

## President's Update

**From Tim Norbeck**  
**President, Physicians' Foundations**

As many of you know, the first half of 2005 has been quite busy for the Physicians Foundations. Earlier this spring, the Physicians' Foundation for Health Systems Excellence received \$77 million from the Aetna settlement fund and launched its first cycle of grantmaking. Concurrently, the Physicians' Foundation for Health Systems Innovations is gearing up to develop its own grantmaking program, which is likely to focus on Health Information Technology among other themes. Both foundations have filed the IRS paperwork to become public charities and the boards continue to meet on a bi-monthly basis to develop policy, procedures, and programmatic activities. Additionally, the Foundations have joined Grantmakers In Health (GIH), a membership organization for grantmaking organizations. GIH, an excellent resource for both new and seasoned grantmakers, provides opportunities for sharing, learning and networking. As President of the Board for both Foundations, I'd like to take this opportunity to personally thank the individual board and advisory members of both the Excellence and Innovations Foundations, as well as the 19 signatory medical societies, for their incredibly diligent work and efforts. Without your commitment and dedication and the endless hours you volunteer at meetings and on conference calls, we wouldn't be where we are today. I also wish to thank our friends at Grants Management Associates, who have provided the Foundations with staff and expertise in grantmaking.

### Grantmaking Update

In January the Excellence Foundation released guidelines for its General Initiative Grants program. Over 400 concept papers were received for the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. Concept papers were received from all four corners of the country, including Alaska and Hawaii. Proposed projects addressed the Excellence Foundation's charitable goals to:

- *improve patient care and safety;*
- *educate physicians and patients;*
- *implement practice improvement strategies for improved quality of care;*
- *implement health information technology for improved quality of care.*

We are very pleased with the wide range of project ideas and the vast geography represented in the concept papers. The quality of proposed projects is outstanding. Foundation board and staff worked around the clock to review the concept papers, and at their April meeting the Grants Committee made a recommendation to the Board on which projects should be invited to the second phase of review.

#### **Next steps**

Thirty-two proposals will be considered in the second phase of review. They come from a variety of organization types: research and policy institutes; primary care organizations; local, statewide, and national professional organizations including state and county medical societies; and non-profit hospitals. Proposed project activities include developing and implementing strategies to improve chronic disease management, promoting innovative programs addressing current training needs of practicing physicians, documenting how

practice improvements impact patient care, and developing programs using technology for improved health outcomes. Members of the board's Grant Review Subcommittee will review proposals throughout the summer and the Board plans to announce awards in the fall.

#### **2006 Grant Cycle**

For those interested in the next round of grantmaking, the Excellence Foundation will release 2006 grant guidelines in the fall. Due to the overwhelming response this spring and the many, many excellent concept papers, the board decided that a single grant cycle would be the best approach in this first year. The Innovations Foundation plans to come on stream with its grantmaking program in 2006 as well.

#### **HIT Subcommittee Update**

The Health Information Technology Subcommittee has been busily gathering information and working with a team of consultants to size up the state of the art, and more importantly the gaps, in the adoption of technology solutions that will help practicing physicians provide better care to their patients. The goal of this planning effort, managed by executives loaned by two state medical societies, is to determine whether the Physicians' Foundations can have a meaningful role in identifying free or low-cost platforms for Electronic Health Records systems.

## What's ahead?

### ***A New Website for the Physicians' Foundations***

The Physicians' Foundations' website will get a face-lift this year. Expect to see the new website sometime this fall. The new website will showcase grantees, highlight recent foundation activities, link to press releases, and news articles on the foundations and will provide information on upcoming grant cycles including grant guidelines, application forms, and deadline information. We hope that you will take a look at the new website when it comes online and be sure to send us your suggestions and feedback.

### ***Getting the Word Out***

Throughout the next few months, you may have an opportunity to hear directly from one of the Foundations' officers. Members of the Executive Committee of the board have been invited to speak at meetings and conferences such as the AMA House of Delegates Meeting in Chicago this month and the AAMSE Annual Meeting in San Diego in August. We hope to post their presentations on the Foundations' new website.

As always, we welcome your questions, comments, or suggestions. Please write to us at [physicians@grantsmanagement.com](mailto:physicians@grantsmanagement.com) and be sure to visit us on the web @ [www.physiciansfoundation.org](http://www.physiciansfoundation.org)

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Louisiana State Medical Society  
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Medical Society of New Jersey  
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#### **Physicians' Foundations**

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