



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As We Gather

■ LOU ELLEN HORWITZ, MA

It's a well-known fact that most people don't like meetings. They are an intrusion on "our" day. They are often in the service of other people and their ideas. They take at least an hour and sometimes don't accomplish much. They require preparation and listening and "consensus."

It would be so much better if they could be all about us, wouldn't it? If we were the only ones who could call a meeting, and everyone who attended had done their homework and were there to help us figure out how to make our lives easier, better, more rewarding?

I will confess now that the above is a set-up to talk to you about the upcoming National Urgent Care Convention.

It seems contrived, I realize, but it's also true. As I was writing, and thinking about gatherings and why people usually come together—and how it usually goes (see paragraph 1)—I realized that the Convention is the antithesis of your regular meetings; it really is that "fantasy meeting" (see paragraph 2) we all dream about.

Here's why:

- Highly trained people spend at least 10 months doing their "homework" and coming up with a meeting agenda that is *all about you*.
- We invite the top people we can find to come and talk about topics that you have already told us you want to know more about (plus a few new ideas to keep you all on the cutting edge).
- We invite all of your professional colleagues and friends to the meeting, so you cannot only learn from our experts, but share ideas with each other and reunite with old acquaintances.
- We also invite 100 or so industry suppliers, just in case you need to do some organizational shopping, or need to learn about a great product or technology or service you hear about during the meeting.



Lou Ellen Horwitz is executive director of the Urgent Care Association of America. She may be contacted at lhorwitz@ucaoa.org.

- So you can have a little fun and relax during your "fantasy meeting," we have a party every now and then—with better refreshments than the typical office cake.
- We also have a full-time staff ready to answer questions, give direction, facilitate introductions, and provide whatever else you need during your meeting (even if it's just another notepad).
- Since there are so many people at your fantasy meeting (because it's their fantasy meeting too!), we also give you a contact list for everyone, so you can easily reach out to them after it's over.

The only catch is that you do have to come to Las Vegas to be at the meeting...but as catches go, that's a pretty good one!

As you can tell, I am both proud of what the Convention Committee has put together, and excited to share it all with you. Without you, obviously, it's just a bunch of good ideas waiting for a place to happen; it is all of you who make it actually happen.

This presumes, of course, that you will be in attendance when we convene at Caesars Palace April 21–23. If you haven't had the chance to register for this "fantasy" meeting yet because you've been stuck in the more mundane variety described previously, I urge you to do so now. The online registration form, along with all the details you'll need to know, can be found at www.ucaoa.org/convention.

With everyone talking about how bad the economy is and what impact that will have on meetings like ours, we are encouraged by how many of you have already signed up—exhibitors and participants alike. So, thank you for giving us (and yourselves) the gift of your attendance. I can promise you, it is an investment that will pay dividends in the years and months to come, and we can't wait to see you. ■

On a somewhat related note....

Soon, all UCAOA members will be hearing from us with a Call for Nominations for the April election of new members of the Board of Directors, which will take place during the Convention. These new leaders will join our existing Directors in charting the future for UCAOA, so we encourage all of you to give that serious consideration.