



“Achieving a quality, equitable and sustainable health system”

Recently Published

Standards of Practice for
Pharmacists
Pharmacy Council



Employers' Compliance

BHeC monitors employers' compliance with the Health Insurance Act 1970. Bermuda has more than 4,000 employers; in November, 63 were reported to have inactive health insurance policies. Of these, 18 businesses re-established a policy once BHeC contacted them and seven reported closing.

Visit our web site at www.bhec.bm for all our publications and updates

Patient Records

BHeC has received a number of questions from the public regarding fees for transferring their medical files between physicians. Like most healthcare services, there is no regulated fee for the transfer of a patient's file. In the context of Bermuda's health system, which operates largely on a free market model, providers vary in the extent and level of charges billed for the services, with some waiving fees for services like referral letters and patient file transfers. Best practice suggests that any fees should be communicated to the patient before the procedure or action is completed.

Utilization Management

Following key stakeholder meetings to discuss the introduction of utilization management (pre-certification) for diagnostic testing, BHeC will soon release information to the public for their feedback on this important initiative. Utilization management is being pursued as a means to ensure medical necessity of select diagnostic procedures before they are conducted in order to improve healthcare quality and contain costs.

Diagnostic testing represents a significant proportion of Bermuda's health spending. It accounted for 40% of standard benefit claims and 8.5% of total health spending in FYE 2012; utilization rates increased by 25% from the previous year. BHeC estimates that reducing

local utilization of CT and MRI procedures alone could yield



cost savings of \$5.8 million per year if utilization patterns can be reduced to the average level of the OECD. The savings will be greater once other diag-

nostic procedures are included.

The process will require an insurer's Utilization Review (UR) Specialist to evaluate appropriateness of a medical procedure according to established clinical guidelines. The UR specialist will give approval to reimburse a health service provider for the procedure before it occurs. Emergency cases may be handled retroactively.

BHeC is currently establishing the procedures list for which pre-certification will be required, but it may include CT scans, MRIs, PET scans and select clinical laboratory tests.

Contact us on 292-6420 or healthcouncil@bhec.bm

Regulatory Updates



Employers: BHeC's focus on enforcement of the Health Insurance Act 1970 and public awareness of employers' obligations has ensured more employees have valid policies in place. BHeC

is pursuing legal action in some cases.

Professionals: The Pharmacy and Poisons Amendment Act 2013 passed. The Act enhances professional registration requirements and consumer safety, incorporates prescribing practices for advanced practice nurses and optometrists, and streamlines revisions to pharmaceutical schedules.

In November, all statutory bodies reported registration re-

quirements to BHeC. These reports indicated compliance with existing legislative requirements for registration and professional discipline. Maintenance and accuracy of some professional registers is being addressed by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer. **Technology:** Legislation is being drafted to establish Health Technology Reviews - a process to control the entry of high risk medical equipment into the health system.