

From Momentum to Action

■ Steve Sellars

May is a time to reflect, reset, and carry forward the momentum we've built over the first part of the year. Coming out of our 2026 Urgent Care Convention in Chicago, that momentum feels real and shared by all Urgent Care stakeholders. Over the past several months, we've talked about advocacy, about proving our value, and about the importance of showing up for one another as an industry. The Convention brought all of that into focus. It was a reminder that Urgent Care is not just a collection of centers, but a connected community working toward a common purpose.

I want to start by saying thank you. Thank you to the operators, leaders, and clinicians who showed up engaged, bringing real-world perspective to every conversation. Thank you to our speakers who challenged our thinking, our sponsors and partners who continue to invest in this field, and the Urgent Care Association (UCA) team for delivering a Convention that reflected the strength of this industry.

I also want to recognize and thank Gerry Cvitanovich, MD, for his leadership and service as our outgoing Board President. His guidance helped strengthen UCA's role as a unified voice for the field. At the same time, I welcome Cassandra Donnelly, DO, as our new Board President, along with our 2026 – 2027 Board of Directors. Their leadership, supported by our many volunteers, will continue shaping the direction of our association and our field.

What stood out most in Chicago was the level of engagement. Conversations were candid, practical, and forward-looking. Whether discussing policy and reimbursement, workforce challenges, payer strategies, employer relationships, or the impact of AI and automation, one thing was consistent: no one is solving these

challenges alone.

In an increasingly complex and competitive healthcare environment, this alignment matters. Fragmentation is a risk. Alignment is an advantage. What we saw in Chicago was alignment taking shape. A shared understanding of where we need to go, recognition that Urgent Care plays a critical role in access, and growing confidence in the power of our collective voice.

But momentum requires continued engagement. This is where I want to be direct. The future of Urgent Care will not be shaped by observation; it will be shaped by participation.

Over the past year, many leaders have stepped forward to serve on the Board, participate on committees, and contributed to our advocacy efforts. That level of involvement is making a difference, but we need more. More operators becoming members. More leaders getting involved. More voices contributing to data, insight, and perspective. Because when more of us participate, we are more credible with policymakers, more effective with payers, better positioned with employers, and stronger in our communities.

This is not just about supporting UCA. It is about strengthening your organization and your market. Engagement at the national level helps shape the policies that affect your local operations and connects you with peers navigating the same challenges.

If you were in Chicago, I encourage you to build on that momentum. If you were not there, now is the time to raise your hand and join us. Become a member. Get involved. Your participation matters.

As we look to the remainder of 2026, our priorities remain clear: advancing advocacy with a unified voice, proving the value of Urgent Care through data and outcomes, and deepening engagement across our membership.

The Convention was an important moment, but it was not the finish line. It was a starting point for what comes next. I look forward to continuing this work with you in the months ahead. ■



Steve Sellars is Chief Executive Officer of the Urgent Care Association.