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## Retraining: You *Can* Teach An Old Dog New Tricks

By Jennifer Weddle

I arrived at Healthcare Management Group, (HMG), the medical billing company associated with AMI, in October of last year. My goal was to examine operations here at HMG and streamline processes to improve our efficiency and productivity. At that time, I had many things to learn. Although I had been in many aspects of healthcare for the last twenty years, I find that there are always new things to learn. Billing for dialysis facilities was a new experience. I was impressed with the experience level of the employees here at HMG and their willingness to share their knowledge.

One of my first formal learning experiences was a financial training course at AMI. This provided me with the basic resources to understand the system being used at HMG. I had worked with many financial systems, but they all vary slightly and there were many components that were new to me and related to dialysis billing. After this training, I felt at least armed enough to make intelligent observations.

In working with all of the different departments, it became apparent that there were varying levels of understanding of the system and its intricacies. There were also limited opportunities to share knowledge with each other so that shared learning could occur. At that time, we enlisted the help of AMI and sent several employees to an all day retraining workshop on the financial system. These employees ranged from very seasoned to almost brand new.

The reaction of the employees to this idea was as diverse as their experience level. Many felt that it was going to be a waste of a day while others were anxious to become more proficient on the system. In trying to make it a positive experience, I encouraged the more veteran employees to assist the instructor by offering day-to-day examples. While this didn't completely rid us of the complaints about having to spend a day at school, it did quell the griping a little.

After the class, there was a significant change in attitude. Many employees expressed that this "retraining" was very valuable since it was done after a length of time working on the system. The training made more sense than their initial training, when they hadn't had any hands-on utilization of the system. The more knowledgeable employees had to admit, reluctantly, that there were things that they could use that they had either forgotten or never been taught. As a result of the re-education, we have changed some processes here that have saved us time and effort.

(Continued on page 2)

# From the President

By Elizabeth A. Evans

Despite all the advances that technology has made, people still are pivotal to its success. The most recent spate of company setbacks and failures speaks eloquently to this reality. Exciting new companies have developed extraordinary technical products and discovered that there was no market for them, that is, people did not wish to invest in their products. The logical conclusion is that people control the proliferation of technology as they do its implementation, a topic I recently discussed in the June 2001 issue of "Nephrology News & Issues".

In recognition of this fact, we displayed a corporate banner at the ASN 2000 that simply stated, "It's still about people"—*you*, our clients, with whom we partner and also collaborate on new products, on new ideas, and on new releases; and the *AMI staff*, those people who put life into the AMI TIME System<sup>®</sup> by providing service to you, our clients. In fact, several industry consultants stated at the *TEPR 2000* convention that their surveys indicate the majority of software purchasers rank client service as their top consideration along with the product itself.

There are several facets to client service. One facet that may be overlooked is the ongoing collaboration between our clients and AMI. For example, several clients recently came to the AMI offices in Richmond, VA to test the V2000 Release in advance of its beta testing at other client sites. (See "V2000 Breaks New Ground" in this issue.) Their input refined the release even further, a valuable service to both their and our commitment to quality. As a result of their visit, AMI invested approximately 120 additional staff hours in order to incorporate their constructive criticism into the release—heartfelt thanks to all who participated. We believe that these efforts will better ensure that our clients will appreciate the upcoming release.

And so, is technology still about people? There's compelling evidence that it still is.



*(Retraining, continued from page 1)*

Everyone would like to be an expert at his or her job. However, we must admit that we can always learn things. When you buy a new car you have driven for a long time, you know how to work the horn, set the clock, turn on the radio and lock the doors. But it is still necessary to read the owner's manual to learn the intricacies of that unique vehicle. Experience is a wonderful tool, and education adds to that experience.

*Jennifer Weddle is Vice President of Operations for Health Care Management Group*

## Hands On

Since the release of the last newsletter, two more talented individuals have joined the AMI staff.

CHARLES E. (CHUCK) CORETH joined AMI in February as Chief Operating Officer and is responsible for the financial and internal operations of the company. For 16 years Chuck was the Managing Director of Investment Banking for Branch Cabell & Company, a recently acquired division of Tucker Anthony Sutro, Inc. (headquartered in Boston). Branch Cabell has been a regional stock broker based in Richmond and employee owned since 1904. Chuck handled all phases of capital formation and financial consulting for small and middle market companies in the southern mid-Atlantic area. Prior to Branch Cabell, Chuck spent six years with Wheat, First Securities, Inc. (now First Union Securities) in investment banking, direct investments and investment management. Chuck graduated with a B.A. in Economics from North Carolina State University and received an MBA from the University of Richmond in 1977. In addition to holding all major securities licenses, Chuck has taken advanced accounting courses at VCU and earned the Certified Financial Planning certificate.

Chuck enjoys golfing, skiing and home projects and is on the board of the STEP Ministries in Gilpin Court, an inner-city neighborhood. He is married, with a son in the Air Force and a daughter in high school.

ADRIAN AMEDIA recently joined AMI as the Midwest Account Executive. He brings with him a B.A. in Economics from Kenyon College, two successful years of national sales expertise and five years of clinical renal experience. Prior to working for AMI, Adrian held the National Sales position for a capital equipment manufacturer located in Cleveland, OH. His renal experience includes both Reuse and Patient Care Technician responsibilities. At AMI, Adrian is identifying new clients, working with existing clients and aiding in product development and marketing.

# AMI University News

## New and Improved Financial and Clinical Administrator Courses

By Art Todras



### New AMI University Certifications

In the summer of 1998 AMI University debuted its Financial Administrator and Clinical Administrator courses concurrent with Version 6.3 of the AMI TIME System. By the end of 1999, the two courses were revised according to the developments in AMI TIME Version 6.4. For the next 18 months, as AMI rolled out release 6.5 and then release 2000, the courses remained the same, for two reasons. First, we used that period to launch AMI University's ON-TIME Learning System, our new line of CBT (Computer Based Training) modules: the Release modules for Versions 6.5 and 2000, the Clinical Basics module, and the System Basics module. Second, the extensive remodeling of the standing orders and flowsheet user interfaces in Version 6.5 and of specialized financial applications in Version 2000 necessitated more than a quick makeover. I am pleased to announce that both the Financial and Clinical Administrator courses are now back in step with the current AMI TIME release.

The Financial Administrator Course includes major changes to Lesson 3, Monitoring Cash Collections, and to Lesson 5, Working Account Balances. Lesson 3 has a new part on the global modification of service and UCR fees by a percentage. Lesson 5 has a new part on Small Balance Write-offs, emphasizing the new Pay Class feature for writing off small balances by a combination of primary and secondary insurers per claim.

The Clinical Administrator Course has an entirely new lesson, Facilitating Responsible Clinical Charting, on how to make the most out of the Clinical System Maintenance screens to optimize charting accuracy. The original learning objectives in the lessons on lab and medication orders, managing clinical operations, and Urea Kinetic modeling are the same but are related to the current screen layouts and functionality of those applications.

One thing that has not changed is the original fee of \$495 for each course. For sign-up information, please contact me via email ([atodras@amihealthcare.com](mailto:atodras@amihealthcare.com)), FAX (804-934-9365) or phone (804-934-9370).

### System Administrator:

Kelly Schwartz	Renal Care Group
Anthony Whitehead	Renal Care Group
Lauren Case	Renal Care Group
Jon Quyle	Renal Care Group



### Mark Your Calendars Register Now!

- ◆ Next ID<sup>2</sup> Training: August 20-24  
November 12-16
- ◆ Registration requests accepted for:

Clinical Administrator Course  
Financial Administrator Course  
System Administrator Core Course  
Master Trainer Course

For further information, contact Art Todras, Director, AMI University via email ([atodras@amihealthcare.com](mailto:atodras@amihealthcare.com)), FAX (804-934-9365) or phone (804-934-9370).

Or, check out the Quick Find guide on AMI's website: [www.amihealthcare.com](http://www.amihealthcare.com). Follow the Training and Education link to the AMI University course catalogue, with descriptions, schedules, and pricing information on all AMI University courses. Print out an enrollment form from our website and fax it back to reserve a space! Read the article in this newsletter, "Visit AMI's Website", for more information on what is available.

### AMI Holiday Closings

Labor Day	Monday, September 3
Thanksgiving	Thursday, November 22
	Friday, November 23

## Visit AMI's Website

By Stephen Guarnieri

If you go to [www.amihealthcare.com](http://www.amihealthcare.com), you will see a new website. We designed the site to be information rich and easy to navigate. For the new user, the Quick Find Guide is a good starting point. It appears in the box in the lower left of the home page. We chose a common framework for the site to add to the usability. In the top left corner of every page is the AMI logo. If you click on the logo, you will be returned to the home page.

Another useful navigation tool is the drop down menu labeled "Quick Jump" at the top right of each page. The Quick Jump menu is tiered to help you easily find the section of the website you want. A less detailed navigation bar appears on the left of the screen in a green crescent. Please choose the Contact AMI area to make suggestions to the webmaster on how to improve usability and navigation.

Two links of importance to our clients are in the top right hand corner of the page. One link opens an email to contact AMI support. The AMI Support mailbox is checked frequently and logged like any other support request. The other link opens an email to contact AMI sales. Any question or concern you may have about AMI and our products should be directed here, where it is then forwarded to your account executive. Your account executive's job is to help you.

Finally, the Client Only section is a password protected area of the website. We need your help and recommendations, especially those that relate to the information you would find useful online. Please email Sales to share your ideas for the Client Only section or to get a login and password.

## V2000 Breaks New Ground

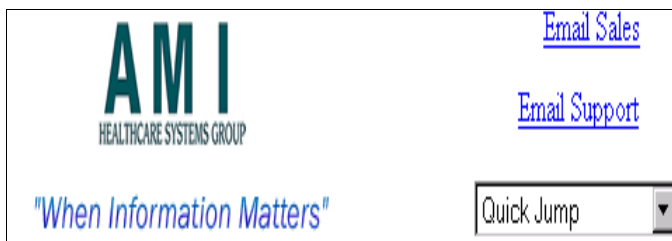
By Art Todras

AMI's V2000 release is a first in several ways. It is the first AMI release that issues TIME-D, AMI's character-based user interface, and TIME-W, AMI's Windows-based user interface, together as a single system. The latest developments in both TIME-D and TIME-W make up Version 2000. The V2000 release also marks the first time that AMI clients traveled to our offices to serve as "front-line" testers before the start of beta testing. In early December, Ron Wilson of Renal Care Group, along with Lesley McPhatter and Cathy Husser of Lynchburg Dialysis, spent several days at AMI testing changes to both TIME-D and TIME-W, as documented in the draft V2000 Release Notes. Any issues they encountered were entered immediately in our Problem Log for evaluation as an enhancement or programming fix.

The experience proved valuable to our visitors, who had the opportunity to address issues prior to beta testing, and to our release team for the immediate feedback that it provided. Of the many tangible benefits, one of the most important was the addition, in TIME-W, of the ability to create and modify PD Standing Orders.

A third "first" is the way in which we are distributing our release materials. In March, AMI sent all clients the Release Notes summarizing the enhancements and new features in V2000. Beginning with V2000, we are sending the Billing and Clinical questionnaires, documentation replacement pages, and AMI ON-TIME Learning System CD according to the upgrade schedule rather than as a mass mailing. Each client scheduled for V2000 is to receive the release materials approximately four weeks before their upgrade date. We firmly believe that this new distribution philosophy will promote a timely implementation of and acclimation to the new release.

AMI is looking forward to helping you transition to V2000. ***Please call to schedule your upgrade or for more information about the new version.***





# TIME Pieces

This fall, AMI will be attending and hosting several meetings. Here is where you can catch us, and when.

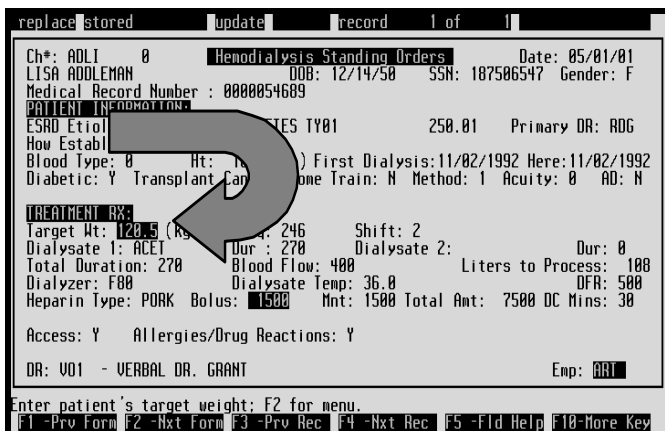
- ◆ AMI will be exhibiting at the American Society of Nephrology Meeting on October 14-16 at the Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco, California. We will be in booths 833 and 835. Call us before the show to schedule a time to see our newest features, or just drop by and visit.
- ◆ AMI will be exhibiting at the annual meetings of both Network 11 and Network 12. Come by and meet Adrian Amedia, our new Midwest Account Executive (see "Hands On" in this issue). The Network 12 Meeting will be in Kansas City, Missouri on September 13-14. The Network 11 Meeting will be in Minneapolis, Minnesota on September 18-19.
- ◆ The User Steering Committee Meeting will be at AMI, September 20-21. Look for a report on the USC in the next newsletter.

## TIME-ly Tips

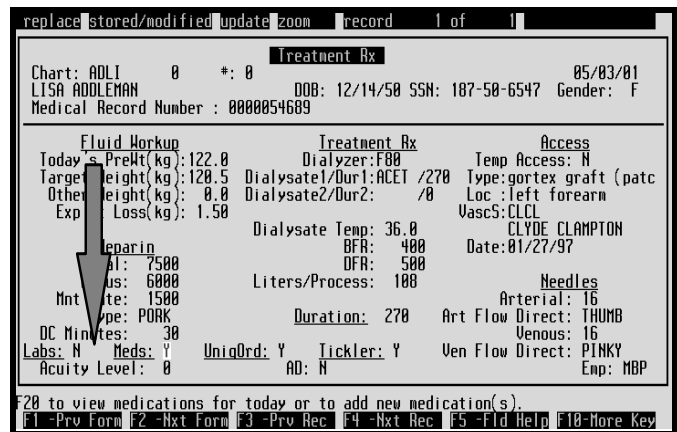
Have you tried TAB lately?  
By Pam Banning

AMI's TIME-D system uses the tab key as a shortcut feature on many application screens. Examples include:

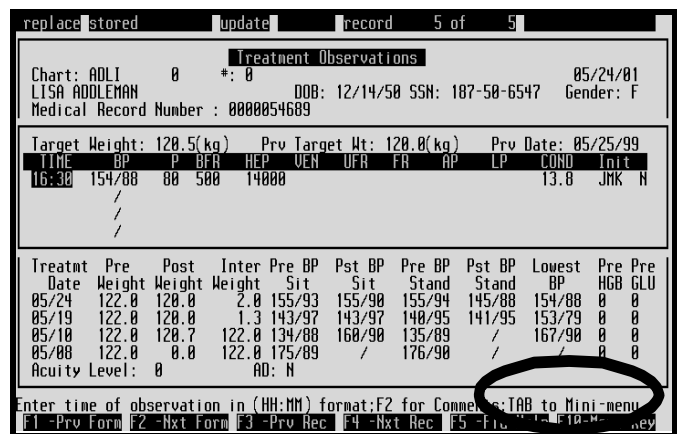
- ◆ Pressing TAB in Standing Orders will move the cursor directly to the Target Weight field, skipping up to 13 fields in the top section of this screen.



- ◆ Pressing Tab in the Treatment Rx screen of the hemodialysis flowsheet application (V2000) will move the cursor to the Lab Work Planning field.



- ◆ Pressing TAB in the Treatment Observations, Comments or Service Charting screen of the hemodialysis flowsheet application (V6.5 and V2000) will bring up the mini-menu so that the user can easily reference other sections of the patient's medical record without leaving the flowsheet.



(Continued on page 6)

AMI Healthcare Systems Group  
2810 N. Parham Road  
Suite 200  
Richmond, Virginia 23294

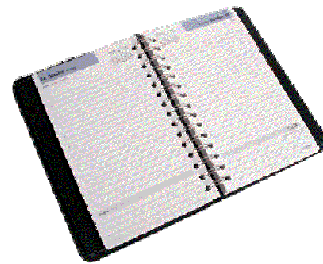
*(TIME-ly Tips, continued from page 5)*

- ◆ Pressing TAB in Registration will move the cursor to the Copy Data field. Pressing TAB again on this screen will move the cursor to the Status field.

```
replace not stored update record 1 of 1
Patient Registration 1 of 4
Chart Number: ADL1 0 Patient Scan:
Last Name : ADDLEMAN First Name : LISA
Street1 : 2932 APPLETON CIRCLE COBE: 0000054689
Street2 :
City : RICHMOND State: VA Zip Code: 24562
Home Phone : (804)845-9181 Social Security Number: 187506547 Copy Data:
Birth Date : 12/14/1950 Sex: F Marital Status: M Employer: N
Referred By : N Family Doctor: N Patient's Doctor: ADG
Allergies : Codeine, ASA
Drug Reactions: Nausea, Rash
Student? Y Geisinger Medical Center
MR #: 12345 Pharmacy #: (804)205-9090
Signature: Y Status Code: NS Class: A Date: 11/02/92
Facility: LD LINWOOD DIALYSIS FACILITY
Remarks: Patient started CAPD 08/10/98
Enter a 'C' to copy current patient demographics to policy and frp records
F1 -Prv Form F2 -Nxt Form F3 -Prv Rec F4 -Nxt Rec F5 -Fld Help F10 -More Key
```

## Documentation Updates

The documentation for Version 2000 is complete and will be sent to you about four weeks before your scheduled upgrade. AMI will be publishing reminders and updates to the documentation in this section of the Newsletter. Watch your mailboxes for the updates!



## Information Pleeze...

Got any suggestions for the next newsletter? Send them to our mailing address (attention Art Todras), fax them (804-934-9365), or visit our client page at [www.amihealthcare.com](http://www.amihealthcare.com). Thanks for letting us share your news with the AMI community.