



UCAOA Certification Options, Specialty Sections Grow with Our Industry

■ LAUREL STOIMENOFF, PT, CHC

As the urgent care industry evolves, our members have also evolved. In response, the Urgent Care Association of America is launching new certification opportunities and specialty sections.

Certification

The UCAOA Board and Certification Committee have responded to industry diversification with updated certification criteria. Historically, UCAOA certification recognized a qualified urgent care as one open 7 days a week, offering comprehensive medical services for patients of all ages. A limited-scope pure pediatric urgent care could also qualify. UCAOA has subsequently established categories for Rural, Occupational Medicine, and Seasonal urgent care centers, with additional limited-scope options being considered. Occ Med is the first certification that can be coupled with another; MD Now's 26 Florida centers being the first to attain this designation.

Sections

The newly formed Sections were historically known as Special Interest Groups (SIGs), focused on providing online networking opportunities to a defined community. Some of these SIGs, such as Revenue Cycle, will continue while the newly established Sections will have a much broader function.

Charters have been developed, and champions established, for Telemedicine and eHealth (Bill Lewis, MD), Pediatric Urgent Care (Parul Martin, MD), and Hospital & Health Systems (Robert Rohatsch, MD) Sections. Others in the works include Occupational Medicine/Worker's Health, and UC Operations & Management.

Expanded Resources and Collaboration

Our new Sections will offer more sophisticated communities, collaboration, and resources to assist with the diverse services

and patient populations treated by today's urgent care centers. More specifically, *clinically oriented* Sections will:

- Strengthen advocacy efforts, including payer outreach and regulatory affairs
- Use UCAOA communication outlets to promote quality in the delivery of services to specific populations
- Monitor and support the dissemination of relevant research to section members
- Collaborate with the Certification and Accreditation Committee regarding care, scope, safety, and quality
- Work with the Urgent Care Foundation and the College of Urgent Care Medicine on relevant projects
- Appoint a designee to work with our Education Committee to develop relevant educational experiences to be showcased via online courses or at UCAOA conferences

Tailored Section Content

Sections will establish communication outlets, guide education efforts, and focus on each's unique administrative and clinical issues. As an example, a hospital or health system-based urgent care may have greater resources at its disposal than a non-system-affiliated urgent care, but it may face unique challenges, such as making a system-based EMR fit the needs of an urgent care where efficiency and throughput are essential patient satisfiers. The Hospital & Health System Section could research and report on EMR adoption and integration best practices specific to their urgent care settings, providing tailored guidelines to its community.

UCAOA members can join any (and many) Sections of interest; one doesn't have to work at a pediatric urgent care center to join the Pediatric Section. Caring for pediatric patients in your urgent care center is reason enough to join. There is no cost to join, as Section membership is a benefit of being a UCAOA member.

It's a New Year!

So, come join a new Section or pursue new opportunities for center certification to further take advantage of all UCAOA membership has to offer. Email jkral@ucaoa.org for more information on Sections or bgaddis@ucaoa.org for certification. ■



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