



Two Years Too Fast

■ NATHAN NEWMAN, MD, FAAFP

As my 2-year term as UCAOA president draws to a close, I am amazed that it has flown by so quickly. Wasn't it just the other day that Dr. Marc Salzberg passed the gavel to me? I recall visions of a redesigned organizational structure, making use of committee work rather than having the board of directors get in the weeds, which would optimize all of the hard work from team UCAOA.

We planned to raise awareness of the benefits of urgent care medicine in our communities, hold off regulatory and legislative challenges, be an educational resource for all members large and small, and work to stabilize reimbursement. I imagined an organization supporting parallel initiatives in education, advocacy, patient safety, new service lines, and integration of UCAOA with other large organizations in medicine.

In looking back, it is apparent that we did so much more! Our committee chairs boosted volunteerism by seeking out interested urgent care leaders. They developed goals and objectives to meet our 3-year strategy. These are some of our successes:

- **Accreditation/Certification Committee:** There are now more than 775 certified centers, and more than 127 centers have been surveyed and have received UCAOA accreditation. The addition of accreditation has filled a true need, because many US regions are reporting that insurers now require accreditation.
- **Health and Public Policy Committee:** We met with Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to ensure that urgent care clinicians would avoid a penalty because the Physician Quality Reporting System benchmarks are primary-care driven. We also partnered with members in New York and hired a lobbyist to thwart a regulatory and legislative push to *require* Certificates of Need, emergency medicine training, and Medicaid participation for urgent care centers.
- **Strategic Development Partnership Committee:** We worked with the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American Academy of Pediatrics for policies on

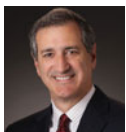
emergency preparedness and met with their leadership on future partnering opportunities. Also, we brought in our first two Diamond Corporate Support Partners (DocuTAP and Practice Velocity) and developed an Exhibitor Advisory Committee to enhance the opportunities for exhibitor feedback and input. Now we boast the largest urgent care exhibit hall for participants ever!

- **Education Committee:** We have enhanced our Fall Conference, adding new educational tracks such as Health Reform, Hands-On Splinting/Casting, Suturing, and Department of Transportation certification classes. Our Spring Convention and Fall Conference are the most well-attended events in the history of UCAOA!
- **Public Relations Committee:** We have now placed stories in *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, *Forbes Magazine*, and many other news outlets, and local television news coverage of urgent care's role in Ebola was picked up nationally. The UCAOA Benchmarking Survey is the top source of urgent care information in the United States, and the 2014 survey had more participating centers than ever before.
- **Membership Committee:** We now have the most members in our history, and new types of membership are available. The initiation of UCAOA state chapters will add a national presence to members' local issues.

Now we are set for a new team to take the controls. Recognizing the importance of diversity, our board of directors voted unanimously that UCAOA leadership may now include a non-physician president; however, the core majority of our board of directors will remain physicians.

Last—but far from least—is the growth and maturity of our UCAOA staff. Without this, no progress toward any of our goals would have been possible.

Thank you for this great opportunity to lead. As Sir William Osler said, "The best preparation for tomorrow is to do today's work superbly well." Team UCAOA certainly has done so! ■



Nathan Newman, MD, FAAFP, serves as president of the Urgent Care Association of America. He took office in 2013, and his term ends in 2015. He is Vice President of Medical Services of Righttime Medical Care in Annapolis, Maryland.