



ACPAR – Staying On Top of Your Game in an Ever-Changing Industry!

By Linda Wright Johnson, ACPAR

Whew, you did it! You passed the CPAR exam – quite the accomplishment! So, you are CPAR... what now? If there is anything guaranteed in this world, it is change – especially in the healthcare industry. How can you stay current in an industry that is continually evolving? The answer to that question is quite simple – take the initiative to obtain and maintain your **Advanced CPAR** certification.

Unlike the CPAR certification which serves as a solid foundation to understanding the “big picture” of the healthcare business office realm, ACPAR builds on that foundation on an ongoing basis. And here is the good news – there’s no test! No 500+ page manual to study day and night for weeks before the exam and no intense anxiety on test day! To obtain ACPAR certification all that is required is attending five (5) ACPAR two hour sessions within a two year period and a commitment to learning the latest and greatest information available from subject matter experts in every area of the industry. It really is that simple.

So, if it is truly that simple (and it is!), what value does it hold? Don’t let the process fool you, ACPAR certification has immense value in an ever-changing healthcare industry. It is the key to staying informed and current in your knowledge and expertise with regards to changes in a myriad of areas that impact successful daily business office operations. Some of those areas include major payer policies and procedures, legislative updates, best practices for business office departments such as access, financial counseling, insurance billing and collections, self-pay point of service and follow-up collections and much more. ACPAR is the key to building on the solid foundation that CPAR laid and ensuring that your knowledge remains relevant to current industry trending. That current knowledge can be the difference required to get the promotion you want in your current employment situation or in distinguishing you above the dozens of applicants for a position in a new environment.

The cost to value ratio is something to consider as well. For the price, ACPAR classes are some of the best training courses available to healthcare business office personnel. Each class is approximately \$40 per session of intensive training from some of the most knowledgeable experts in the state of Georgia. The ACPAR committee seeks out the best representatives in the every field and those experts volunteer their time to pass on their knowledge to others by preparing for and facilitating the ACPAR courses. Participants in each course are supplied with information during the course and with reference materials to utilize once they have returned to their work environments.

As the trainer for our business unit, I find that maintaining my ACPAR certification enables me to stay current in my own knowledge of industry

changes, as well as provides valuable resources from which to glean important training collateral for my unit. More than once, in response to a question presented to me, I have reached into my ACPAR course files and pulled out documentation from which I could accurately communicate the appropriate answer for the current healthcare industry standard. The situation that occurs even more frequently is the times I refer to my notes and reference materials from an ACPAR course as I prepare my own training agendas for our unit.

ACPAR provides an ongoing opportunity for growth in our environment as well. We encourage our representatives with CPAR status to continue their education through the ACPAR certification every two years – especially as they desire to continue their career path growth. To show our value in and support of this continuing education opportunity, our company provides full course reimbursement upon completion of ACPAR certification. If your company does not have a similar program, why not suggest one today? Where else can an employer provide current HFMA-approved ongoing training for their associates at a mere \$100 per person per year investment? And even if your employer does not provide reimbursement for this training, isn’t \$100 per year a reasonable investment in your own growth potential? Invest in yourself – you are worth it!

ACPAR courses are offered at various locations around the state throughout the year to ensure that the opportunity is provided in locations as convenient as possible to anyone interested in obtaining or maintaining their ACPAR certification. The dates and locations of ACPAR courses can be found on the website at <http://www.georgiahfma.org/HFMAEvents/AdvancedCPAR.aspx>. Bookmark this location and check back frequently to see when the next courses are offered in your area so you can plan to attend. The ACPAR Committee looks forward to serving your ongoing educational needs and hopes to see you at the next ACPAR class in your area!

ACPAR Testimonial

By-GAIL BROWN, STEPHENS COUNTY HOSPITAL

I Attended the CPAR sessions provided at Savannah, GA and I would highly recommend for anyone associated with the business office, registration, and collection areas to attend these sessions.

Even though this is what we work with each day in our office when it is presented by someone other than your immediate co-workers it brings forth new ideas and suggestions for your area. I always come home with new ideas for our facility that is very beneficial. I look forward to these sessions to see what I can implement for our facility. I am looking forward to the future sessions.