

THE CHICKADEE POST

Q1 2025



AAHAM

American Association of Healthcare
Administrative Management

*The Premier Organization for
Revenue Cycle Professionals*

Maine AAHAM - Pine Tree Chapter

WWW.AAHAMME.ORG



Top News

March Commercial and Government Payer Meeting with Legislative Updates was a success. (Page 4)

Member Appreciation Day coming your way. Stay tuned for more information!

Our Chapter's Growth & Success Planning to Thrive!

As we enter the new year, we are thrilled to announce that our chapter is aiming for significant growth and success in 2025. We are evolving and changing!

Our hardworking team has successfully implemented new strategies and projects, and our goal is to increase membership, offer more education, and provide more networking opportunities!



VOLUNTEER

Ask us about joining our team!



President's Message:

Embracing Spring and New Opportunities

Dear Friends, Members, and colleagues,
I am thrilled to share my first President's message for our chapter! Thank you for electing me; I'm committed to working diligently to serve each of you and support the Maine healthcare community. As we welcome spring, I feel a surge of excitement for "rebirth", when the world around us bursts back to life with lively greenery and blooming flowers. The buds are starting to sprout, and the fresh energy of nature reminds us of the endless possibilities that lie ahead in our chapter!
I'm incredibly excited about the future. We have ambitious plans to create a dynamic chapter that not only expands

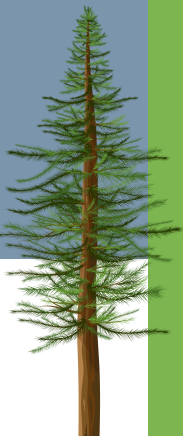
our membership but also fosters an inclusive environment where every member feels valued and empowered.
By bringing in new voices and perspectives, we can enrich our discussions and drive innovative solutions for our industry, all while using our tenured teammates as a compass to navigate.
Additionally, we aim to enhance our educational and networking opportunities, resources and connections. Together, we can increase our involvement and strengthen our chapter's impact.

I encourage you to consider getting a national membership with AAHAM, which offers a wealth of resources and support which can further enhance your journey.
Lastly, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks and high fives to our dedicated board members, generous sponsors, and each one of you for your continued participation and commitment to our chapter. Your involvement is what makes our Maine's healthcare industry thrive.
Let's embrace this season of growth together!

*Warmest regards,
Christine Telles*

About The Pine Tree Chapter President

Christine Telles is the President and Principal of Marcam Associates, bringing nearly 25 years of experience in the healthcare industry. She provides leadership for the company's day to day workflow and has advanced her expertise through education. A Certified Revenue Cycle Executive, Christine actively contributes to various professional organizations and has held leadership roles in multiple AAHAM chapters, as well as serving on AAHAM's national Government Relations Committee. Originally from Massachusetts, she now resides in New Hampshire with her husband and has three grown children in the New England area. She is also thrilled to welcome her two brand new grandbabies into the family!



A favorite quote from your president....

"Troubles, they may come and go, but good times, they're the gold."

— Dave Matthews Band



Innovative New LinkedIn Account

We launched our new LinkedIn account! This platform will help us connect and engage with each other more effectively. We have some exciting changes on the horizon aimed at growing our membership and improving attendance at our future events. Stay tuned for updates!

Look for the square image of our logo!

Every "like" and "repost" will help us spread the word!

Liking and reposting content on a new LinkedIn business account is crucial for several reasons



Check it out!

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/pine-tree-chapter-of-aaham/>



Pine Tree Chapter of AAHAM Hospitals and Health Care

79 followers

Message Following

- **Visibility and Engagement:** Engaging with posts increases visibility in your network. The more you interact, the more likely your content will appear in the feeds of your connections and followers.
- **Building Relationships:** Liking and sharing relevant content fosters connections with industry peers, clients, and potential partners. It shows that you are active and invested in your field.
- **Establishing Authority:** By sharing insightful content, you position your business as a knowledgeable player in your industry. This helps build your brand's credibility and attracts followers.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Engaging with others can lead to new networking opportunities, collaborations, and partnerships that can benefit your business.
- **Content Strategy:** Reposting content from others allows you to diversify your feed and provide value to your audience without always creating original content. This can keep your followers engaged and informed.



A big thank you to Maine General Medical Center for their generous hospitality in hosting us!

March Meeting

March Commercial and Government Payer Meeting with Legislative Updates was a success.

You wanted updates and we brought them! A special thank you to our speakers for sharing their insights and expertise. We appreciate your commitment to enhancing our knowledge and understanding of the ever-changing healthcare industry.

SPEAKERS



Andrew "Drew" Rogers
Martin's Point

Meet a Speaker



We decided to feature the talented Andrew "Drew" Rogers in this newsletter! Drew captivated us with his humor and engaging storytelling, making for an unforgettable experience. Interestingly, he is also an accomplished actor and model, which adds a unique perspective to his presentations. If you were unable to attend, we're so sorry you missed him. If you had the pleasure of joining us, we're sure he put a smile on your face!



2025

Board of Directors



Our dedicated team of volunteers serves the Pine Tree Chapter, bringing together a diverse range of expertise and passion for healthcare administrative management. Committed to fostering collaboration and driving our mission forward, they work tirelessly to support our members and enhance our community's impact.



JOIN OUR TEAM

President:

Christine Telles, CRCE, Marcam Associates 60 Rochester Hill Rd, Unit 5, Rochester, NH 03867, Phone: 603-834-0146, e-mail: ctelles@marcamassociates.com

Vice President:

Karen Clark, CRCS, CRCP, Redington Fairview General Hospital PO Box 468 Skowhegan, ME 04976, Phone: 207-858-8358, e-mail: kclark@rfgh.net

Secretary:

Julie DeMaere, Tegria, Phone: 207-694-1211, e-mail: julie.demaere@tegria.com

Treasurer:

Theresa Huck, Retired, Phone: 207-831-5995, e-mail: julie.demaere@tegria.com

Board Members:

- Nicole Bishop
- Barbara Jankovich
- Denise M. Tobin
- Timothy Moore
- Vickie S. Heath
- Paul Fitzpatrick
- Alex Denham
- Stacey Russell





We our Volunteers

Ask us about how you can help, it's mutually beneficial!

Volunteering for a our chapter allows you to make a meaningful impact in the Maine healthcare community while gaining valuable skills and experiences. It also offers the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals and expand your network, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose.

Stacey Russell

Maine General Medical Center

Stacey Russell is the Revenue Cycle Manager at MaineGeneral Medical Center and has been working in healthcare for over 14 years. Her areas of focus are guarantor receivables, vendor management, and data analytics. She is a Certified Revenue Cycle Professional and holds her Project Management Professional Certification, which have supported her in driving positive outcomes for her teams. A new board member to the Pine Tree Chapter of AAHAM, she is looking forward to bringing her experience across multiple areas of revenue cycle to our local chapter. Born and raised in Maine, Stacey enjoys playing Magic the Gathering, attending ComiCon conventions, and spending time with her daughter.

Welcome onboard, Stacey!



Ladies and gentlemen, hold on to your seats because we have a new superstar joining our team! We are ecstatic to introduce Stacey, a true professional in healthcare, who is set to shake things up and bring fresh perspective to our chapter! Thank you for joining our board of directors, Stacey!

MaineGeneral Medical Center



A favorite quote from your our friend...

"The best way to predict your future is to create it."

— Abraham Lincoln

Physicians decry ongoing Medicare payment cuts

Article One

The AMA criticizes Congress for allowing a fifth year of Medicare payment cuts, warning it threatens patient care and forces small practices to close.

"Physicians across the country are outraged that Congress's proposed spending package locks in a devastating fifth consecutive year of Medicare cuts, threatening access to care for 66 million Medicare patients." Bruce A. Scott, M.D., president of the AMA, said in a statement. "Despite repeated warnings, lawmakers are once again ignoring the dire consequences of these cuts and their impact both on patients and the private practices struggling to keep their doors open."

Physicians faced a 2.83% payment cut to Medicare Physician Fee Schedule reimbursements this January 1, marking the fifth time CMS has reduced payments to physicians. The Medicare payment cuts also come as CMS estimates a 3.5% increase in the Medicare Economic Index, which measures how much it costs to run a physician practice, AMA pointed out.

The trade association has calculated that Medicare payments to physicians are about 33% less compared to 2001 when adjusted for inflation.

AMA was hoping Congress would address the ongoing reimbursement reductions in the spending package. However, House Republicans ditched a bipartisan effort to stop the ongoing Medicare payment cuts.

"Congress has failed physicians, and Medicare patients will pay the price," Scott stated. "The window to reverse this reckless decision is rapidly closing. Lawmakers must explain either why protecting access to quality health care is not a priority or how they plan to fix it."

Other healthcare trade associations have also decried the Medicare payment cuts, urging Congress to undo them.

In a Feb. 28 letter to Congressional leaders, more than 100 organizations led by the American College of Radiology requested the inclusion of a fix to the 2025 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule conversion factor in any government funding legislation.

"Clearly, this unstable path threatens Medicare beneficiaries' timely access to quality care -- in both rural and urban settings," the groups wrote in the letter. "The ongoing downward reimbursement spiral is also contributing to consolidation in the health care system, as more clinicians are no longer able to sustain their practices and are forced to seek alternative business models, such as hospital employment, private equity and other alternatives. Finally, these cuts threaten the ability of our members -- who are employers and small business owners -- to serve as economic engines of our local communities."

House Republicans, with backing from President Trump, hope to deliver the bill to avert the government shutdown on Mar. 14 to the president's desk by Friday.

"The House and Senate have put together, under the circumstances, a very good funding Bill ('CR')! All Republicans should vote (Please!) YES next week. Great things are coming for America, and I am asking you all to give us a few months to get us through to September so we can continue to put the Country's 'financial house' in order," President Trump said in a social media post.

Jacqueline LaPointe, Director of Editorial
Published: **10 Mar 2025**

Source:

<https://www.techtarget.com/revcyclemanagement/news/366620401/Physicians-decry-ongoing-Medicare-payment-cuts>



Innovation despite 'white knuckle time' in healthcare

Article Two

Nearly all hospitals are adopting AI capabilities to ease clinical and operational burden. The hospitals with strong digital transformation and AI integration have healthier financial footing and are better poised for growth in the future.

"The biggest challenges right now are financial and regulatory, full stop," said Richard Zane, chief innovation officer of UCHHealth. "The financial pressure is on healthcare right now. I'm fond of saying, not in a nice way, that it's white knuckle time in healthcare. We're all going to have to make really difficult decisions and set priorities in an unapologetic way, and it's going to be about execution. "Many health systems are focused on deploying AI across their enterprises in a variety of ways. There will be machine learning, prescriptive analytics, computational linguistics, natural language processing and generative AI projects in the clinical, administrative and research arenas expected to have a clear return on investment. "We want to apply it to the routine and the mundane," he said. "We want humans working to the top of their scope and we want, whether it's a line of code or a bot, to work at the top of their scope. We are laser focused on making the routine and mundane easier, simpler, more efficient, cheaper and better." But AI isn't silver bullet for everything. The decision to incorporate AI into a new process or workflow can't be made lightly. There are risks involved and hidden costs in the time and resources it takes to smoothly integrate a new platform or application into existing workflows.

"AI is not magical. It's just math. And there's a lot of constraints within AI, and it can be scary or it can be exciting. We are right now at the peak of the Gartner hype cycle on AI, but we have to be

rational and patient on how we deploy it and what we use it for," said Dr. Zane. "I think at the end of the day, it's going to make things better for our patients, and for society, but we have to be patient and rational."

As the innovation leader at UCHHealth, Dr. Zane sees new ideas and AI-driven applications come across his desk daily. To keep his team focused, he subscribes to the "three C's of innovation" in healthcare: "compassion without competence is crap." "What that means is we are going to have to execute flawlessly to stay in the game," he said. "The other part that's really difficult is that we have an unsustainable regulatory burden. The number of people and amount of time that we've had to increase in the last five years to meet regulatory demand is suffocating. "To meet the demands of today's healthcare environment, Dr. Zane recommends simplifying processes and eliminating complexity." That's where adopting technology can help you execute on that goal, or it can go in the opposite direction," he said. "What I tell everybody that I work with, and who works for me, is that your job is to simplify and eliminate complexity. If you're going to present me with a plan that has 19 steps, I'm going to ask you why it doesn't have three. Then we're going to figure out how to make it simpler and more adaptable, and how execution can be flawless."

Laura Dyrda ([Twitter](#)) - Wednesday, March 12th, 2025

Source:

<https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/innovation/innovation-despite-white-knuckle-time-in-healthcare.html>





Maine hospitals, forests at risk after budget deal falls through

Article Three

A budget deal fell through in Augusta Tuesday night [March 11, 2025], leaving many Maine hospitals, providers and patients in limbo. (WGME)

AUGUSTA (WGME) – Maine healthcare providers are now in limbo after state lawmakers failed to pass a supplemental budget, needed to fill a big hole in the state’s Medicaid program.

Democrats and Republicans appeared to have reached a compromise, only to have the official vote fall just short Tuesday night.

A delayed funding bill means medical providers in Maine are no longer receiving all the payments they’re owed from the state, starting Wednesday.

"You’ve taken a crisis and turned it into a catastrophe, potentially," said Steven Michaud, president of the Maine Hospital Association.

The delay is a significant blow to critical access hospitals, including those in Rumford and Bridgton. These hospitals are now receiving only 70% of the reimbursements they would normally get. Plus, payment is being withheld altogether for any hospital claim over \$50,000.

Michaud said Maine hospitals are already operating in the red, and some may not survive without this funding.

"This level of a disruption in their payments will wreak havoc, and I don’t think it’s overstating the fact that if it goes on too long, we could be at risk of losing some," he said.

It’s not just the healthcare system relying on cash from the supplemental budget. There is also \$2 million earmarked for spruce budworm remediation, which experts consider the most dangerous forest insect in Maine.

If left untreated, budworm can defoliate trees and eventually kill them.

"With a predominant spruce and fir composition, northern Maine’s forest provides critical wildlife habitat, clean air, clean water, carbon storage and sequestration, and abundant recreational opportunities while supplying the fiber needed to fuel our \$8.1 billion industry," said Krysta West, deputy director of the Maine Forest Products Council.

The Maine Forest Products Council warns that there’s also a time constraint for this funding, amid a building budworm outbreak that covers 300,000 acres of Aroostook County’s forest. The area needs to be sprayed in the "narrow treatment window" this spring. Without it, the risk of forest fires increases.

"So while this deal might have gone up in smoke, the failure to act means our state could literally be on fire," said Senate President Mattie Daughtry (D-Brunswick). The Senate will reconvene Thursday for another attempt at passing the budget. However, lawmakers appear to be at a stalemate. Republican senators say they won’t vote without MaineCare reform, while Democrats have no plans to renegotiate.

by [Anna Coon](#), WGME

Wed, March 12th 2025 at 8:35 PM

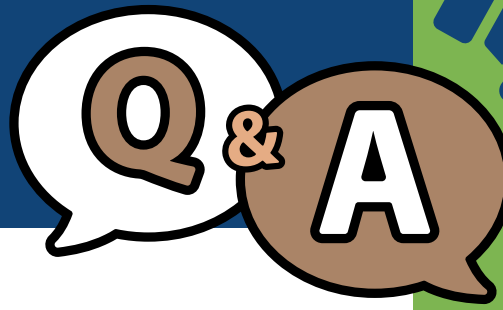
Source:

<https://wgme.com/news/local/maine-health-care-providers-left-in-limbo-after-budget-deal-falls-through-supplemental-budget-democrats-republicans>





Meet a Member



Makayla
Hussey

Thanks Makayla, for letting us highlight you!



Makayla Hussey is the Director of Operations at Marcam Associates, excelling in Client Services, Accounting, and Compliance. She holds an Associate's Degree in Business Administration and four AAHAM certifications, including the Certified Revenue Cycle Executive (CRCE), for which she achieved the highest national score in 2019. Makayla is also excited to welcome her first son, due in April, and enjoys spending time with her husband and their dog, Bruin.

Q1 WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO JOIN THIS CHAPTER?

I live in Maine and have been part of the AAHAM community for a while now. Joining this chapter felt like a natural fit to connect with my fellow Mainers!

Q2 CAN YOU SHARE A DEFINING MOMENT IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY?

Passing my CRCE exam through AAHAM was a huge milestone for me. It was a tough certification, but the effort was absolutely worth it for my career. It really set me on the path I'm on today.

Q3 WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE LOOKING TO GET MORE INVOLVED WITH OUR CHAPTER OR THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR IN GENERAL?

Join us! This community is fantastic—everyone is incredibly helpful and always ready to share advice. You won't regret it!

Q4 WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SNACK?

Do I really have to choose just one?! I'm all about salty snacks, and chips are definitely my go-to!

Q5 TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOU, THAT MOST PEOPLE WOULDN'T KNOW IF THEY MET YOU.

I actually took two years of automotive classes in high school and even earned a college credit for it!

Q6 WHO HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE IN YOUR LIFE, AND WHY?

My parents have had a huge impact on who I am. They taught me the value of hard work and that if I want something, I need to put in the effort to achieve it.

Q7 FINALLY, IF YOU COULD TRAVEL ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, WHERE WOULD YOU GO AND WHY?

I'd choose Disney World! It has always been my happy place, both as a kid and an adult. I've been lucky enough to visit many times, and I never get tired of that magical feeling.

A favorite quote from your our friend...

"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing."

— Walt Disney



THANK YOU

Sponsors

We can't thank them enough!

Sponsor support is vital to our chapter as it provides essential funding that helps sustain programs and services. These partnerships not only enhance financial stability but also increase visibility and credibility within the community. Sponsors often bring valuable resources, expertise, and networking opportunities that can amplify the non-profit's impact. Ultimately, their support enables us to fulfill our mission effectively and reach more individuals in need.

Our Sponsors



Pine Tree Chapter
of AAHAM

Why Sponsor?



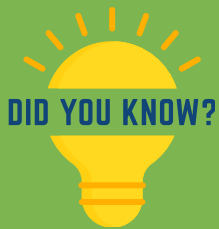
- Verbal recognition at all Pine Tree AAHAM events
- Recognition on Sponsor Slideshow at all Pine Tree AAHAM events
- Exhibit table at all Pine Tree events, including Annual Conference
- Recognition on our website, including company logo, and link to your website
- Advertisement in quarterly newsletter
- Featured on our LinkedIn page
- Opportunity to network with decision makers from many of Maine's largest providers
- Access to attendee lists for all Pine Tree AAHAM events



Chickadee Chatter

Welcome to Chickadee Chatter, your source for fun and fascinating tidbits! Here, we share quirky facts and intriguing insights that spark curiosity and brighten your day. Whether it's about nature, our community, or beyond, we hope these nuggets of information inspire you and get you chatting! Enjoy the chatter!

Cold Water: The waters off the coast of Maine are among the coldest in the U.S., which is why the state's seafood is known for its quality.



DID YOU KNOW?

Lobster Capital: Maine is known for its lobster, producing around 90% of the lobster caught in the United States.

Unique Geography: Maine is the only U.S. state that shares its border with just one other state (New Hampshire).

Revenue Leakage: It's estimated that healthcare organizations can lose up to 30% of potential revenue due to inefficiencies in the revenue cycle.



Snowman: The world's largest snowman was built in Maine in 2008 and stood 122 feet tall.

FUN FACT

Jiffy: A jiffy is an actual unit of time; it represents 1/100th of a second.

The **chickadee** is a small, energetic bird known for its distinctive black cap and cheerful "chick-a-dee-dee-dee" call. Found across North America, these birds are often seen flitting among trees and feeders, where they delight birdwatchers with their playful behavior and curious nature.





AAHAM

American Association of Healthcare
Administrative Management

*Empowering the future of healthcare
revenue cycle excellence.*

UPDATE

National AAHAM

The Pine Tree Chapter of the National AAHAM (American Association of Healthcare Administrative Management) is dedicated to keeping you informed and updated on national developments in our field. We aim to enhance your understanding of key issues and initiatives affecting healthcare administrative management.

Legislative Day

“Connect Locally, Influence Nationally”

April 14th - 17th, 2025

The annual AAHAM Legislative Day is a cornerstone of our advocacy efforts, offering a diverse array of opportunities to engage in informative sessions, connect with influential speakers, and participate in meetings with Federal congressional leaders during an in-person meeting in each state.



REGISTER NOW

Become a National Member



Becoming a member of AAHAM puts a world of revenue cycle experts and information at your fingertips.

With a call to one of our chapters, AAHAM members can network with experienced revenue cycle professionals who have faced many of the same challenges they face every day.

For a cost of less than a dollar a day, AAHAM membership is the best investment you can make in your career!



Membership Renewal/Application Form

Pine Tree Chapter of AAHAM is pleased to welcome you as a member.

Annual dues are \$25.00 per person.

Membership runs from January to December. Local dues cannot be prorated during the year.

To ensure that you are a recognized member for the Chapter year and receive all notifications of educational sessions, please submit your payment of \$25.00, made payable to “Pine Tree AAHAM”

Mail to:
 Theresa Huck
 405 Woodford Street
 Portland, ME 04103

If you are a member of National AAHAM and choose to pay your local dues through them, it is important that you still send this form (without payment) to the above address so that our records will correctly reflect your membership.

Please complete the following:

Name and Title: _____

Certification: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Check all that apply:

This is a new membership

I am renewing my application

I have paid my dues through National AAHAM

For Treasurer’s Use Only:

Check No: _____

Date Received: _____

