

Keeping Health Care Affordable For Workers And Their Families

VISIT HCCMCA ON THE WEB Your Comprehensive Information Source

Looking for a description of HCCMCA's Pharmacy Benefit Management program to present to your plan's Board of Trustees? Want to learn about the latest trends in health care? You can find that information and much more at HCCMCA.org, the Coalition's website.

"User-friendly" is how Dennie Castillo of the Alaska Teamster-Employer Welfare Trust, describes the site. That was the goal of last year's site redesign, which also made the site faster and more reliable.

Tabs Make it Easy to Find Information

The homepage gives you important news you can use at a glance. Right now, for example, you can download materials in support of Alaska's SB 116, a bill to allow alternative dispute resolution of workers' compensation issues. (See story p. 4)

Tabs across the top of each page direct users to the types of information they need most often. Click on the Programs tab to see a list of the services HCCMCA offers—from annual health fairs to vision care—with links to downloadable program descriptions and the websites of the organizations that provide the services.

Click on the Resources tab to find links to the newsletter archive and articles that speak to the issues that concern your members. Each link is introduced by a short excerpt to help you choose which to read first.

Castillo favors the Resources page because it "keeps members informed of HCCMCA's progress and diligent involvement with issues that are important to us. The newsletters reflect HCCMCA's dedication to helping its members keep medical costs low."

The Join Us tab takes you to a page that provides all the information needed to become an HCCMCA member and a comprehensive list of answers to frequently asked questions.



Updates Keep the Site Current

By their nature, websites require constant care and feeding. The website was designed to be easily updated so HCCMCA can deliver accurate, up-to-date information.

"We regularly post new links, news reports and program information. The next upgrade will add the ability to monitor website usage. Knowing how members use the site will help us tailor it to your needs," said HCCMCA Executive Director Fred Brown.

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CONTRACTOR TESTIFIES WORKERS' COMP ADR LEGISLATION SAVES MONEY

California construction contractor Dave McEuen told the Alaska Senate Labor and Commerce Committee that his firm reduced its workers' compensation premium payments 8% the first year after California passed workers' comp ADR legislation in 2003 and has reduced its Experience Modification Rate factor by 25 points over 8 years. He also testified that the ADR process substantially reduced the time



required to
resolve disputes.

Similar legislation, SB 116, is pending in the Alaska legislature. Most of those attending the April 5 hearing concerning SB 116 testified in favor of the legislation. Without taking a position, Workers' Compensation Division Director Michael Monagle testified that SB 116 identifies and attempts to address the most serious problems with the state's current system.

According to former Division Director Paul Grossi, SB 116 will help bring down medical costs. He testified that

Alaska's medical costs now constitute 75% of total workers' comp costs, up from 30% when he started working for the Division in the 1980s.

Physicians also support SB 116. Orthopedist Mark

Wade, MD, of the Fairbanks Surgery Center, wrote to the committee: "Too often in the current system, injured patients must cancel appointments on the eve of surgery because insurers obtain last-minute medical opinions to support controverting the treatment. I support SB 116 because I believe it will help bring certainty in the process of scheduling treatment and surgery for injured workers."

Contact HCCMCA for additional information and to learn how you can help achieve passage of SB 116. ■



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MAT-SU REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER JOINS PPO NETWORK

LOOK INSIDE FOR THE LATEST
ADDITION TO HCCMCA'S PPO LIST.

Since 1994, the Health Care Cost Management Corporation of Alaska, Inc. (HCCMCA) has been helping member health plans control health care costs by negotiating better pricing on health benefits and services than these same plans could achieve on their own. Current member health plans include 20 headquartered in Alaska and 11 headquartered in the Pacific Northwest.