

# A Changing of the Guard—but Not Our Commitment

■ JOSEPH CHOW, MD

To say this past year has been “challenging” would be understating the magnitude of this once-in-a-century event. The pandemic has challenged us as an industry and has left no one unaffected. In the midst of these historic events, urgent care has been able to stand proud, when comfort and stability were needed most in healthcare. Most centers stayed open, providing safe, quick, and quality care when our patients needed it the most. Most provided needed COVID-19 testing; all kept staff and patients safe.

The work you have all done is truly historic, and certainly the term *healthcare heroes* applies to you all.

The Urgent Care Association was here for you, as well. During the pandemic, we provided our members with education on the virus, created a Listserv forum so we could all communicate and learn from each other, and maintained a sense of community when there was no physical community. All the while, we kept up our commitment to conduct essential advocacy work at the federal and state levels.

With the vaccine rollout ongoing, we are starting to feel optimistic about the future once again. More than ever, the urgent care industry will need to be a trusted part of the community. We will continue to provide the safest environment and access to healthcare—no matter what other challenge comes our way.

UCA will also be there for you to provide education, advocacy, transparent updates, and community; this is what sets us apart. We have also strengthened our ties with the College of Urgent Care Medicine, better reflecting the day-to-day partnerships of business and medicine in urgent cares everywhere.

We’ve all heard the phrase *It takes a village*. There have been so many contributors to the association whom we’d like to recognize. Dr. Richard Park, founder of CityMD and our Past

President, rotates off the UCA Board of Directors this year. Dr. Park has been part of the Board for 5 years. His laser focus on “How do we provide value for members, how do we make our conference world class, and how do we support our centers with accreditation?” has been a driving force for even longer than that. Dr. Park will be missed, but his influence will live on, and the ethos he instilled will always resonate within UCA.

COVID-19 robbed us of the opportunity to have an in-person conference this past year, meaning many of you have not had the pleasure of meeting our outgoing president, Shaun Ginter. Be assured that Shaun has been working just as hard (if not harder) to keep the association focused on what the members needed during the pandemic. Shaun has spearheaded advocacy for urgent care through UCA and UCAPAC, kept our board on track during this pandemic, and continues to be active in our regional chapters. We are pleased to have Shaun remain on the board as Immediate Past President to help guide the association in the new phase (and hopefully out of) of the pandemic.

This is the time to acknowledge the difficulty COVID-19 has caused in our industry and in our personal lives. It is also the time to turn the page. We must stand proud of our industry, continue to provide the best in convenient and quality care, and be bold in what we do to provide this for our patients and community.

I am honored to be serving as your President in such an exciting time. I welcome you to join us at our Annual Convention this October in New Orleans. I welcome you to join our Listserv communities, to read and contribute to the *Journal of Urgent Care Medicine*, UCAccess, UrgentCaring, and Urgent Updates, to become advocates for the industry through our PAC, and to stand proud of our specialty and our industry.



**Joseph Chow, MD** is Group President, TeamHealth Ambulatory Care and President of the Urgent Care Association.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Chow, MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Joseph Chow, MD**  
President, UCA