

SERENAGROUP NEWSLETTER

Building the Nation's Leading Wound Care Team

SERENAGROUP HYPERBARIC TECHNICIAN DAY = JULY 20



THOMAS SERENA, MD, CEO

SerenaGroup has dedicated July 20th as Hyperbaric Technician Day to recognize Hyperbaric Technicians who are dedicated to their role in the Hyperbaric Chamber Room.

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy is a medical treatment administered by delivering 100% oxygen at atmospheric pressures greater than sea level to a patient in an enclosed chamber. It acts as a drug, eliciting varying levels of response at different treatment depths, durations, and dosages. It has proven effective as adjunctive therapy for specific conditions.

What does a Hyperbaric Technician do?
A Hyperbaric Technician administers hyperbaric oxygen therapy to patients under the direction of a physician. They monitor patient treatments, including equipment settings, treatment duration, and patient response.

A Hyperbaric Technician operates the hyperbaric chamber and other hyperbaric support systems in accordance to all applicable safety standards and regulations. They perform cleaning of the chamber and equipment according to infection control policies. Additionally, a Hyperbaric Technician performs equipment checks and system maintenance.



Hyperbaric Technicians are trained through a 40hr Hyperbaric Course, meet SerenaGroup Standards through following the Safety Manual, and attend Monthly Safety Webinars. Hyperbaric Technicians report to SerenaGroup's National Safety Director.

I personally want to **THANK** each of our Hyperbaric Technicians and look forward to their well-deserved day of recognition on July 20th!

Happy Hyperbaric Technician Day



Mental Health of the Wound Care Patient

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Ally George,
Community Educator



Day in and day out we provide care to patients in hopes of healing wounds, but what about the wounds we cannot see; the anxiety the patient is experiencing or the depression resulting from a chronic wound? The psychological impact of body changes can be significant, as well as the social and emotional aspects of wound healing. Social isolation because of decreased mobility, diminished functional ability, contending with chronic illness, and pain cause a decrease in quality of life, low self-esteem, compromised self-image, and depression. Wound care and hyperbaric visits can cause severe anxiety as patients try to understand their new obstacles of managing their wound. At visits, healthcare providers discuss the hope of combating amputation, infection, and other associated risks that can lead to death. Many patients complain about malodorous wounds and as a wound care team member you can smell them from the waiting room, but did you ever consider the embarrassment and anxiety that the patient feels?

It is well-studied that poor mental health correlates directly to slow wound healing, but as a wound expert we should be maximizing efforts to improve all aspects of the patient's health.

Resilient individuals have the power to adjust, resist stress, and potentially thrive in the face of adversity.

Resilience can be impeded by a lack of understanding about their wound, new physical limitations, and psychosocial consequences. There are many ways to improve the patient's mental health, consider using some of the below ideas and always share your ideas with others!

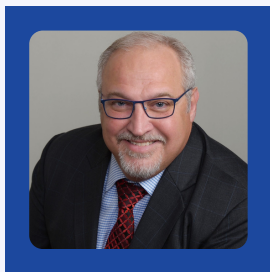
- Build rapport and trust
- Ask the patient about their obstacles
- Be clear and concise with wound management, risks, and goals
- Provide educational handouts that can be reviewed at home with their support system
- Speak directly to the patient's face in terms they understand
- Show the patient their wound progress and pictures
- Use the Teach Back method (teach them and have them repeat the information or procedure back to you so you know they fully understand)
- Before discharging the patient, give them a chance to ask questions
- Provide contact information in the event the patient has questions or problems
- Celebrate big and little wins with the patient



Insurance Networks & Plans

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Matt Schweyer Chief Compliance Officer



Are you aware of the Hospital's Insurance networks and plans? I plan to review Medicare Advantage (the private plan alternative to traditional Medicare) plans. These plans have doubled in the last decade. Currently, four out of ten older Americans have opted for these health care plans. The reason these patients choose these plans is not the intent of this article; however, the ramifications to your hospital and your department are.

Understanding Medicare Advantage Plan

At the inception of Medicare Advantage plan, it was understood they would follow traditional Medicare plans and cover all services that are medically necessary. However, like all things in health care, these plans have and will continue to evolve and grow in the volume of patients that participate in them. Insurance companies that offer MA plans will continue to tweak accordingly. Since inception, 34% of the population is covered and by 2028 it is estimated that 42% will participate in plans. Senior citizens and others who choose Medicare Advantage plans are choosing what they perceive to be a great value. They believe they are getting **FREE** perks: most include part B & D, Health Club Plans, Gym Shoes, Ride Share, etc. But are all those things really free?

Earlier, I mentioned Medicare Advantage plans were to cover all services that were Medically Necessary under Traditional Medicare And often they did! I am old enough to remember

reviewing MA plans that referenced the Medicare LCD & NCD's for advanced wound care and other services. Today: not so much! Why? Medicare Advantage plans are now tweaking (determining) what does and does not meet medical necessity. And often, these plans have significantly reduced the interpretation of medical necessity. And, they have negotiated reimbursement rates lower than traditional Medicare reimbursement to hospitals in some cases!

[This is the crux of what we do in health care.](#)

We all want to take care of the patient, provide Evidence-Based Care (EBC), heal the patient and provide value! However, sometimes what we consider EBC is not how the insurer perceives it. Sadly, the insurance companies value-add-equation may not be adding value for the patient. Recently, we have seen the Blues deny HBOT for DFU Ill's and others deny CTP for either a DFU, VLU and other evidence-supported indications such as NPWT.

[When did we find out about this?](#)

Upon prior authorization? Sometimes we do; however mostly after the fact. The major reason is the assumption that Medicare Advantage Plans are the same as Traditional Medicare. Another issue for patients is the amount of out-of-pocket expenses they must pay.

You need to know that Medicare Advantage Plans and other managed plans feed your wound care center. Be proactive and get to know those numbers now as they are only going to grow. Monitor the volume: is volume going up and revenue going down? Is it the cost of doing business? Is it time to engage the Revenue Cycle Management Team to discuss strategies? That is one of the core deliverables SerenaGroup provides to our hospital partners.



SerenaGroup Education

SerenaGroup recognizes that the key to continued success with positive clinical outcomes is education. Education is provided through different platforms to ensure the tools are available to our centers. Topics for June Education included (but not limited to):

- Journal Club: TBA
- HBO Safety: Pneumothorax Under Pressure
- Monthly Education: Staff Development
- Roundtable Compliance Meeting
- Roundtable PD Meeting

Education is one of many key benefits to partnering with SerenaGroup. We are Building the Nation's Leading Wound Care Team.

Educational Courses

HBOT 40hr Course
August 12-15, 2021 | West Palm Beach, FL

SerenaGroup Blue Star Winner



Shawn Patton, HBO Tech Inspira Health System Elmer

Shawn is a dedicated HBO Tech who makes all his patients feel comfortable during treatments. We are thankful to have him as part of our SerenaGroup Team!

SerenaGroup

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