

## **High Deductibles and Health Savings Accounts Causing a Stir in Medical Reimbursement**

If you talk any individual with commercial insurance, you may have heard the same statement repeated over the past year. "My deductible has gone up or is going up next year." 2003 saw the introduction of Health Savings Accounts (HSA). Employees may elect to carry only catastrophic coverage and contribute to an HSA. By the end of 2003 only 438,000 individuals were covered by an HSA according to the American Health Insurance Providers (AHIP). By the end of 2005 that number rose to 3.2 million individuals and is expected to rise to 40-45 million individuals. Contributions to an HSA range from \$1,050 for single coverage to \$6,000 for family coverage. Kiplinger's *Your Money* newsletter's October issue says "In 2004, fewer than 10% of midsize and larger firms offered a high-deductible option...In 2007, more than 60% will."

What do high deductibles translate to your revenue? In short your department could see a possible reduction in revenue, especially during the first and half of the insurance policy year. Most plans do begin in January, but there are plan years form July to June.

Combating the EMS Billing issues related to these high deductible plans is not going to be easy. Utilizing policies with in the Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General, most departments have sought billing policies that preclude their residents from any type of revenue collection. The only notice these residents receive may be a request for information fro MBI or an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) from their insurance carrier.

For questions regarding High Deductible Plans or Health Savings Accounts, contact Tom Steuer at 937-619-3027 or 800-875-0136 extension 3027.