



NAMAS Weekly Auditing & Compliance Tips

February 5, 2016

The Assurance of Quality Assurance

Does your organization have a Quality Assurance (QA) plan in place? Does it contain policies for escalations or what to do when certain issues arise? Even organizations with the most experienced of auditors on staff can find extreme value in creating - and following - an effective quality assurance plan.

Many of us who view our job duties as a task-list or to-do's that need to be done tend to complete a project and quickly move to the next while enjoying the task of checking that item as 'done'. While every organization needs these 'work horses' to power through the job at hand, they also need the 'attention to details' teammate who looks up from their work and says, "hey, has that been QA'd?". No matter how good we may be at our jobs, human error occurs. This is why a QA program is beneficial. An effective QA program brings consistency in audit findings and interpretations for your staff.

When creating a QA program for your audits or

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when evaluating a firm to complete the task, there are several points to consider:

- **Staff QA Requirements:** It is important to consider who is being evaluated through the QA process. All auditors, regardless of experience or number of records audited, should be evaluated through a QA process. Auditing the auditor ensures ongoing education is fundamental and allows for continued identification of gray areas that may need internal policies to more accurately define a consistent interpretation.
- **Volume QA Requirements:** Setting a QA plan and escalation policy is imperative. Documentation Guidelines are 20 years old and are not clearly defined. Therefore, new staff to an audit team should have a higher QA requirement to ensure they are extrapolating the documentation accurately according to your auditing policies and procedures. This includes individuals with 10+ years of experience, but who may be new to the organization.
- **QA Auditor:** An organization should consider their preferences in who should perform the QA review. A good quality control process would be to outsource the QA review to a third party audit firm. This would allow an auditing process of your auditors with no additions to the current workload. Just be sure to vet their QA process! If choosing to internalize the process, an organization should consider the benefits of having one auditor as the "QA Director" versus having all of the auditing team auditing each other. Oftentimes, identifying someone on the

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NAMAS Product Spotlight

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Earn 8 AAPC CEU's and cover topics such as medical decision making, grey areas of auditing policies, medical necessity and more!

Upcoming Classes:

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Little Rock, AR: April 20

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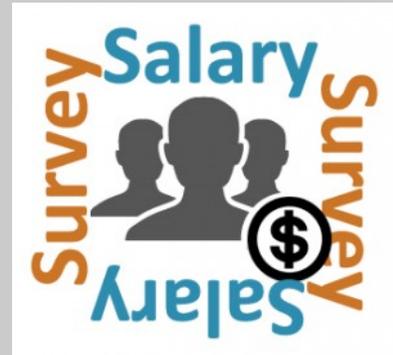
**Click the image above
for details**

team who has great attention to detail in the process may eliminate a "to-do" process from the QA program and protect the integrity of the process.

- **Finding and Escalation Policies:** The findings of the QA review should become part of an auditors employment record validating their strengths and the expertise of their auditing skills, or unfortunately noting deficiencies that must be addressed. There should be a clearly defined plan regarding acceptable precision ratings and the organization should have outlined acceptable QA parameters for their auditing team. This would be defined through an Escalation Policy of what happens when QA findings fall outside of the acceptable parameters. QA is not meant to be a process that threatens an auditors job, but if we hold physicians to precision error ratings, then why not the auditors who are scoring them, too?

This is not an all-encompassing guide to an auditing QA program, but merely an overview of some of the pressing concerns. As a client in pursuit of an auditing firm, you should expect a professional third party organization to have a healthy QA program and be able to provide details to validate the expertise of the auditing staff. As an organization, consistency and accuracy should be a foremost concern in order to substantiate the quality of the services provided.

Salary Survey: Your Feedback is Requested



Each year, NAMAS collects data from auditors about their employment as auditors.

Please take a few moments to complete our survey. Entering your email address at the end of the survey will enter you into a drawing for a chance to win one of several prizes:

\$100 Visa Gift Card

\$25 Starbucks Gift Card

and our

GRAND PRIZE is a scholarship to attend our 8th Annual NAMAS Auditing & Compliance Conference in Orlando, Florida

Click the image above to complete the survey. This survey will close on March 15, 2016 and winners will be selected and contacted by a NAMAS

This Week's Tip

Provided By:

**Shannon DeConda,
CPC, CPC-I, CEMC,
CMSCS, CPMA**



Shannon serves as Partner with DoctorsManagement and is the President/Founder of NAMAS

representative. Survey results will be published by the end of March 2016.

NAMAS Calendar of Events



Click the image above to view our monthly calendar

A Note From Our Parent Organization: DoctorsManagement, LLC

Office-Based Surgery Center Startup and Development

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NAMAS 8th Annual Auditing &

Upcoming Webinars

NAMAS is proud to present the following webinars in February:



**Medical Necessity in
Auditing from the Physician
Auditor Perspective**
Tuesday, February 9
2pm EST

**It Could be YOUR Identity
That Gets Stolen**
Tuesday, February 23
2pm EST

NAMAS Members: Watch

Compliance Conference



8TH ANNUAL

Auditing & Compliance
CONFERENCE 2016

Pre-Conference: December 6, 2016

Conference: December 7-9, 2016

Location: Orlando, Florida

Our pre-conference event is a full day event that offers you the choice between four breakout sessions to help you grow within your career.

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