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Alliance Collection Service, Inc. Newsletter

January / 2010

Issue: 37



Welcome to Alliance Collection Service, Inc.

The Rising Tide of Bankruptcies

I recently received an inquiry from my friend and frequent newsletter contributor, Sheila Wallace. She had questions on a topic I am hearing more and more about as we move through the current economic downturn. Here is a summary of her inquiry:

"The practices I support are seeing an increase in all forms of bankruptcies from our patients. Can you please help me understand the difference between a Chapter 7 Bankruptcy and a Chapter 13? What should we be doing when we receive a bankruptcy notice? How do collection agencies deal with these issues? And finally, moving forward, how do you advise a practice on handling that patient if he or she returns to see the doctor in the future?"

What a timely series of questions. In order to provide concise answers, I called on an expert in this area, ACSI's very own Tony Palmer. Mr. Palmer is the Director of Collections at Alliance, and he has some good advice for dealing with this complicated issue. Hopefully, together, we can provide some useful feedback.

A Chapter 7 bankruptcy is a bankruptcy in which creditors will receive no payment for any portion of the bill. Zero. This form of bankruptcy wipes the slate clean for the debtor and leaves creditors without repayment. A Chapter 13 is very different. This type is known as a "wage earner" bankruptcy. Here the bankruptcy trustee will work with the court to repay a portion of the bills that are filed with the court. The amount is usually a small percentage of the original balance. However, this balance can be withheld from the debtor's paycheck, similar to a garnishment. The original creditor will be contacted during this process. It is a kind of negotiated settlement. The payment is then remitted to the original creditor over a period of time.

Both of these types of bankruptcies protect the debtor from further collection attempts. Once the bankruptcy is filed, neither the original creditor, nor a third party collection agency can make further collection

[ACSI "A company large enough for what you need, small enough for what you want."](#)



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WHO CARES?

Happy New Year! If you are like most people, you decided to make some new year's resolutions. Some may want to shed a few pounds this year. Others might want to quit smoking or dipping, and others may want to concentrate on becoming a better husband, wife, employee, or employer. It is also likely that you will share this resolution with a friend or co-worker in attempt to establish some form of accountability.

Well who cares? The answer is....God does. No one else will be there to hold you accountable every second of every day. No one else is as concerned about your plans and dreams. Why does He care? He cares because He has a specific purpose for you this year. It includes your family, your job, your church, and your social circles. Ephesians 2:10 says God has prepared works for us in advance. God is concerned with you fulfilling your purpose in Him because He would like to bless you and teach you about who He is and who you are in Him. There is nothing more fulfilling than finding this purpose, but first, you have to seek it.

Live Free in Christ,

Judge Kevin Crook

HEALTHY TIP

attempts. It is very important that the practice notify the collection agency immediately, if they receive a bankruptcy notice and that account has already gone to collections. Creditors should not send any accounts that are known bankruptcies to collection agencies. This could result in legal action being taken and could be costly to defend. All bankruptcy files should be dealt with at the original creditor. Communications between the agency and original creditor is of the utmost importance in making sure everyone is aware of a bankruptcy situation. All too often this information doesn't get disseminated quickly enough, and debtors are contacted when they shouldn't be.

As far as future contact with that patient is concerned, the best advice may be; proceed with caution. Future visits to see the doctor would be considered the creation of a new debt and would not be covered by the past bankruptcy filing; however, collecting is prohibited from anyone who hasn't been dismissed or discharged from a bankruptcy. Both parties should have a clear and renewed understanding of the financial responsibility policies of the practice. Dealing with this situation, however rare it may be, can be awkward for both parties. Having a written policy in place beforehand is the best policy.

Well, we hope we have answered some of the basic questions about this confusing topic. As we move forward in this tough economic environment, bankruptcies will continue to flourish. It is important that everyone has as much information as possible on the facts, as well as a game plan for how to deal with it when it happens in your practice.

Jesse Hamby
Tennessee Sales Director
Alliance Collection Service, Inc.

New Year's Resolutions

Each year, most people make resolutions to make changes in their lives. These changes can vary from losing weight, exercising more, working harder, making more money, reading their bible more, going to church more, and the list could go on and on. I usually set crazy goals for myself, and I find that, by Valentines Day, they have all fallen by the wayside. I decided that this year I'd set smaller goals and set small rewards for reaching those goals. It would be better to set realistic goals in 2010 and get a little better, than set lofty ones and then get discouraged when they don't happen. This would be counter productive and actually set me back. So with that being said, our goal at Alliance in 2010 is to be better for you, our client, in as many ways as possible. We appreciate all of your business in 2009 so much and look forward to working toward even better results in the upcoming year. We have several things in the pipeline that will be very cool for the upcoming year. One of the things we are working on is a Virtual Collector. I won't get into too much detail in this newsletter, because there are a lot of details to work out. But, how would you like a collector to be able to work your accounts that would never make a mistake, always be courteous, never break policy, never call in sick, could work 24 hours a day, and never get emotional? Sounds amazing and too good to be true right? Check out next month's



BEAT THE WINTER BLUES

Tips to Avoid Seasonal Affective Disorder, or the Winter Blues

1. Keep active
2. Get outside
3. Keep warm
4. Eat healthily
5. Lighten up with light therapy
6. Take up a new hobby
7. See your friends and family
8. Talk it through
9. Join a support group
10. Seek help

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/winterhealth/Pages/10tipswinterblues.aspx>



Employee Spotlight

Faye Adam

Faye has worked in our Legal Department

newsletter to find out more!

Tony Palmer
Director of Collections
Alliance Collection Service, Inc.

Gaining more control of our lives through commitments and promises

Over the past few years I have read many books most of which are history or self-improvement based. There is no doubt that each book I read gives me new insight or provides me with a tool that I can use to either become a better person but the one book I find to be the most helpful in my day to day life, outside the Bible, remains "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stephen Covey. If you haven't read this book, I ask you to consider doing so. If you have, I recommend giving it a second or third read.

I, like so many others, take the opportunity each year during the New Year season to take a look at myself in order to determine where I can become more productive and proactive. I was browsing the pages of "7 Habits" when I came across this passage on pages 91 & 92. I thought it to be worth sharing with our readers. Mr. Covey writes:

"At the very heart of our circle of influence is our ability to make and keep commitments and promises. The commitments we make to ourselves and to others, and our integrity to those commitments, is the essence and clearest manifestation of our proactivity."

"It is also the essence of our growth. Through our human endowments of self-awareness and conscience, we become conscious of areas of weakness, areas for improvement, areas of talent that could be developed, areas that need to be changed or eliminated from our lives. Then, as we recognize and use our imagination and independent will to act on that awareness- making promises, setting goals, and being true to them-, we build the strength of character, the being, that makes possible every other positive thing in our lives."

"It is here that we find two ways to put ourselves in control of our lives immediately. We can make a promise - and keep it. Or we can set a goal - and work to achieve it. As we make and keep commitments, even small commitments, we begin to establish an inner integrity that gives us the awareness of self-control and the courage and strength to accept more of the responsibility for our own lives. By making and keeping promises to ourselves and others, little by little, our honor becomes greater than our moods."

I believe these are words worth reviewing at least at the beginning of each year and in my case, more often. When I came to work for Alliance 10 years ago Mr. Chambers told me that the company was "committed to Client satisfaction". Please know that we take those words very seriously and strive to renew that commitment to you every day.

since 2002. She handles all Bankruptcy related issues, helps out on Legal issues, and also assists the Front Office.

She lives in Saltillo, MS, with her grandson Austin who is 7. His hobbies include: basketball, Wii games, and pets. This keeps Faye very busy when she isn't at Alliance!

Faye's hobbies include Austin, church, and reading. She is very active in her church and enjoys all church activities. We caught up with Faye with a few questions.

Q: What do you like most about your profession?

Adam: I like the interaction with our clients and also the debtors.

Q: What is the key to being successful for a long period of time?

Adam: Part of the key is the department interaction. There is always something going to keep things interesting!

Q: If you are speaking to a stadium full of people and have their undivided attention, what one thing would you say them?

Adam: Try to do your best in all things at all times.



I hope and pray that you have a great 2010 and that God will pour His blessings out on each and every one of you throughout the year. Thank you for being our Clients and friends.

Ken Dulaney
Sales and Marketing Director
Alliance Collection Service, Inc.

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