

Then and Now

■ LOU ELLEN HORWITZ, MA

UCA's *Benchmarking Survey and Report* is back! We are so happy that the pandemic is settling down enough that you are able to look forward and are asking for data to help you do that.

In 2020 and 2021 we had to improvise our benchmarking, and we learned a few things along the way:

- Quarterly surveys and reports are preferred
- You really want to benchmark against each other vs more generalized national data
- Your needs have grown into a desire for deeper dives on data

Before we look at what's next, I want to thank the industry partners that helped us with data for 2021: Experity, Medline, MedTrainer, National Urgent Care Realty, Socius, Solv, Sorensen, Wilder & Associates, and give a shout out to the staff who found a way to keep the data flowing—Jami Kral, Jackie Stasch, and Todd Windley.

For 2022 we are keeping the quarterly schedule, adding back data collection surveys, and focusing each report on a single(ish) topic. Our first report will be on Staffing & Compensation—the number-one issue in urgent care today. It should be available by May. If you contributed to the survey and are a UCA/CUCM organizational member, we are bringing back the benefit of a free copy.

Also new for 2022 are the ways we are going to help you learn and connect to resources and each other. Let's start with in-person experiences. We've shifted the entire Annual Convention away from the fundamentals of urgent care. If you need those, we've got you covered with lots of free webinars. For the Convention in Las Vegas, April 30–May 4, 2022, we are focusing on the trickier diagnoses, the thornier operations problems, the more complicated relationships, the newest models and ideas. The session topics are narrower and deeper and deal with the finer points of success and happiness in urgent care. And they look forward, not backward.



Lou Ellen Horwitz, MA is the chief executive officer of the Urgent Care Association.

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We are shifting our timing a bit, also, to recognize that this may be the first extended, dedicated period you've had for learning and reflection in a very long time. We are giving you extra time and space for absorption and translation of what you hear. Time to talk things over with others from your team, or even your competitors. Time to ask a vendor all of those questions you haven't had been able to get off your list. Time and space to get inspired again. Time and space for absolute silence, or for let-it-all-go laughter.

Looking even further forward, we have been secretly developing brand-new systems for you to easily find the information you are looking for—and filling in gaps for information we've never had. All that is still going on (and will go on forever!), but we'll start unveiling it this summer. We have also been investing in new technology that will make other things easier for you and allow us to easily grow new member benefits, which you'll start seeing in Q4 this year.

Finally, I want to report on the publication of our Advocacy strategy. In November, I said you'd see a summary of those published by the end of the year. Unfortunately, Omicron derailed our efforts for a while as it pulled all of our hard-working volunteer leaders under the tidal wave that swept over all of urgent care, so we did not finish them on time. I am sorry about that. We are putting on the final touches now and will be able to begin to share those with the world in April at the latest.

We are very pleased, however, with the considerable strides we have made in our age-old pursuit of a “seat at the table.” Because of the shared work of many people over many years and your particular achievements in the past two, we are finally getting those invitations and we're going to make the most of them. It's still likely to be a long haul, but we've already come a long way. UCA and the College of Urgent Care Medicine are proud to represent you all, and know the best is still yet to come. ■