification of licenses

Property/Facilities

- Access and security
- Equipment maintenance
- Facility assessment
- Fire safety
- Housekeeping/sanitation
- Indoor/outdoor maintenance

Motor Vehicles

- Accident reporting
- Passenger transport
- Rental vehicles
- Vehicle inspection, operation, maintenance

³ <https://www.skedulo.com/resources/blog/operations-management-in-healthcare>

Inspiring Speakers Tout Resilience, Happiness, Creativity



In October, St. Ignace hosts the U.P. Jeep Creep, a spinoff from the popular Jeep the Mac event in May. The October event, scheduled during the peak fall color season, features trail riding, a haunted Jeep Creep, a scavenger hunt, and other activities for the entire community.

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The *Risk Journal* is edited by Tamara Christie, Communications Manager, and published six times a year for members of Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority. We welcome your feedback. To comment or suggest story ideas, please contact Tamara at 734 513-0300, 800 243-1324, or tchristie@mmrma.org.

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by Tamara Christie,
Communications Manager

AT THE AUGUST ANNUAL Meeting, a series of speakers shared thought-provoking and insightful perspectives with attendees at the Opening Session and Friday training opportunities.

Cooking up success

Chef Jeff Henderson

was the keynote speaker, sharing his story of being a former drug dealer and convicted felon. He found his purpose in the kitchen during his time in prison, eventually rising to the ranks of accomplished chef, published author, and television personality.



Chef Jeff returned on Friday morning to dive deeper into his own path to success and how it inspired him to help give other formerly incarcerated people a chance with jobs and a sense of purpose in restaurants and other businesses.

One of Chef Jeff's mottos, "If you can see it, you can be it," offers a reminder to everyone that it's possible to change their lives and achieve goals that may not always seem within reach at first glance.

Bridging labor force gaps

Labor economist Ron Hetrick explored what he termed a "demographic drought" and shared ideas for bridging the

gaps in the labor force. Hetrick explored long-developing trends that have been affected further by the pandemic and suggested flexibility, planning, shortening the hiring and onboarding processes, and focusing on "untapped talent" to meet staffing needs.

The value of being positive

Paul Krismer, author of *Whole Person Happiness*, discussed "the serious business of positive emotions." He revealed that success and happiness are correlated, but not as some people might suspect. It's happiness that makes us more likely to succeed, not to mention be healthier, more creative, and a host of other benefits.

Krismer shared research and a lot of energy as he offered tips for improving our state of mind, such as developing a daily gratitude practice and making it a habit to ask—and focus on—what is going well in our organizations, families, and lives.

Online access to resources

All three speakers' handouts are available to authorized users in our member portal in the My Documents > Workshop/Training Materials > Annual Meeting folder.

There you can also find resources from Anthony Huey, who spoke at the Saturday morning Annual Business Meeting of the Board of Directors. For more on Huey, see the August issue of the *Risk Journal*.



Denise McGinn, CAE, of Association Guidance was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Michigan Society of Association Executives on September 27, 2022.

Denise has worked with MMRMA since 2005, planning our Annual Meetings and Risk Management Workshops. "Denise is a key part of our team and a true ambassador to members at our signature events," notes Executive Director Mike Rhyner.

Please join us in congratulating Denise for this prestigious and well-deserved honor!