PATIENT ACCESS NEWS
UPSTATE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES FROM
PATIENT ACCESS SERVICES, UPSTATE CONNECT, AMBASSADOR SERVICES, AMBULATORY CALL CENTER

January 2026

Creating a Positive Patient Experience

Customer service for patients in healthcare, particularly from the perspective of registrars, revolves around empathy, clear communication, and efficiency during vulnerable moments. Registrars are often the first point of contact and play a crucial role in setting the tone for the entire patient experience. Below are a few tips on how to demonstrate good customer service and build rapport with patients.

- **Set the Tone:** The initial interaction at registration significantly influences the patient's perception of the entire facility. A warm welcome and a smile can reduce patient anxiety.
- **Build Trust:** Patients place their trust in healthcare professionals, and respectful, professional service helps build that trust.
- **Improving Outcomes:** Patients who feel respected and listened to are more likely to follow medical advice and engage in t heir own care, leading to better health outcomes and higher satisfaction.
- **Empathy and Compassion:** Understand that patients are often in a vulnerable or stressful situation. Demonstrate genuine concern for their worries.
- **Active Listening:** Give the patient your undivided attention, make eye contact, and actively listen to their needs and concerns.
- **Clear Communication:** Avoid medical jargon and explain processes (registration, billing, wait times) in a simple, understandable language.
- **Transparency:** Be clear about processes and manage expectations regarding potential delays or costs.
- **Professionalism and Accountability:** Know your job well and be accountable for the service you provide. Maintain professionalism at all times, even when a patient is having a difficult time.

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REGISTRATION TIPS

- When registering a patient always include the injuries and a basic description of how the injury occurred.
- Be sure to select the correct ***guarantor*** for a minor patient. Review the name and dob of the guarantor prior to selecting.
- Collect missing ***SSN numbers*** whenever you can, as they help with patient identity and insurance look up.
- Always include the ***billing address*** when creating a ***Generic Insurance.***
- Read the entire ***RTE*** response that is returned. Review any ***mismatch information.***
- Be sure to enter a reason for ***not collecting a copay.***
- Term all ***old insurances*** that are no longer being used.

LUNCH AND LEARN SESSIONS

PAS Power Hour

Topic: Financial Matters

Hosted by Janet Lewis

Friday January 23rd, at 2pm

UH Cancer Center

Room C1071

Join the meeting now

Please click on the link above to access the lunch & learn. Please follow the prompts for access.

Join the Teams Meeting by clicking on the link above or typing the address listed below in a web browser window.

If you have trouble with the links use the Meeting ID and Pass codes below.

https://www.microsoft.com/microsoft-teams/join-a-meeting

Meeting ID: : 295 767 004 873 01

Pass code: **ni2Gk9E2**

Quote of the Day

"It's not how much you do, but how much love you put into the doing."

— Mother Teresa

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Monthly Alert-Insurance Corner

Important information

Guarantor Accounts

There has been an increase in guarantor errors where the wrong guarantor has been selected. The guarantor is a the person or entity that is ultimately responsible for the bill. When registering patients, be sure you are using the correct ***guarantor type*** and ***selecting the correct guarantor.***

This can be tricky when registering a minor. Ask specifically who should be listed as the guarantor and verify the guarantors name, dob, and enter the full address, including the city, state and zip code. This is extremely important as this is where statements are mailed. Patients do not always live at the same address as the guarantor, therefore vetting this information is crucial.

Follow the guidelines highlighted in **policy G-06, Guarantor Assignment:**

https://upstate.ellucid.com/pman/documents/view/8653

Guarantor Types:

(PF) Personal Family Guarantor should be created for every patient with health insurance attached. Only one personal family guarantor may be active at a time.

- When registering a foster child, the guarantor type should be Personal Family. Be sure to list the department of social services as the guarantor.
- When registering an inmate the guarantor type should be Personal Family with the (DOC) Department of Corrections listed as the guarantor.

(WC) Workers Compensation Guarantor should be selected for any work related injury. The work related coverage should be added.

(TPL) Third Party Liability Guarantor should be used for an automobile accident, bicyclist accident or pedestrian related accident. The automobile insurance should be added to this guarantor type.

Please note: A Personal Family guarantor is needed for every patient at the patient level. Be sure to select the correct guarantor type for each encounter. Reach out to your training team for additional information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Participate in Research

Going forward, results will be featured quarterly showing the top 5 departments with the highest percentage of patient participation for ***OK to Contact for Research Recruitment.***

Results will be featured quarterly in the newsletter.

Office Hours with Shelley White or Kaniesha Mason will be offered via Conference Call or MS Teams. Please call Carol at 315 464-5035 or email Carol at andrewsc@upstate.edu) to schedule.

Insurance Basic Classes Schedule

Note: The Insurance Basics Class will be offered from 8:30 to 12:30 on the 4th Thursday of every month.

Sign up will be available in Self-Serve.

Patient Identity: Be sure to review the Name and DOB of **EVERY PATIENT** prior to putting the bracelet on their wrist. If there is any doubt, feel free to ask for photo identification for verification purposes. Also review patient photos previously taken at the time of registration to prevent identity theft.

Reminder: A registrar's role in patient safety is properly identifying a patient

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Take Note

naham National Association of Healthcare Access Management

CHAA CERTIFIED HEALTHCARE ACCESS ASSOCIATE

Listed below is the test window and dates for anyone interested in taking an upcoming exam.

Test Windows and Application Deadlines

Testing Window**	Application Timeline
January	apply between September 1 and November 30
April	apply between December 1 and the last day of February
July	apply between March 1 and May 31
October	apply between June 1 and August 31

**Exam windows are open all month for testing.

NAHAM Contact Hour Guide

The CHAA and CHAM certifications require achievers to earn contact hours towards maintaining their certification. Contact hours are separate from the ongoing work experience required for recertification and are specific to education, training, and other activities related to patient access or healthcare. NAHAM offers year-round opportunities to earn contact hours, including the Annual Conference, webinars, volunteer opportunities, and more.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A new icon will display in the Storyboard when a patient is marked as a veteran. The icon can be clicked to update the patient's military history.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Data Services Department Baby Boom!

Our tiny department has some new additions to introduce.

On December 26th, Ananya Choudhury's much anticipated baby boy was born. Baby Vyom Varada (pronounced Vee-Yom, meaning Space/Sky) weighing in at almost 7lbs. Mom and baby are doing great. He is the first grandchild on both sides of the family!

On December 28th, Dustin Adams' first granddaughter was born to his eldest daughter Alexia. Maeve Everly weighing in at 4lbs 11oz. She is tiny but mighty. Mom and baby are doing well!

Many congratulations to both families.

STAFF KUDOS

Compliment for **Heather Fenton** and **KeNajah Mathis**

Submitted by Grace White

I wanted to take a moment and let you know about exceptional customer service I received from Heather. As you know, we had some challenges getting our wristbands to print based on age in the Peds After Hours Dept. Right from the start, I reached out to Heather for some assistance as I had to test directly in Production. She was immediately accessible, proactive, and overall assisted me with a great can do, we'll get this done attitude! I really appreciated that! Also, wanted to call out KeNajah Mathis who stepped right up while Heather was not available and jumped right in to assist me with that same can do, positive attitude. There is no doubt in my mind that the customer service I received from these two ladies is something that comes naturally for them and I just wanted to pass that along!

Congratulations to team lead **Kachelah Flournory** for successfully completing her micro-credential program in "Learning to Lead"!

STAFF KUDOS

Snowflake decorating contest at Nappi and Kim Durand won 2nd place! Yay for representing Patient Access.

Submitted by Kim Durand

TOP COLLECTORS
WAY TO GO

POS Collectors (listed by number of accounts) for the month of December

Brett Parsons ……..Collected on 160 accounts ($28,321)

Kimberly Durand ……..Collected on 73 accounts ($2,773)

Lorrelle Ash……..Collected on 64 accounts ($6,685)

Randi Proctor ……..Collected on 60 accounts ($5,135)

Michael Vaughn…….. Collected on 49 accounts ($6,010)

Lets all try to make 2026 a ground breaking year with off the chart collections !!!

OPEN POSITIONS

Admitting:

OAS

Ambulatory Call Center:

Call Center Representative

UH CC:

Switchboard Operator

Nappi:

Ambassador

Clerical Specialist

Patient Access Associate

Senior Patient Access Associate

Downtown Central Reg:

Registrar

Senior Registrar

ED Registration:

10 OAS Positions (All shifts)

PID/Float:

Team Leader

Senior Registrar

Pre-Services:

2 HPSC1 Preregistration

1 HPSC2 Central Scheduler

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

January Birthdays

Hamdi Farah	01/01	Nappi
Abdias Nguemadi	01/01	UH CR
Manda Nelson	01/02	ACC
Yvonne Hodge	01/04	Admit
Dustin Adams	01/07	Data
Ryan Taylor	01/07	ED Reg
Shylah Brown	01/09	ED
Kazi Hossain	01/12	UH CR
Andrea Luce	01/12	PID
Alexander Hike	01/20	Float
Shentel Knight	01/20	UC CC
Brian Vire	01/23	Ambassador
Yara Aldwads	01/25	Nappi
Heather Fenton	01/26	ED Reg
Tamara Courtney	01/27	ED Reg
Angela Galutz	01/28	Ambassador
Dicy Robinson	01/28	ED Reg
Lauren Suits	01/28	MDD
Allison Lancette	01/29	Nappi
Tramar Wallace	01/29	Admitting
Michaela Brooks	01/30	UC CC
Toby Bryant	01/30	ED Reg
Andre Bak	01/31	UC CC

Welcome to the following new employees:

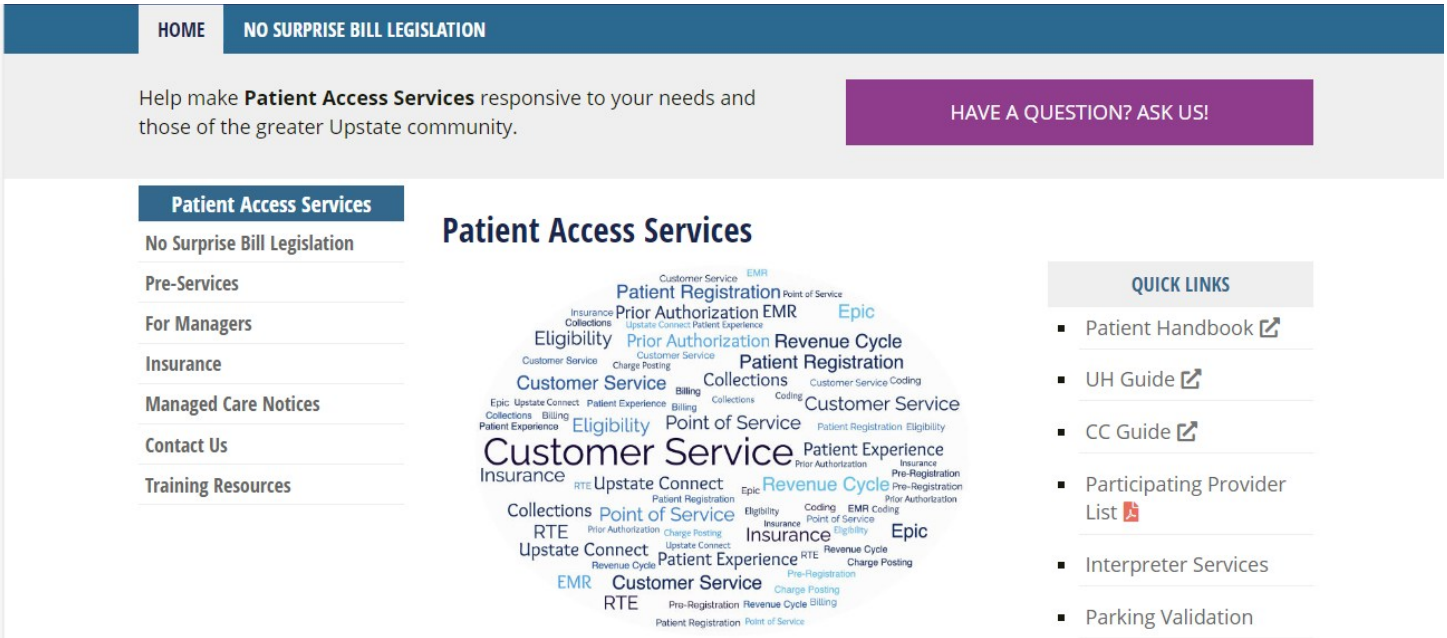
Isaac Denton	Nappi
Brian Vire	Ambassador

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Taressa Smith returns to ACC

TRAINING RESOURCES

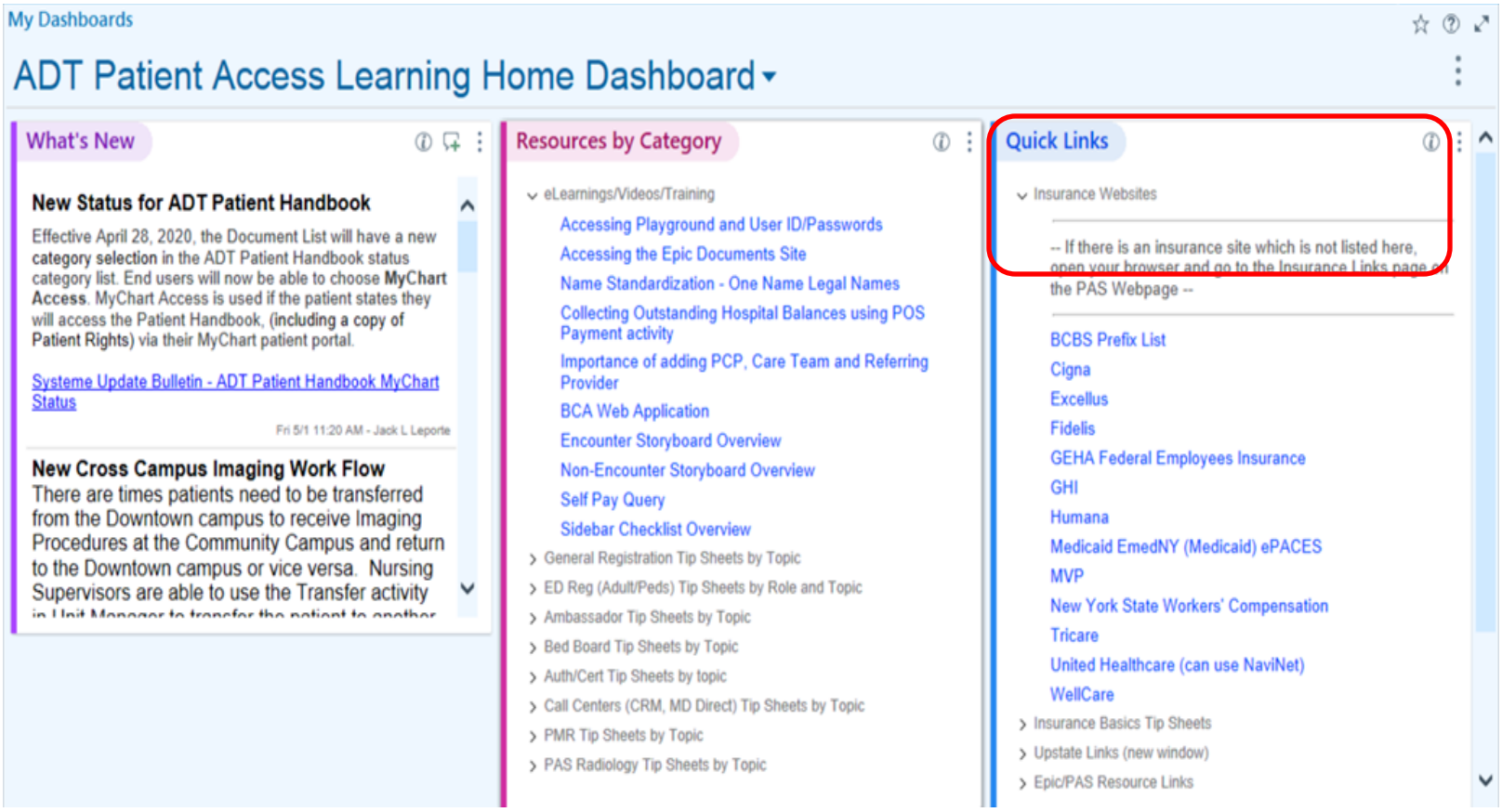
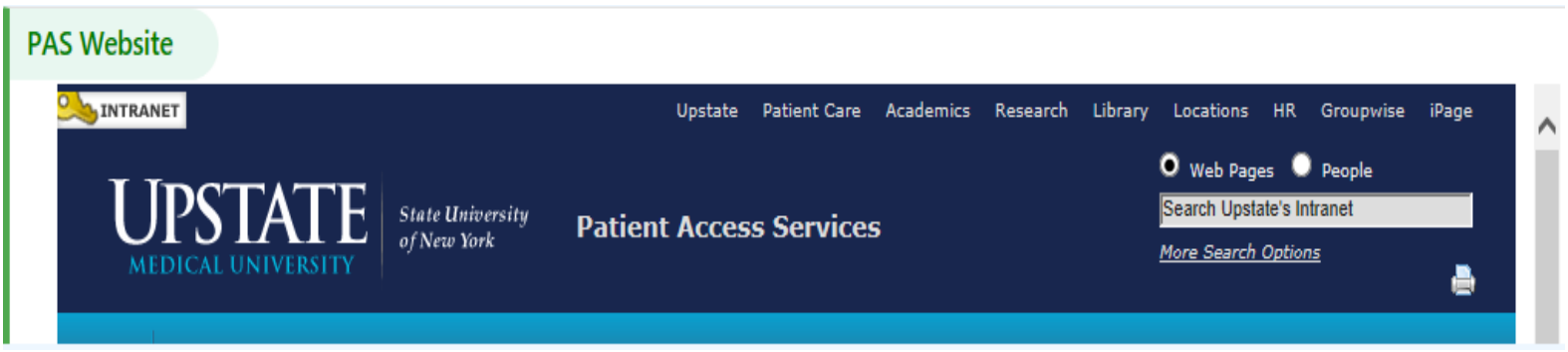
Did you know that the following training resources are available to you and can be found on the PAS Website at : http://www.upstate.edu/ihospital/intra/pas/contact.php



- **Tips and Tricks: Outlining approved workflows**
- **PAS Newsletter: Including updates and Registration Tips**
- **PAS Bulletins: Highlighting specialized desk procedures**
- **Policies: Link to intranet policies**
- **Insurance Links: Insurance Websites with instructions on navigating**
- **Insurance Cheat Sheet: Overview of insurance entry rules**
- **Point of Service Resources: Co-pay collection tools and scripting**
- **Have a Question? Ask us!: Email hyperlink to request information from Performance Improvement Team**
- **UH Inpatient Handbook: Hospital guides with information specific to site**
- **CC Inpatient Handbook: Hospital guides with information specific to site**
- **Interpreter Services: Link to Interpreter and Patient Communication Services**
- **Participating Provider List: includes a list of participating insurances**
- **Training Resources: Sign-up for Lunch and Learn Sessions. (If unable to attend, complete by Blackboard)**

TRAINING **RESOURCES**

Did you know that in addition to the PAS Website, resources can be found on the Patient Access Learning Home Dashboard. The dashboard allows easy access to resources. If something could not be found on the dashboard, the PAS website is easily accessed by scrolling to the bottom of the page.

Nice feature to use is the BCBS pre-fix list. To access just follow the steps listed below:

1) Click on Insurance Links found under Quick Links
2) Insurance sites will populate
3) The BCBS Prefix List is the first one listed