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Group to accredit healthcare collections agencies

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Created Jul 29 2008 - 6:23pm

Hiring a healthcare collections agency is a nerve-wracking process. On the one hand, you want to collect as much as you can, but on the other, you don't want to batter your patients until they never want to enter your hospital or clinic again. Finding agencies that strike a good balance between courtesy and firmness, and understand healthcare industry issues as well, is extremely hard to do, observers say.

Starting in September, however, a new industry group hopes to offer a solution to this problem. The group, the Accredited Healthcare Business Associates, is establishing an accreditation process for healthcare accounts receivables management companies. Backers include the California Health Care Association and ARM industry advisory firm Kaulkin Ginsberg.

To gain accreditation, ARM organizations will have to conform to standards in 25 areas, including earning 80 percent of revenues from healthcare-related clients, offering proof of employee certification in their healthcare specialty, having compliance policies in place, and maintaining liability insurance to protect clients in the event of a harmful agency error. Agencies seeking accreditation must also agree not to resell the debts they manage, nor place them with offshore collections companies.

The "80 percent healthcare revenues" standard may exclude some giant collections companies with large portfolios in the financial services business, but association heads are OK with that. They say that a healthcare focus is necessary to get the job done properly.

To learn more about the new certification:

- read this *InsideARM* [article](#) [1]

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for-health-care-collectors?pg=2

[2] <http://www.fiercehealthcare.com/story/hma-adopts-tougher-collections-strategy/2007-10-29>

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