

Chicot Memorial Utilizing MediTract's Contract Management System



Chicot Memorial Hospital, a primary acute care critical access hospital in Lake Village, was confronted with a problem that plagues hospitals both large and small. Even with a well-informed staff, because contracts and credentialing documents were located in multiple departments and locations, it was hard to track when physician insurance certificates and vendor contracts were coming due.

"We were searching for something that would allow us to have greater control and accountability over all contracts for our facility," says Bruce A. Bennett, CEO of Chicot Memorial Hospital.

"We are rural, but we continue to see significant growth, which is why MediTract is essential to our operation," Bennett added. "We use MediTract to manage all of our facility contracts. We can include the CEO, executive assistants and the department manager as responsible parties on all contracts so the key personnel are alerted when contracts approach their termination or renewal dates.

"Without exception, MediTract has benefited our staff with its accuracy, ease of use and convenience to all appropriate contracts and documents," he continues. "The first year of use resulted in a savings of approxi-

mately \$40,000 by enabling us to catch contracts we did not want renewed, but which contained evergreen clauses administration knew nothing about."

MediTract enables healthcare facilitators to easily manage, edit and review contracts and other important documents in a timely, easy-to-use manner. "The ease of producing a log of all contracts for the annual independent financial audit is one of the features we have grown to appreciate," Bennett says. "We also like that we can track credential renewal times for RNs, LPNs, CRNAs and other technical employees."

Chicot Memorial is one of a growing number of hospitals and health systems that have turned to MediTract, which serves more than 20 percent of the nation's hospitals. The company currently serves more than 1,200 hospitals and 5,000 related facilities.

MediTract is a division of TractManager, Inc., a national Internet-based technology firm specializing in secure, real-time access to customized and centralized contract and document management systems. MediTract is one of AHA Services, Inc.'s endorsed vendors.

For more information on TractManager and MediTract, please call Tina Creel at 501-224-7878 or visit the AHA Services, Inc. Web site at www.ahaservicesinc.com. ●

by **Elisa M. White**, Vice President and General Counsel, Arkansas Hospital Association

New HIPAA Guidance About Communicating with Patient Families

The number of HIPAA complaints investigated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights (OCR) has increased each year since the HIPAA Privacy Rules went into effect.

In 2007, OCR investigated more than 8,100 complaints.

As part of its continuing efforts to assist providers and others in understanding the HIPAA requirements, OCR has issued new guidance about communicating with

a patient's family or friends under 45 C.F.R. §164.510(b).

The guidance includes two publications:

- A five-page provider guide, *Communicating with a Patient's Family, Friends, or Others Involved in a Patient's Care*; and
- A three-page consumer guide, *When Health Care Providers May Communicate About You With Your Family, Friends or Others Involved in Your Care*.

Both publications are written in a question and answer format and contain specific examples of appropriate and inappropriate disclosures under HIPAA.

These items were published in September 2008 and are available on the OCR Web site at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/privacy.html>.

The OCR HIPAA Web site also contains other useful resources, including specific examples of HIPAA violations and their resolutions. ●