



The Association for Healthcare
Denial & Appeal Management

2022 Annual Benefit Report

About Us

The Association for Healthcare Denial and Appeal Management (AHDAM) is a public benefit corporation focused on bringing education, resources, and recognition to those working in the field of healthcare denial and appeal management.

The increasing growth of healthcare insurer audits and claim denials has created an increasing need for providers of healthcare (hospitals, physician's offices, home health care agencies, and the like) to include staff skilled in denial and appeal management as part of their revenue cycle, health information management (HIM), or compliance departments. Yet, today, there exists no nationally recognized standards for education or certification for persons working directly in denial and appeal management. Such persons would include clinical and technical denial appeal writers, utilization management and case management staff, physician advisors, contract management staff, and managed care representatives among others.

The purposes for which the corporation was formed, as stated in the articles of incorporation are:

- (a) To create a general public benefit through a material and positive impact on society and the environment through activities that promote a combination of specific public benefits described in Section (b) below.
- (b) To promote education and knowledge sharing in the field of health care insurance denial and appeal management.

WHAT IS A BENEFIT CORPORATION?

Benefit corporations and Certified B Corporations are both leaders of a global movement to use business as a force for good. Both meet higher standards of accountability and transparency. Both create the opportunity to unlock our full human potential and creativity to use the power of business for the higher purpose of solving society's most challenging problems.

<https://benefitcorp.net/businesses/benefit-corporations-and-certified-b-corps>

(c) To promote the interests of persons who manage insurance claims and claim appeals as an incident to the purposes stated above.

(d) To provide services, resources, and knowledge regarding medical insurance appeals to patient communities.



General public benefit

AHDAM has an overall vision of creating general public benefit through creating an even playing field where patients and healthcare providers are successful in persuading medical insurers to make proper payment decisions. Creating success for providers begins with educating providers on the rules of engagement in working with medical insurance payers. The end goal is for providers to obtain appropriate payment for appropriate services with as little expenditure of costly resources to achieve that goal.

Healthcare providers are not the only parties affected by healthcare insurance denials. Insurance policy beneficiaries also may incur additional expense for healthcare that is denied payment by the insurance plan. The vast majority of beneficiaries do not know that in certain circumstances they have a legal right to appeal the decision of an insurance carrier to deny coverage of healthcare benefits. AHDAM has a vision to help patients appeal inappropriate insurance denials to avoid the unexpected additional liability that can occur from denied claims. AHDAM would like to provide help through pro bono filing of appeals on behalf of the patient. Thus, the word patient appears in AHDAM's vision statement regarding creating an even playing field with medical insurance payers.

Investing AHDAM profits into providing pro bono work on behalf of beneficiaries is a future goal of AHDAM that will require creation of the platform and processes needed to provide this important work. Members of the denial and appeal community with the right expertise will assist beneficiaries in filing their appeal or will file the appeal on the beneficiary's behalf. We believe success in creating this general public benefit will occur in time when the association has a well-established member base and support from interested parties in creating this benefit.

Specific public benefit

AHDAM set out to provide a specific public benefit. That benefit is articulated in our mission statement. AHDAM exists to support and promote professionals working in the field of healthcare insurance denial and appeal management through education and collaboration. AHDAM has been successful in attracting members and providing educational benefit to those members.



Educational offerings

AHDAM has created a specific public benefit through its educational offerings.

Nine complimentary 60-minute webinars were offered to both AHDAM and non-AHDAM members in 2022, an increase of 3 webinars over the previous year. The webinar recordings and handouts were made available on the AHDAM website.

Continuing education units (CEUs) were purchased by AHDAM for the AHDAM member attendees. CEUs offered included:

- Association of Clinical Documentation Improvement Specialists (ACDIS): Certified clinical documentation specialist (CCDS)
- National Association of Healthcare Revenue Integrity (NAHRI): Certification in Healthcare Revenue Integrity (CHRI)
- Commission for Case Manager Certification (CCMC): CCM board certified case managers
- American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA): Certified health information management professionals
- American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC): Registered nurses

In total, 1,464 individual CEU certificates were awarded to webinar attendees, an increase of 901 CEU certificates from 2021. The breakout of CEUs was:

- AHIMA 271
- ANCC 632
- ACDIS 308
- CCMC 206
- NAHRI 47

In total, the webinars hosted 2881 attendees, an increase of 782 attendees, up 27% from 2021.

Requesting feedback from webinar participants is a requirement for issuing CEUs. The feedback from webinar attendees was overwhelmingly positive.

“I have written appeals for the hospital close to 15 years, and by far your webinars are the most informative. I register each time one is posted by your group.”

“This was the best lecture yet!!!”

“I'm surprised at how much basic knowledge I gleaned!”

“This all makes so much sense...can't wait to try it.”

“[I was] left with very thoughtful ideas.”

“It will help me with my peer-to-peer conversations with medical directors.”



AHDAM collaborated with the Idaho/Washington local ACDIS chapter to present an educational webinar focused on Clinical Documentation Specialists (CDS) in the management of clinical validation denials. It

proved very beneficial to the members and AHDAM was asked to present an additional webinar pertaining to the role of CDS' in the prevention of clinical validation denials.

Knowledge transfer

Twelve monthly members-only newsletters were produced with input from AHDAM advisory board members and other industry experts. A self-guided appeal writing workshop is available to members. Other resources provided to members include latest industry news and a knowledge center with timely articles on current issues in denial and appeal management.

Member support

AHDAM saw a 35% increase in membership during 2022. A member's survey was completed in November 2022 and emailed to all active members. 70% of members reported being very satisfied with their membership and 30% reported being satisfied. 80% felt they were very likely to renew their membership and 20% were likely to renew. 100% would recommend AHDAM membership to others. The denial and appeal management webinars were a clear favorite of AHDAM offerings. The Knowledge Center was felt to need the most improvement. 90% of respondents were interested or very interested in a live, onsite 2-day workshop on denial and appeal management.

Engaging a membership management agency was an AHDAM goal for 2022. AHDAM sought out and hired a membership management corporation in May 2022. Clemons & Associates, Inc. was hired to assist with managing the member directory, dues, surveys, communication, and distribution of CEU certificates. Clemons & Associates, Inc. will take over managing and distributing The Benefit newsletter and The Brief weekly emails with content developed by AHDAM. They will also manage CEU certificates, member support, and the membership database. The goal is to improve CEU certificate turnaround time, provide more responsive member assistance, consistent member communications, and accurate member data.

Clemons & Associates, Inc. began work on transitioning the AHDAM website to a new membership-focused website platform. Investigation of functionality of creating a member forum, as requested by members, was placed on hold until the new platform is active.

Educational offerings in 2022 were broadened to include outpatient services, as evidenced by a webinar on total joint surgeries (usually outpatient in 2022) with more planned for 2023. Broadening our educational offerings was a goal for 2022 and remains a goal for 2023.

Planning was begun for:

- certification
- an onsite or virtual appeal writing workshop
- successful succession of the association president
- addition of another board member from the revenue cycle or HIM field

Assessment of Societal and Environmental Performance

AHDAM was established as a benefit corporation in the state of Maryland. Maryland State Code, § 5-6C-08, regarding corporations and associations requires benefit corporations to annually complete an assessment of the societal and environmental performance of the benefit corporation. The assessment must be completed in accordance with a third-party standard. Annual benefit corporation assessments using a third-party standard is also a recommended best practice for benefit corporations. The assessment helps benefit corporations understand how they are meeting the intent of benefit corporations which is to provide a positive impact on societal or environmental needs. To meet this requirement, AHDAM recently completed the B Impact Assessment¹ created by B Lab, a global network that creates standards, policies, and tools for business and certifies B Corps². The results of the assessment were shared with AHDAM's Board of Directors at the April 25, 2023, quarterly meeting.

This report was prepared by:

Denise Wilson, President
The Association for Healthcare Denial and Appeal Management Benefit Corporation
8600 LaSalle Rd, Suite 625
Towson, MD 21286

Karla Hiravi, Vice President
PayerWatch
8600 LaSalle Rd, Suite 625
Towson, MD 21286

As required by Maryland code, this report was shared with AHDAM's stockholders on 4/25/2023.

¹ <https://bimpactassessment.net/>

² From their website, <https://bcorporation.net/>