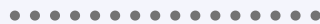


SERENAGROUP NEWSLETTER

Building the Nation's Leading Wound Care Team

Entering into
2022 with
SerenaGroup®



THOMAS SERENA, MD, CEO

*As you set out for Ithaka
hope your road is a long one
full of adventure, full of discovery.....*

I first learned of the poem *Ithika* by Constantine Cavafy when it was read at the funeral of Jacklyn Onassis. A favorite of the late first lady, it quickly became a favorite of mine. The poet entreats us to enjoy the journey despite its hurdles and hardships. In the last two years our journey has rivaled that of Odysseus, the poem's hero. We replaced kidnapping nymphs and man-eating Cyclopes with a spike covered virus that has held us captive and mutated frequently enough to constrain our freedom. However, I am proud of our team. We asserted early on and continue to declare that wound care is an essential service and must continue despite rising COVID cases.

Cavafy's poem continues,

*Hope your road is a long one...
Wealthy with all you've gained along the
way.*

We have gained from our fettered time: tackling the challenges of quality metrics, measuring productivity, expanding online education, preparing for accreditation surveys, and fighting the pandemic-driven rise in amputation rates.

Sitting in the audience at the Leadership Conference this fall I realized that SerenaGroup® has the talent and skill to best whatever challenges we face in the future. And we have a vibrant future. Our wealth lies in the culture of cooperation and support built by our team. As we set out together, let us enjoy the road ahead.



2022 SerenaGroup Compliance Report

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Matt Schweyer, CCO



Wow, hard to believe 2022 is upon us. Last year, what a year it was for SerenaGroup. In the Compliance, Quality Reimbursement and Hyperbaric Safety areas, it has been nothing short of productive thanks to the contribution of all our Program Directors, Providers, and host hospitals.

Quality metrics are hardwired; awards were presented at last years leadership retreat. WTG teams. We now turn our focus on 2022. We will continue to track most of the existing metrics and measures; however, we are adding additional focus and accountability to the program. A renewed focus on modifier utilization resulted in good news: One hospital pointed to our process as reason and rationale to move forward in utilizing the modifier 25 as appropriate.

Reimbursement information for 2022, is being crunched reviewed and I am ever so hopeful the fee schedule announced will be released in final format from CMS soon. We know Congress has provided a two-percent market adjustment from last year to the HOPD/ OPPS fess schedule. All of wound and hyperbaric CPT codes are intact with minimal change to bundling and status indicators.

For the physician and other providers, a good news-bad news message. The conversion rate was reduced by 3.9% or approximately \$1.30. The split billing language is clarified, which allows for two providers (physician or non-physician) in the same practice to see the same patient on the same date of service. A big bonus comes in the form of those who provide Medical Nutritional Counseling (MNA); these providers are now eligible for 100% of the fee schedule. It previously had been capped at 80% of the PFFS fee schedule.

Professional bias: this is a nod to the service and support that is/should be provided by the Dietician and Educators to approximately 65% of our patients who have Diabetes, End Stage Renal Disease. All Program Directors may want to ensure that their hospitals are aware of this and either ensure they are allowing access to that HOPD or made available to patients and families. Your hospital may have been unsure if this is a service line to provide. For us, we believe it to be a Value Add for the institution.

Compliance continues to be a focus. Last week we became aware that Palmetto GBA has re-introduced Target Probe and Educate (TPE) for Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy. These audits, along with Post Payment review (PPR), will only continue to grow in popularity. And I suspect that commercial insurance companies will roll out similar processes.

Along with the Education Committee and the Regulatory Checklist(s), a Standards of Compliance and Accreditation Mock Survey Program have been launched. This program brings a mock survey to your hospital. These surveys while complementary to DNV and the Joint Commission, strongly form a culture of Compliance; and they are necessary and a "must have." Gone are the days of bamboozling the agencies. These surveys are focused on safety in wound care and hyperbaric oxygen.

We have a lot to be thankful for in SG and with what all of you have accomplished. Let's finish the year strong: let's reenergize, rejuvenate, and commit to MOVING on down the line.





CHRISTINE LINDSAY, RN
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



SerenaGroup® is raising awareness with the WalkOn2 Program on limb preservation. The goal of the program is to decrease amputation rates and to optimize the chances of maintaining functional limbs for this high-risk group of patients. Raising awareness about the success of this type of program is especially important for those patients with diabetes mellitus and end-stage renal disease who might otherwise suffer the loss of a limb.

The WalkOn2 Program was developed to help assist our hospital partners in developing a comprehensive team of experts that work in collaboration to establish the most effective treatment plan tailored to fit each patient's specific needs, with particular focus on preventing amputations. This team approach provides superior and timely assessment and intervention for patients at risk for amputation due to trauma, infection, peripheral arterial disease, diabetes, and end stage renal disease. Having a dedicated center of experts has proven to optimize healing, improve functionality and quality of life, and significantly reduce amputations.

“According to the Amputee Coalition, approximately 185,000 amputations occur in the United States each year and a staggering 3.6 million people will be living with an amputation by 2050.”

The WalkOn2 Program is designed to heal complex wounds and improve quality of life. Years ago, the treatment option for most patients with a chronic, non-healing wound was amputation. Without the team approach and advanced technologies, there was little to no viable means of healing a chronic wound and saving a limb. Thankfully, through considerable advances in technology and research through the SerenaGroup® Research Foundation, we have made it possible to safely treat chronic wounds without resorting to limb removal. In many cases, limb salvage can occur with little or no long-term affects to limb function or quality of life.

“According to the Journal of the American Podiatric Medical Association, a foot or leg amputation costs between \$30,000 and \$60,000 in initial hospital costs, plus between \$43,000 and \$60,000 in costs for follow-up care.”

Revenue related to the limb program itself include surgical debridements, cellular tissue placement, HBO therapy, and revascularization procedures in the outpatient setting. If this is done carefully, such a program can generate significant revenue for the program host facility. The WalkOn2 Program can preserve limbs and improve the longevity and quality of life of patients in the context of a viable financial entity to the hospital and healthcare system.

Rapid Access and Advanced Therapies
Time is Tissue!! Studies show that 46% of patients having a major amputation do not have a diagnostic arteriogram despite



evidence that diagnostic arteriography is a predictive factor for limb preservation. The key to preventing amputations is rapid assessment and intervention using diagnostic imaging, vascular screening and endovascular therapies coupled with aggressive wound management and advanced modalities.

Another SerenaGroup Value-Add Program for 2022. The WalkOn2 Program is an incredible value to our patients and our facilities. We can no longer afford the status quo approach to caring for patients with chronic, lower extremity conditions that are life threatening and over taxing our healthcare system. It's not easy...it takes teamwork, commitment, collaboration, and constant communication.

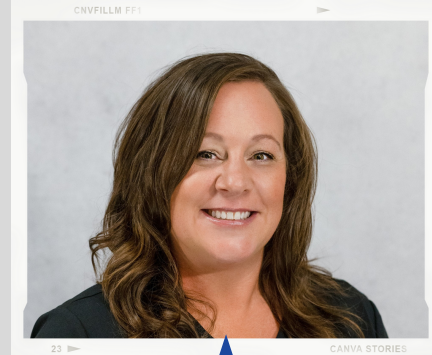


Educational Courses

HBOT 40hr Intro Course

- January 22-23, 2022
 - Montgomery, AL

SerenaGroup Blue Star Winner



Kristy Breisinger

Clinical Research Coordinator
SerenaGroup Research Foundation

"Kristy's dedication to research has been incredible. She is always stepping up, helping us blaze trails, and working tirelessly every day!"

SerenaGroup

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