

In brief: Providers can now look up status of appeals, OHI buys Apex from Aetrex



by: HME News Staff - Friday, March 6, 2015

WASHINGTON – The Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals has launched a new tool that allows providers to check the status of appeals at the administrative law judge level, AAHomecare reported last week. Providers can access the tool, called the ALJ Appeal Status Information System, by going to OMHA's website, www.hhs.gov/omha, and selecting the "Appeal Status Lookup" link from the navigation bar on the left side. "We applaud OMHA for taking this step to allow suppliers to see what is going on with audits affecting their business and giving them a resource for following up on those appeals," stated Kim Brummett, vice president of regulatory affairs, in a press release from AAHomecare. The tool allows providers to query level 2 and/or level 3 appeal numbers to get information on the receipt date and the status of the appeal, and the ALJ assignment and team phone number. In November, AAHomecare reported that more than 900,000 appeals were [backlogged](#) at the ALJ level.

OHI buys Aetrex's Apex division

TEANECK, N.J. – Orthotic Holdings Inc. has acquired the Apex Foot Health & Wellness division of Aetrex Worldwide, the companies announced March 3. The deal will allow OHI to increase its lower extremity offering, according to a press release. The Aetrex management team will continue to serve as advisers to OHI and the new operation will remain at the current location in Teaneck, N.J. "OHI will begin immediately devoting the resources necessary for Apex to maintain its leadership position and to reach ever greater heights through new and innovative design and technologies," stated Ivan Sabel, CEO of OHI, in the release. Aetrex credited its 20-year relationship with OHI as a strong factor in its decision to sell. "Together, we've served thousands of customers and millions of patients whose consequent outcomes have benefitted measurably through the partnership," stated Larry Schwartz, CEO of Aetrex, in the release. "I'm fully confident that such relationships and patient outcomes will continue to thrive under the OHI umbrella."

Patient Home Monitoring to acquire company in Virginia

LOS ANGELES – Patient Home Monitoring has executed a letter of intent to acquire a \$5 million healthcare company in Virginia that offers home accessibility products like patient lifts. PHM is a \$50 million company focused on rolling up annuity-based healthcare service companies in the U.S. "We now have four LOIs that are awaiting closing with total revenue in excess of \$15 million," stated Michael Dalsin, chairman of the board of PHM, in a press release. "Assuming we close all four deals, PHM's annual revenue run-rate will exceed \$65 million." PHM plans to close the deal with a mix of cash and stock, issuing less than 1% of its outstanding common shares. Upon closing, the owners of the unnamed company, who will stay on board, plan to begin cross selling their products and services across Georgia, Maine and South Carolina.

Hasco Medical secures \$1M in credit

ADDISON, Texas – Hasco Medical has secured an additional line of credit with Hancock Bank, the company announced last week. Hasco will use a \$1 million secured revolving line of credit from the bank to grow BraunAbility and Vantage Mobility, and to acquire companies and dealerships throughout the U.S., according to a press release. "This new facility allows us the flexibility to act on acquisitions that we may not otherwise have been nimble enough to act on in the past," stated Shane Jorgenson, CFO, in the release.

Medtrade's 6-4-18 series returns

LAS VEGAS – The "6 Building Blocks 4 Success in the Next 18 Months" (6-4-18) series returns to Medtrade Spring, March 30-April 1 at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center in Las Vegas. "These hand-selected sessions in the 6-4-18 series are filled with information that you can learn from immediately, as well as implement into your short- and long-term business strategies," stated Show Director Kevin Gaffney in a press release. The six sessions are free with a conference pass or can be added to expo-only passes for \$49. Sessions include "Tired of Revisiting, Revising and Redoing: Develop a Solid Plan to Collect Patient Pay from the Get Go" with Sarah Hanna and Kit Shellhouse of ECS Billing & Consulting North; and "Retail Sales: Innovation and Aggressiveness While Avoiding Legal Pitfalls" with Jeff Baird of Brown & Fortunato.

Roscoe, MED Group strengthen relationship

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STRONGSVILLE, Ohio – Roscoe Medical has expanded its partnership with The MED Group by making more of its portfolio of products and services available to members. Roscoe and The MED Group now partner on more than 4,000 items, including those in Roscoe's new [Viverity](#) retail product line. "We are grateful to have the opportunity to expand our partnership with The MED Group and look forward to providing their members with our comprehensive portfolio of products and services that will support their growth," stated Ryan Moore, vice president of sales for Roscoe, in a press release.

Convaid launches contest

TORRANCE, Calif. – Convaid has launched a Convaid Care Contest to bring together special needs families to answer the question, "What do you wish you had known at the time of your child's diagnosis?" Three entrants will win a new accessory for their child. Contestants can participate in one of three ways: essay of 200 words or less; a photo; or a video of one minute or less. The deadline to participate is March 31. For more information, visit www.convaid.com or call 1-888-convaid.

Active Healthcare releases 'All About That...Sleep'

RALEIGH, N.C. – The Sound Sleep Institute, a sleep consulting and treatment program from IntegraSleep and Active Healthcare, has released "All About That Sleep," a music video that parodies the hit single, "All About That Bass," to celebrate Sleep Awareness Week. The video showcases a common occurrence in undiagnosed cases of sleep apnea—patients are unaware of the sleep disorder until their bed partner recognizes the signs like snoring and pauses in breathing. "Sleep is one of the three pillars of health, in addition to diet and exercise, that often gets discounted or overlooked in our culture," stated Steven Feierstein, CEO of Active Healthcare, in a press release. "Sleep Awareness Week is the perfect opportunity to revisit and rethink our quality of sleep and how we can make sleep a bigger priority for our overall health and well-being." Sleep Awareness Week is a national campaign run by the National Sleep Foundation to educate Americans about the importance of sleep. It kicked off March 2 with the release of the NSF's "Sleep in America" poll and ends March 8 with Daylight Savings Time.

Virginia association announces 2015 lineup

GLEN ALLEN, Va. – The Virginia Association of Durable Medical Equipment Companies announced its officers for 2015 at its winter meeting in late February. The officers are Sam Clay of Clay Home Medical, president; Ronnie Rankin of Culpeper Home Medical, vice president; Robin Powers of Friendship HME, treasurer; and Stephanie Hess of Community Home Care Services, secretary. The at-large directors are Jolynn Hamelman of Roberts Home Medical, Anthony Ellis of Ellis Home Oxygen, Mark Bragg of Atlantic Medical, and Angie Fishel of Valley Home Care. A new director: Justin Miller of ABC Healthcare. Associate at-large directors are Noel Booker of Philips Respironics and Gil McCall of VGM.

Comorbidities increase medical costs for COPD patients, study says

LEXINGTON, Ky. – Patients with COPD and multiple comorbidities, like cardiovascular disease, diabetes and asthma, are more likely to have increased medical costs, according to a study released by the University of Kentucky College of Public Health. COPD patients without comorbidities spent about \$4,800 on health care, while those with four or more comorbidities spent nearly \$28,000. The retrospective observational study was done using data from 183,681 COPD patients from January 2009 to September 2012.

Short takes: ASA, Freeport Home Medical, BSN

The **American Sleep Association** launched the first annual "Stop Snoring Day" on March 2 to increase awareness about the sleep disorders associated with dangerous snoring. About half of the adult population snores and for 4% to 10% of them it's an indication of obstructive sleep apnea, according to the association...**Freeport Home Medical Equipment** has hired Christopher Robinson as a field sales manager. Previously, he worked as an insurance auditor for 24 years...**BSN Medical** has awarded the 2015 BSN-Jobst Research Grant in Venous and Lymphatic Diseases to Andrew Kimball, a resident surgeon at the University of Michigan Hospitals and Health Centers in Ann Arbor, Mich. With the \$100,000 grant, Kimball will investigate the mechanisms of venous thrombus resolution under the mentorship of Peter Henke, past president of the American Venous Forum.

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