



# Leadership—of Mice and Men

■ LOU ELLEN HORWITZ, MA

### Looking Back

What a ride! The UCAOA 2008 National Convention is over, but for the 660 attendees and 67 exhibiting companies, plus over 50 faculty, many of us are still breathless from the incredible amount of learning, idea swapping, networking, and socializing that took place in New Orleans last month. If you joined us, thank you for sharing what we hope was also a great experience for you, and if you didn't, you were missed!

For a full set of convention highlights (including a slide show and some program "pearls") I invite you to visit the UCAOA website ([www.ucaoa.org](http://www.ucaoa.org)).

However, as we are fond of saying at UCAOA, any success we have only raises our expectations for the future, so whether you joined us this year or not, be sure to save April 20-23, 2009 in your calendar to come to Las Vegas. It will be even better!

### Looking Ahead

Contemplating the future can be a scary thing. It is, in itself, an uncertain activity. In addition, it is imperative that any responsible contemplation include both the best and worst scenarios—however uncomfortable that might be.

Everyone in New Orleans experienced a bit of that during our keynote address on the future of primary care—and it was uncomfortable!

None of us (including the keynote speaker) really know what is going to happen with primary, urgent, or convenient care. The possibilities of disruptive technologies, legislation, catastrophic events, consumer influences, and so on are just too numerous for any of us to say for certain what the future holds.

Just a few days ago, there was a *Wall Street Journal* article reporting that the "boom" in the retail clinic industry may be slowing down. But life continues to move very fast.

If we got to design the world, it would be all about the

success of urgent care. But we need to temper that enthusiasm with knowing that being a leader also means looking at many different possible futures, and developing at least a conceptual plan for how to influence—or at the very least respond to—those possible futures.

While a gathering of urgent care industry leaders is certainly a great opportunity to celebrate our industry and the marvelous growth and strides we have all made, it is also a critical opportunity to be sure we are all thinking ahead to whatever the future may bring, and to make sure we are prepared to meet those challenges and seize those opportunities.

If you are not familiar with the short book *Who Moved My Cheese?*, it is one that I will highly recommend.

Through a parable about mice and men and the disappearance of cheese, it deals with the different ways we can respond to change. It is excellent (and quick) reading for anyone in an environment like ours with considerable outside influences that will keep on moving the cheese. Consider checking it out if you have not.

### Looking Inward

At UCAOA, your current and future challenges are our challenges, which is why the leadership of our Board of Directors is so important.

Our members added five new Directors through the elections in New Orleans, and we look forward to the addition of their voices to our strategic discussions.

The new member of the UCAOA Board of Directors are:

- Jeff Collins, MD
- Don Dillahunty, DO, MPH
- J. Dale Key
- Peter Lamelas, MD, MBA
- Laurel Stoimenoff

In the coming months, as we launch new projects we have been working on (the redesigned website, new job board, new courses at the Fall Urgent Care Conference and new online CME), we will also be looking toward what may be next, so we invite you to share any thoughts, concerns, comments, questions, ideas, hunches, prognostications. Bring it on. We do it best when we do it together. ■



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