



2015: A Year of Advocacy for You in Review

■ ROBERT R. KIMBALL, MD, FCFP

The year has flown by, and thanks to a lot of dedicated and selfless volunteers and a fabulous staff, UCAOA continues to grow and thrive. There are more than 900 UCAOA Certified Urgent Care Centers and 267 UCAOA Accredited Urgent Care Centers. Our membership is up 11% compared with 2014, and we are financially stronger, with an equity growth of 15% over the year 2014.

We are making steady progress on the policy and legislative front. On our very successful trip to Washington DC last fall, your representatives met with agencies, associations, and legislative offices that are germane to our industry. We now have CQ State Track to monitor state legislative and regulatory issues that may be of interest to—or pose barriers for—the urgent care industry. We still need liaisons in many states to review these reports from their unique local perspective. Please contact Tonia Trimuel (ttrimuel@ucaoa.org) if you can help.

We also saw the launch of our first state chapter, with Michigan leading the way. We hope other states and regions will join us in this endeavor, which ultimately strengthens our collective ability to advocate. Speaking about regions, I was privileged to attend the first regional meeting hosted by the Northeast Regional Urgent Care Association (NERUCA), which was educational, informative, and fun. We hope that our ties to this organization will only strengthen going forward. Incidentally, we will host our first regional meeting in Philadelphia this summer. It is the exciting culmination of several years' work by our education committee, and we hope that the topics will appeal to many of you who live in the area. We plan to offer these smaller meetings on a rotating basis across the country. Look for more information online and in your mailbox over the next several months.

On another front, our public relations efforts to tell the story of urgent care have resulted in more than 204 million impres-



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Notable Trade and Consumer Placements



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sions (interactions between audience members and content) in media such as the *Wall Street Journal*, Fox News, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and even *Reader's Digest*! We continue to successfully make the case that for many patients, your urgent care center—rather than the emergency department—is the solution for treatment of non-life-threatening conditions.

Democracy is alive and well in your organization. The board of directors election takes place at the annual meeting in April. The nominating committee has come up with some excellent candidates, and we have seen solid interest with additional nominations from the membership, which makes for a very robust election and strengthens your board. Remember, there are lots of other ways to get involved in your organization, including serving as state liaison and working on various committees that are continually looking for fresh perspectives. I hope to see you all in Orlando in April. Come prepared to learn, interact with your peers, and have lots of fun. Please make time to come to our first annual awards dinner. ■