

There Are No Elephants

■ LOU ELLEN HORWITZ, MA

It's hard to tell a long story in a short email. At the end of July, Dr. Max Lebow and Dr. Payman Arabzadeh—UCA's President and President-Elect, respectively—announced that we were beginning the search for UCA's next CEO. Since then, I've gotten all kinds of questions, so I want to use a bit of this column to tell the longer story.

First, I love UCA, and I will always love UCA. I was here at the (almost) beginning and have loved being back on staff again. The job of CEO here is the best job I've ever had (both times) and serving through this latest challenge has been a true privilege. There is no bigger fan of UCA than me.

So why am I eventually leaving? It's not for greener pastures or something new and exciting—and there are no elephants in the room we are keeping secret. I am leaving because it will be the right time in UCA's evolution for me to depart, and this has *always* been the plan. I am a startup girl and a turnaround-type, and our need for that is winding down, which is a great and gratifying thing. We've turned the organization upside down and inside out and we are getting into excellent shape for wherever the future will take us. It's the right time to start looking for UCA's long-term leader who will take what we've done, planned, and envisioned to date—and run with it.

I'm also asked why we are announcing this so far in advance and so publicly vs a confidential search. That's an easy answer: it's just who we are. This is a member association, *your* association, and we are a *Community* so you deserve to be informed.

We also want to give ourselves time to do this properly and to hold out for the right person if we must. This succession plan is vitally important to all of us, and together we are going to find that person with the particular skills vital to our next chapter.

Executing the succession like this is fairest to the staff, too. They are accomplishing great things every day as we complete the remaining transitional work and launch new benefits, resources, and long-term initiatives. There's a lot underway. It

ensures their perspectives can be included in the search and eliminates a shockwave that could have derailed our momentum in the months to come.

We have put a lot of thought and planning into how we are going about this succession, so I hope this longer story has helped explain the transition more deeply and cements your confidence in what we are doing and why!

Speaking of what we are doing and why, the Board of Directors at UCA has been reviewing the way we talk about UCA.

Traditionally, we have had a mission statement like many organizations do, but with our transformations over the past two years the Board wanted to revisit the entire idea of why UCA exists. What are we here for? Who are we? So they did.

The result is a core purpose statement that is guiding our strategy today and for the future: **UCA exists to ensure the advancement and long-term success of Urgent Care.** Let's unpack that a little.

They chose the word "ensure" because we understand that as your association, we have an *active responsibility*. Not just to "be here" for you when you need us, but to proactively work for your benefit.

They chose the word "advancement" because we know that Urgent Care must always get a little better every day, and we have an important role to play in realizing that happens. We do that by **fostering togetherness** and **empowering best practices**.

They chose "long-term success" rather than just "success" because we understand that it's our job to do the long, slow, national, and global-level work to make things better for all of Urgent Care *into the future*. We think of it as **championing excellence**.

And finally, we chose to capitalize Urgent Care because we want it to stand out every time it shows up, and you will see us do that in our communications going forward. Urgent Care is worth capitalizing, don't you think?

Check out the About UCA page on the website (<https://www.ucaoa.org/About-UCA>) to see more, and thank you, as always, for being part of our **community**. ■



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