



# To better represent you, UCAOA needs YOUR information

■ P. JOANNE RAY

In the past year, UCAOA has continued to connect with key decision-makers such as various third-party payors, The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), state legislators and regulators, state departments of health, the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), the Veterans Administration (VA), the Department of Transportation, media outlets such as *Forbes*, *Modern Healthcare*, and *Reader's Digest* as well as many other national and regional outlets, and "sister" medical associations such as the American Academy of Family Physicians. In each case, our goal is to represent you, your colleagues, your centers, and the urgent care industry as a whole; to educate the leaders of these groups and debunk the myths they may believe about urgent care; and to create opportunities for partnerships that will ultimately benefit urgent care.

In many of the discussions with organizations previously listed, and at least once a week in outreach to the media, we are asked to quantify various urgent care benchmarks. Some are relatively easy to extrapolate from current and past UCAOA Benchmarking Studies. Some are clinical or practice management in nature and can be addressed by our industry experts. In countless situations, however, we are asked to provide data regarding an incredibly healthy and growing industry and to offer expanded statistics that could significantly influence decision-makers in ways that would benefit you.

For example, last month, UCAOA commented on the barriers to successful participation in Medicare's Physician Quality Reporting Program (PQRS) for physicians and other eligible professionals who practice in urgent care centers, including the lack of relevant PQRS measures, which would worsen if CMS finalizes its plans to eliminate the claims reporting mechanism for a number of measures. It would strengthen state-

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ments such as these to denote the number of physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants working in urgent care. We ask that you voluntarily provide this information so that your national association can better represent you.

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State "monitors" will also be recruited to serve as our eyes and ears at the state and regional levels and to help the national leaders of UCAOA help you. Knowing about issues that are or may be on the horizon will allow us to provide response templates, data, and other resources for you to convey to your state decision-makers. In the media and community outreach realm, UCAOA is developing toolkits and templates to assist you in creating relationships with and press releases and promotional information for use in your own communities.

*Please note: You can keep up with progress on these dialogues and issues on the UCAOA website at <http://www.ucaoa.org/?Advocacy> and <http://www.ucaoa.org/?page=HealthPolicy>; UCAccess, our monthly e-newsletter; and via the UCAOA Facebook page, Twitter account, and LinkedIn page. Please make sure that you are subscribed to these media to stay up to date! ■*



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