

**Registration Form  
PAMES Fall Conference**

**Wednesday, September 28th & Thursday, September 29th, 2022  
Embassy Suites, Pioneer Square in Seattle, WA**

**\$150.00 per member/ \$200.00 per Non-Member**

**\*\* A discount of \$50.00 given to all non-member attendees who sign up to become a 2022 PAMES member at the conference.**

**For every 2 attendees from the same company, your 3rd attendee will be free!**

**Conference Registration Includes Lunch, Social Hour, and Dinner**

**Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Company:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Address:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**City, ST, Zip:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Email:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Payment: One payment can be accepted for all attendees from your company.**

**Additional Attendee (1)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Attendee (2)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Attendee (3)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Payment by Credit Card: CC#:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Exp:**

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**CVV #:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Zip Code:**

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**Amount Authorized: \$**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Sig:**

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**Payment by Check - Mail to: PAMES Association 425 3rd ST SW Jamestown, ND 58401block of rooms has been reserved for conference attendees at The Embassy Suites link. It is valid for :  
September 27th-October 1st, 22 [Reservation Link](#)2022 PAMES Fall Conference**

**Wednesday September 28th and Thursday 29th, 2022  
Embassy Suites, Pioneer Square, Seattle, WA**

**Wednesday September 28th, 2022**

<b>7:30 – 8:00 am</b>	<b>Registration</b>	
<b>8:00 - 8 :30 am</b>	<b>Welcome, PAMES Update, Board Introductions</b>	<b>PAMES President</b>
<b>8:30 – 9:45 am</b>	<b>Overcoming Adversity</b>	<b>Opening Keynote Aaron Thomas</b>
<b>10:00 -11:00 am</b>	<b>Legislative Update</b>	<b>John Gallagher, VGM</b>
<b>11:15-12:15 pm</b>	<b>Vendor Show Case</b>	<b>See firsthand the newest and greatest products our Vendors have to offer</b>
<b>12:15 - 1:30 pm</b>	<b>Lunch with Vendors</b>	
<b>1:30 – 3:00 pm</b>	<b>Building a Legally Compliant Referral Network</b>	<b>Jeff Baird, Brown and Fortunato</b>
<b>3:15 – 4:15 pm</b>	<b>State Payer Advocacy</b>	<b>Laura Willard, AAHC</b>
<b>4:30 – 6:45 pm</b>	<b>Dance A Long, or even Win A Long with one of Seattle’s Best! “Sound About DJ</b>	<b>Social Hour, Networking, Prize Giveaways</b>
<b>7:00 – ???</b>	<b>Dinner Awards Ceremony</b>	<b>Party on the Perch!</b>

**Thursday September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

<b>7:30 – 8:15 am</b>	<b>Registration &amp; Vendor Visits</b>	
<b>8:15 – 9:45 am</b>	<b>Billing and Reimbursement Benchmarking</b>	<b>Miriam Lieber, Lieber Consulting Ronda Buhrmester, VGM</b>
<b>10:00–11:00 am</b>	<b>Medicare Updates</b>	<b>Noridian Representative</b>
<b>11:00 – 12:15 m</b>	<b>“Employee Obsession? ” Learn how to focus on your own “Leadership Capital</b>	<b>Closing Keynote Mike “Ike” Isaacson, VGM</b>
<b>12:15 - 12:30 pm</b>	<b>Closing Remarks</b>	<b>PAME’S President</b>

# LOOK WHO'S TALKING

## OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

### Making an Impact, One Person At A Time.

#### Aaron Thomas

Challenge yourself and the people around you to not only survive but to thrive. Aaron has a unique story that has helped him connect with thousands of people over the last eight years.

Aaron Thomas' father, Ed, was a beloved high school football coach who not only trained generations of players on the importance of hard work, dedication, excellence, and commitment but personally put those values into action as the community leader who inspired his town to rebuild in the wake of a deadly EF5 tornado. Not long after the community withstood the disaster of the storm, the small town of Parkersburg, Iowa endured a far worse tragedy...the fatal shooting of Coach Ed Thomas by a former player with mental issues. Following his father's murder, Aaron was approached to return home to take over Ed's responsibilities as athletic director and to continue the legacy his father had built in being not only a school leader, but in being an example for the town to follow. Aaron, his wife Ellie, and their three sons moved back to Parkersburg one month after his father was murdered. Rather than shun the family of their father's murderer and perpetuate the tragedy Parkersburg faced, Aaron and his family called for understanding and forgiveness, because that's what Ed Thomas would have wanted them to do. In this incredible story of ordinary people thrust into an extraordinary situation, Aaron Thomas shares his family's journey of showing uncommon strength during the darkest of times. Aaron will discuss how to deal with adversity and how to make the most of all opportunities. You will be challenged to look at your life, your family, and your organization to see if you are being a true difference-maker. He and his family are the recipients of the Arthur Ashe Award for Courage presented at the 2010 ESPY Awards, for being the people Ed Thomas would have expected. Aaron also received the Missouri Valley Conference 2010 Most Courageous Award.

## BUILDING A LEGALLY COMPLIANT REFERRAL NETWORK

### Jeff Baird, Brown and Fortunato

**Jeffrey S. Baird is the Chairman of the Health Care Group of Brown & Fortunato, where he is a shareholder. The Health Care Group represents an extensive client base of home medical equipment companies, pharmacies, manufacturers, infusion companies, labs, home health agencies, hospitals and other health care providers throughout the United States. Jeff works with an impressive team of attorneys who specialize in all areas affecting the HME, pharmacy, manufacturing, infusion, lab, home health and hospital industries. The firm's Health Care Group works closely with the Department of Justice, Office of Inspector General, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS Contractors, National Supplier Clearinghouse, Food and Drug Administration, Drug Enforcement Agency, TRICARE, state Medicaid programs, state pharmacy licensing boards, and other federal and state regulatory agencies. Jeff plays a crucial role both in representing the firm's health care clients and in shaping the development of the firm's respected Health Care Group.**

The lifeblood of a DME supplier is to establish a strong referral network. This can be accomplished by developing relationships with physicians, hospitals, long term care facilities and other referral sources. With the recent modifications to the federal physician self-referral statute ("Stark") and the federal anti-kickback statute ("AKS"), CMS and the OIG are encouraging collaborative arrangements between providers with the twin goals of (i) making access to health care available to those who normally do not have such access and (ii) improving patient outcomes. At the same time, it is important that relationships with referral sources not "cross the line" to violating Stark, the AKS, and other applicable statutes. This program will discuss the federal anti-fraud laws that DME suppliers must follow, including Stark, the AKS, the False Claims Act, the beneficiary inducement statute, and The Travel Act. The program will also discuss examples of state anti-fraud laws. The program will then pivot to a discussion of the types of relationships that are legally permissible...and those that should be avoided. Examples of relationships to be discussed include (i) working

with physicians in clinical studies; (ii) entering into Medical Director Agreements with physicians; (iii) sponsoring physicians as speakers; (iv) entering into preferred provider arrangements with hospitals and long-term care facilities; and (v) entering into joint ventures.

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

#### **John Gallagher, VGM**

**John E. Gallagher Vice President, Government Relations, The VGM Group, Inc.** John E. Gallagher is Vice President of Government Relations for the VGM Group, Inc. where he is responsible for advocating on behalf of VGM members/DME providers to Congress, the Administration, and federal agencies. Gallagher has also amassed thousands of miles, traveling across the country to educate both the state associations and independent providers on regulatory and government issues. Additionally, Gallagher has worked tenaciously to promote upstanding service within the home medical equipment industry. He is a board member of both the Healthcare Quality Association for Accreditation (HQAA) and the Fraud Eradication Advisory Team (FEAT). John received his undergraduate degree from the University of Northern Iowa and a master's degree in management from the State University of New York Binghamton. Prior to his 2002 employment with VGM, John served as a U.S. Army Signal Corp. Officer from 1983 to 1990. He also held a number of executive positions in the medical equipment industry. In 2016, John was inducted into the Inaugural Hall of Fame for both the University of Northern Iowa Army ROTC and the United State Army Reserve Officer Training Command (ROTC).

### **STATE PAYER ADVOCACY**

#### **BUILDING AND NAVIGATING RELATIONSHIPS FOR THE FUTURE**

#### **Laura Willard, American Association of Homecare**

Laura Willard is the vice president of payer relations for the American Association for Homecare. In this role, she has formed relationships with national payers including Anthem, TRICARE, the Defense Health Agency, AIM Sleep Management and Care Centrix, to have a greater impact on policy and operational changes for HME providers. She has consulted with legal staff on the impact of the CURES Bill and created reference materials and resources for the industry; and at the state level she has been a driving force to secure wins in several states who were following suit with Medicare reimbursement. Willard has served in the HME community for more than 24 years, most recently at Advanced Home Care as senior director of regulatory affairs, reimbursement compliance, and contracting. She has extensive experience working with managed care, Medicare advantage, MEDICAID MCOs, and state Medicaid programs. Laura is very active in the state associations, serving on the board for GAMES, FAHCS, OAMES, HOMES, SCMESA, ACMESA, Payer Relations Co-Chair for KMESA, and Vice President for ATHOMES. She also served as the Vice Chair for the Jurisdiction C Medicare Council and is a founding member of the Mediware User Group. Willard also participated as a member of the Palmetto 16 State Coalition Committee and sat on the Public Policy Committee of the Visiting Nurses Association of America, and both home health associations during her time at Advanced Home Care. In addition to her industry involvement, Willard has previous experience managing a large reimbursement department with 150 employees and was responsible for all aspects of the revenue cycle.

### **MEDICARE UPDATE**

#### **Noridian Representative**

At the time of this printing, we do not have the name of the Noridian Representative that will be attending the PAMES Conference.

**BILLING AND REIMBURSEMENT BENCHMARKING**  
**Miriam Lieber, Lieber Consulting & Ronda Buhrmester, VGM**

Measuring & monitoring performance equal success. How well do you measure up against others? Attend this session with Miriam & Ronda to learn about benchmarking & comparing the revenue cycle. Denial & collection rates, A/R, bad debt, learn how to keep your money?

Miriam Lieber is a principal consultant and trainer specializing in home healthcare revenue cycle management. Her extensive experience with Medicare and other third party payers has brought her national recognition in the homecare industry. With over 25 years in the homecare field, Miriam has consulted with over 500 HME companies nationwide and is a featured author of many articles in the areas of operations management and leadership. She is also a nationally known speaker for many homecare trade associations. In her consulting practice, Ms. Lieber's clientele includes, HME companies, managed care organizations, hospitals, wholesalers, pharmacists, and manufacturers. She is known to have practical approaches to complex operational matters and assists her clients with the nuts and bolts of running a profitable business.

Ronda Buhrmester, VGM is the Senior Director of Payer Relations. Ronda has been a VGM Associate since 2012, Ronda specializes in the billing, reimbursement, and audit area as the Senior Director of Payer Relations and Reimbursement. She managed a hospital based DME in Illinois for 12 years and handled sales and marketing. Ronda is a respiratory therapist as well as a certified mastectomy fitter. With over 20 years of experience in the healthcare industry, she assists VGM members with review of claims and all types of audits and educates members on medical policies in the respiratory and all other DME products. She serves on the Jurisdictions B and D respiratory team, is a member of the Provider Outreach and Education teams with the Jurisdictions and attends the council meetings with all four Jurisdictions. She is also on the Great Lakes Home Medical Services Association Board of Directors, currently the sitting President, and a member the National Supplier Clearinghouse Advisory Council. Ronda has presented at the VGM Heartland Conference as well as the Med Trade and state association meetings and has conducted webinars and on-site education with VGM Members.

**“Employee Obsession? ”**  
**Learn how to focus on your own “Leadership Capital**  
**Mike “Ike” Isaacson, VGM**

In a world of supply chain challenges, compressed reimbursement and margins, increased prices and procurement costs, our days can feel chaotic and out of control. Through these trying times Leaders can lose sight of their most valuable asset...their employees. “Employee Obsession” is a discussion about focusing on our own “Leadership Capital” so that you can engage in creating a workplace where your people feel valued, challenged, and energized.”

Mike Isaacson is the Senior Vice President of Business Development for VGM & Associates, and oversees the continued development, growth, and enhancements of VGM & Associates Communities. Working with each Community Leader, he seeks out additional solutions for our partners and new opportunities to improve services and supports.

Prior to joining VGM & Associates, Mike was Vice President of Business Development for VGM/HOMELINK. This opportunity afforded Mike an in-depth knowledge and understanding of provider pain points being met with innovation and technology. Before making his way to VGM, he spent 23 years as a state and national leader in community healthcare settings, creating services for individuals, families, and communities alike. These experiences created opportunities to develop and grow several service companies with a focus on government relations, provider relations, cross system integration, and challenging the status quo.