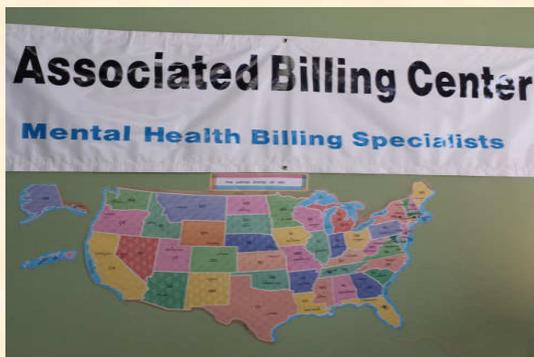


Associated Billing Center's  
**Newsletter**

-Volume 17  
-January, 2018

**A Message From Mona**



I am so fortunate to be surrounded by people who share my mission concerning client service. Recently, team member Barbara Shea, was given the title of Office Manager. Barbara will also continue with her responsibilities as an Account Manager. Barbara's immeasurable ongoing contribution toward helping to attain our goals reflects her passion for her fellow team members and you, our client. Our team retention rate is among the best in the industry. We're proud of this! We attribute this to the mutual respect we have for each other and our willingness to support each other everyday. Congratulations Barbara!

Best regards,

*Mona*



Photo:pixabay.com



**Families Anonymous is There to Help**

When speaking with many therapists, families, and acquaintances the topic of opioid addiction seems to be ubiquitous in many quarters. In 2016, more than 600 thousand people died from a drug overdose, 66 percent involved an opioid. There has been a 16-year increase in overdose deaths. Everyday, more than 115 Americans die of an opioid overdose according to the The National Institute on Drug Abuse. On an optimistic note; research is being conducted on newly developed non-addictive pain killers. Also, subject to individual opinion, evidence points to the use of medical marijuana as an alternative pain remedy for some people.

Families Anonymous is an organization dedicated to helping support the families of addicts whether its alcohol or drug related. If you are seeing patients because of the deleterious affect the addict is having on the family unit, Families Anonymous can be an invaluable tool in support of your therapy.

Check them out on line at: [familiesanonymous.org](http://familiesanonymous.org) Meeting times, locations and FA support literature are available. The group was formed in 1971 by a group of concerned parents who were seeking ways of dealing with the problem of substance abuse and its affect on parents, siblings and friends.

Source: Gary R'nel



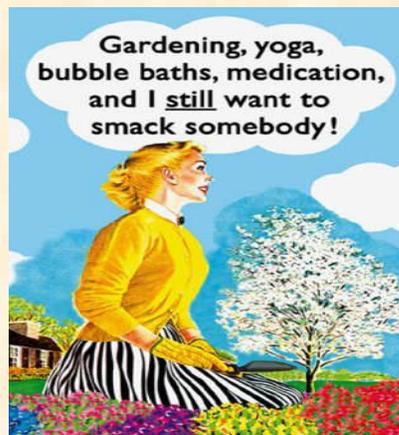
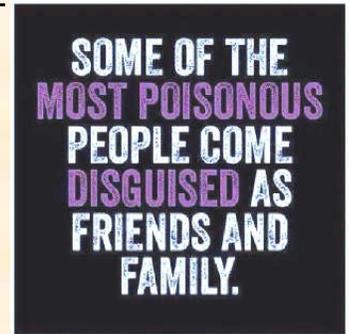
### **British Royalty: The Fascination**

Psychiatrist and clinical professor Dr. Sudepta Varma at NYU’s Langone Medical Center comments on the obsession some individuals have with British Royalty. “Keeping it as a hobby is OK. Being obsessed to the point that you are spending a lot of time not living your own life is harmful.” Varma says some individuals develop a longing to be a celebrity or be with one, which can be problematic. She also cautions against spending too much time looking at celebrity comment on social media. Extensive time spent on the web can be linked to poorer mental health.

The Stats: Prince William and Kate’s wedding attracted nearly 23 million U.S. viewers. Estimates suggest 33.2 million watched Princess Diana’s funeral in 1997, 17 million watched her wedding to Prince Charles in 1981. Prince Harry and Meghan Markle frequently top lists of trending news articles.

Source: huffpost.com

### **Laugh a Little or Maybe A Lot: It’s Good Therapy**



Patient to Therapist: Why did you charge me a group rate?  
Therapist to Patient: You’ve got multiple personalities.  
Source: jokes.skem9.co.uk



### **Associated Billing Center, LLC**

### **Therapist Feedback**

Many providers call and ask me for clarification of when Medicare cards are going to change. New cards will be mailed in April of this year and will meet the statutory deadline for replacing all Medicare cards by April 2019. Your patients who are new to the Medicare program starting in April of this year will only have a card with the new Medicare number. The Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act requires Medicare to remove Social Security numbers from the card by April 2019. Our note: This is extremely overdue and will protect identity.

### **Librarians & Mental Illness: There is a Connection**

Sacramento TV station WCVB reports that about 35 librarians in California have completed a course in how to respond to signs of mental illness or substance abuse. Many homeless people visit libraries to use computers and to read. Staff is learning how to respond to those in need and to offer assistance. Christine Hamm, Manager of Youth & Literacy Services, at the Sacramento Library says, “The public library is really the last safe public space, and so we are open to everybody.” The library hopes to have 50 staff members trained by the end of the year.



BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY INC.



**Three Corporate Mega Giants say they will Disrupt the Healthcare Insurance Marketplace**

These three corporate giants could be among the greatest health insurance marketplace disrupters of all time. Amazon’s Jeff Bezos, Berkshire Hathaway’s Warren Buffett and JPMorgan’s Jamie Dimon say if they cannot count on Congress to fix America’s soaring healthcare and insurance costs they will. The three unveiled a combined effort that would form a new health insurance company that would provide their U.S. workers and families a better option on health insurance. The new entity would be considered a non-profit.

The alliance is said to be totally frustrated by the inflationary costs of healthcare premiums and the level of control the healthcare industry exercises over the patient doctor-relationship. Dimon says that the effort could eventually be expanded to benefit all Americans. Bezos told reporters that “The healthcare system is complex, and we enter into this challenge open-eyed about the degree of difficulty.” Ed Kaplan, who negotiates health coverage on behalf of large employers said “Those are three big players, and I think if they get into healthcare insurance or the healthcare coverage space, they are going to make a big impact.” “Each of these companies has extensive experience using transformative technology in their own businesses,” John Scully told the New York Times. Scully is the former chief executive of Apple who is now chairman of the healthcare startup , RxAdvance. Scully said the project is a great counterweight to what government leadership has not done, which is to focus on how to make this healthcare system sustainable.

For those of you who saw Dirty Dancing, the quote, “Lots of changes Max, lots of changes coming,” could be applicable to the healthcare insurance industry. Several private sector companies are ignoring the apparent lack of mobility on healthcare reform on the Hill and becoming proactive in their own right. A recent example is CVS Health’s deal to buy Aetna for about \$69 billion dollars. Another example is Walmart contracting with groups like the Cleveland Clinic, Mayo and Geisinger to take care of employees who need organ transplants and heart and spine care. Coca-Cola and American Express are working side by side to reform healthcare with the express purpose of improving care to their employees and to lower costs. The private sector influencing lawmakers to improve our healthcare system and make services available to more Americans may be just what the doctor ordered.

Source: Gary R’nel

Please check out our website: [mentalhealthbillers.com](http://mentalhealthbillers.com) for our News Blog updates

The editorial content of this newsletter is not intended to be professional advice. It should be considered informational and a venue for entertainment.

**Associated Billing Center, LLC is a proud member of:**



**“BUILDING OUR REPUTATION ONE CLIENT AT A TIME”**



[www.MentalHealthBillers.com](http://www.MentalHealthBillers.com)



Mona Ruback