

President's Update

FROM TIM NORBECK

President, Physicians' Foundations

On the first anniversary of the Physicians' Foundations (created as a result of the Aetna and Cigna settlements), I want the signatory medical societies and others to know where we have been, and what is planned for the future. 2004 has been an important year for the Physicians' Foundations. Behind the scenes, the boards and advisors have worked diligently to establish the governing and administrative structures for foundation operations. Some of our many accomplishments include:

- ✓ The boards took great care in developing bylaws that will serve our organizations well. With those documents in place we were able to begin the process of filing with the IRS to become public charity/supporting organizations.
- ✓ The boards and advisors participated in a day-long planning session to learn about foundation structures and processes, work on short- and long-term staffing plans, and develop grantmaking approaches with the help of Grants Management Associates (GMA), a Boston-based foundation advisory firm.
- ✓ The Grants Review Committee (chaired by Lou Goodman, PhD), Communications Committee (co-chaired by Don Alexander and Subhi Ali, MD), Executive Search Committee (co-chaired by Paul Weber and Patricia Mueller, MD) and the Finance Committee (chaired by William Mahon) have met regularly to recommend policies and procedures to the Foundations' boards. Soon, they will turn their attention to implementation.
- ✓ The Finance Committee interviewed and retained Synovus Securities, Inc. and Mellon Private Wealth Management to manage the Foundations' investments. The portfolio looks strong, and the Committee will work closely with the consultants to monitor it.
- ✓ The Foundations retained Caplin & Drysdale, a law firm with expertise in advising exempt foundations.
- ✓ The Foundations approved a conflict of interest policy.
- ✓ The Grants Review Committee has developed grants guidelines to be disseminated in early 2005.
- ✓ The Communications Committee is active and will take the lead in keeping the community informed of the foundations' activities.
- ✓ The Foundations contracted with GMA, foundation advisors, who will staff the foundation until an executive director is hired.

WHAT'S AHEAD FOR THE FOUNDATIONS?

In February the Foundations will announce the first grantmaking cycle for the Physicians' Foundation for Health Systems Excellence, seeking concept papers for projects with benefits in three major areas of improving physician practice. You will want to watch the website (www.physiciansfoundation.org) after the first of the year for information about those grants along with guidelines.

The subcommittee on Health Information Technology (chaired by Jack Lewin, MD) will be working with consultants to design a major grants initiative to impact electronic health records at the small practice level.

The Foundations will continue to find new ways to reach out to assist practicing doctors nationwide, and through them, to the patients they serve. The Foundations' Boards are excited to have come to this point and to be on the verge of the next steps, moving into our first grantmaking cycle. We are grateful to the signatory medical societies for their invaluable contributions to this effort. None of this could have happened without the tireless dedication and uncompensated work of our board members, committee members, advisory members, and the many physicians nationwide who supported the legal actions, and endorsed the development of these charitable foundations. Thanks also are due to the attorneys whose guidance and advocacy helped achieve the settlements and establish the foundations.

We hope that you will check the website from time to time, you will find it at www.physiciansfoundation.org. The grant guidelines will be posted in early 2005 and new information will be added to the site as it becomes available.

**Physicians' Foundation
for Health Systems Excellence**

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Rick Abrams (*Incoming February 2005 –*)
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**Physicians' Foundation
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California Medical Association
Connecticut State Medical Society
Denton County Medical Association (Texas)
El Paso County Medical Society (Colorado)
Florida Medical Association
Hawaii Medical Association
Louisiana State Medical Society
Medical Association of Georgia
Medical Society of New Jersey
Medical Society of the State of New York
Nebraska Medical Association
New Hampshire Medical Society
North Carolina Medical Society
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Tennessee Medical Association
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Florida Medical Association
Hawaii Medical Association
Louisiana State Medical Society
Medical Association of Georgia
Medical Society of New Jersey
Medical Society of the State of New York
Nebraska Medical Association
New Hampshire Medical Society
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Northern Virginia Medical Societies
South Carolina Medical Association
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Texas Medical Association
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