



The Evolution of a Specialty



Evolution, by definition, is a process in which something passes by degrees to a more advanced stage. This inaugural issue of *The Journal of Urgent Care Medicine (JUCM)* represents an important milestone in the evolution of urgent care medicine as a discipline.

Our intent, and one of my key objectives as Editor-in-Chief, is to make *JUCM* a forum for the sharing of ideas, trends, clinical content, original research, and industry news unique to the practice of urgent care medicine. This journal speaks in an urgent care voice as it expands on the core competencies of our field with practical, clinically relevant content that reflects our unique medical decision-making. It explores the challenges and opportunities revealed in our novel healthcare delivery model.

In my role as Chair of Academics for the Urgent Care Association of America (UCAOA), I am charged with the task of creating an academic vision that is expansive, as well as legitimate and substantive, tackling such issues as credentialing, training, continuing education, and research. *JUCM* is part of that effort.

I believe strongly that a specialty evolves; it does not simply declare itself. We have embarked on a process that must encourage reflection, flexibility, collaboration, and discussion. We are navigating our course through a tempestuous sea; the best way through will take careful study, planning, and managed risk-taking. We have begun by asking ourselves: Who are we? What do we do that is unique? What special skills are required? What training is necessary to master those skills? What is our model of healthcare delivery, and how do we accredit facilities that provide it?

We're still in our formative stage, yet we've accomplished a great deal already:

- The establishment of a reproducible training program based on a set of core competencies and learning objectives that reflect the unique skills and decision-making required of an urgent care practitioner
- The birth of an accreditation process that identifies urgent care facilities uniquely qualified to meet recognized standards of operation and oversight

- The development of a committee of UCAOA members dedicated to exploring, debating, and building on the academic mission
- Not least of all, the introduction of this journal

Refining the core competencies and growing the training program will provide the necessary foundation to further the academic agenda. With this essential groundwork in place, we can more effectively explore ways to test competency and recognize those who have achieved a higher level learning through experience, training, and continuing education.

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This journal represents a critical step toward a more evolved discipline, capable of redefining healthcare delivery while providing the highest standard of care for our patients. I encourage you to make it your own by submitting an article for publication. More than that, however, I hope you will use it as a tool to aid in your own evolution as a clinician.

Sincerely,

Lee A. Resnick, MD
Editor-in-Chief
The Journal of Urgent Care Medicine