



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Count Me In

■ LOU ELLEN HORWITZ, MA

Sometimes, it's hard to stand up for what you believe in—especially if you are standing alone. Hopefully, you all know that feeling of (perhaps metaphorically) putting your hands on the seat of your chair and pushing yourself somewhat reluctantly, somewhat proudly, to your feet. Or letting your hand creep high above your shoulder in a crowded room to show your support—or lack thereof—for something. It's hard to take a stand, and a bit scary.

It would follow, then, that it's much easier to stand up and support something when everyone else in the room is doing the same, to jump to your feet with your neighbors and burst into thunderous applause: "Touchdown!"

All this makes you wonder why urgent care is so quiet. Why so few of us actively seek each other out to bond together and *shout* about our industry.

Do you know that UCAOA, as successful as we have been, represents (via membership) only about 1,500 different urgent care organizations? That's a good number and we are thankful for every one of you, but it's curious why more of your brethren have not joined us.

During the convention in Orlando in May, I was doing a talk about the Certified Urgent Care designation. One of the questions that came up was, effectively, "Why should we do this? What's in it for me?"

I think that question speaks to the heart of what is hindering us from becoming the industry we can be.

If we are going to bother to "associate" at all, our thinking needs to shift from "What's in it for me?" to "What's in it for *us*?" Otherwise, you are just passing by, taking what you can get, and moving on—and that never builds greatness. What builds greatness is, well...building! And that takes a lot of bricks and at least a modest level of dedication from the bricklayers (i.e., you).

I'm not asking everyone to give the time to be a commit-

"Be the change you want to see in the world."

- Mohandas Gandhi

tee chair or a board member, or even to come to every conference we have. I am asking you, at the very least, to become a member and support the activities and efforts of others who are laying bricks on your behalf every single day. Think of what we could build together if every urgent care professional reading this (that means you) participated even a little bit.

For 1,700 of you, an up-close and personal opportunity is already in your lap. You hold the log-in and password to your site's participation in the UCAOA Benchmarking Survey. Have you used it? Are you sending in your own data to add to the collective so we can answer the questions you all have for us, and the questions that legislators and payors and patients have for us?

This is your chance to be heard—and, more importantly, for your industry to be heard.

In January, I wrote a column (primarily for the solo urgent care owner) about not being alone, and how there are thousands of urgent care owners just like you across the country, going through the same things. That's true of every biller, coder, physician, practice manager, registrar, x-ray tech, nurse...all of you. But if you don't come together and support each other, you may as well actually be alone.

Gandhi said it well: "Be the change you want to see in the world." It's not going to happen without you. It's not going to happen just because you wish it would or think it should. It's going to happen because you make it happen. Become a member. Give us your benchmarking data. Answer a question on UConnect. Come to a conference. Share the industry talking points.

Be the change you want to see. We're building it—and I hope you will come. It's going to be awfully lonely without you, and honestly, not nearly as much will get done. ■



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