Dear all:

Please allow this to be an update of MAG’s activities over the last few weeks. My previous updates can be found at [http://www.mag.org/resources/executive-directors-message](http://www.mag.org/resources/executive-directors-message). As always, please feel free to pass this update to others.

**MAG Foundation “Think About It Campaign”**
The MAG Foundation continues to make great strides since our announcement of our partnership with Walgreens and the Northeast Georgia Medical Center. We are proud to report the following are now partnering with Foundation on the Think About It campaign:

- CVS Caremark (325 pharmacies across Georgia)
- Kaiser Permanente (28 pharmacies in Georgia)
- Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta
- Phoebe Putney Health System
- Department of Public Health
- Georgia Charitable Care Network

The MAG Foundation “Pill Bottle” piece warns patients of the dangers of prescription drug abuse. The “Pill Bottle” piece can be found at the following link ([http://www.mag.org/sites/default/files/downloads/magf-rx-drug-leaflet-magf-2.pdf](http://www.mag.org/sites/default/files/downloads/magf-rx-drug-leaflet-magf-2.pdf)) and will be distributed to over hundreds of thousands of patients in the next few weeks. If you would like more information on how you can support the campaign or you would like materials for your office, please contact Lori Murphy at lmurphy@mag.org. Congratulations to the MAG Foundation and a special thanks to all of our new partners on this very important initiative on curbing prescription drug abuse in Georgia.

**Council on Legislation (COL)**
The Council on Legislation met in July and began general discussions about the 2015 General Assembly. Some general issues discussed included the following:

- Transparency/Truth in Advertising
- Medicaid
- Health Insurance Reform
- Tort Reform
- Certificate of Need Task Force

The COL is comprised of recognized specialty societies as well as various at-large members. The COL discusses legislative issues and makes a recommendation to the MAG Board of Directors as to our legislative priorities for the upcoming year. This is your opportunity to have your issues discussed and considered by the COL. Please send any specific issues you may have to Marcus Downs at mdowns@mag.org. The Board of Directors will set the 2015 Legislative Priorities at the October meeting.

**Physicians Foundation**
We are a member of the board of directors for the Physicians Foundation. The Physicians Foundation unveiled a “tool to help policy makers, physicians and health systems better plan where to practice and what type of practitioners will be needed in order to meet the growing
utilization of health care in the United States.” The tool estimates the shortage of physicians and services at the national and state levels. More information can be found at http://www.mag.org/news/articles/physicians-foundation-unc.

Health Connect South
We will be a sponsor of the Health Connect South event that is taking place on September 15, 2015 at the Woodruff Arts Center. Health Connect South is “created to build a first-of-its-kind sustainable platform for regional health collaborations. Though Georgia is home to world-class health assets, there is surprisingly little interdisciplinary clarity around areas of focus, impact, needs and capacity within and among our health assets. We believe such heightened clarity accelerates new opportunities for geographically advantaged collaborations, unlocking and advancing important advances in health.” More information can be found at http://healthconnectsouth.com/.

Institute of Medicine Committee Report on GME
The IOM released a report providing recommendations on funding and governance for GME. The AMA released a response expressing concerns about the report. More information can be found at http://www.mag.org/news/articles/iom.

Town Hall
Please see the latest Town Hall recording from MAG focusing on HIPAA compliance. More information can be found at http://www.mag.org/resources/town-hall.

VA Bill – Improve Access
On July 31, the United States Senate adopted the conference report on the “Veteran’s Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014.” The conference report was adopted by the House on July 30. The President is expected to sign the bill immediately. The main goals of the bill are: to provide access to care in the private sector for veteran’s who are not able to secure an appointment at a VA facility within a prescribed amount of time or who live more than 40 miles from a VA facility; to provide for the hiring of additional physicians, and other practitioners, and acquisition of additional facilities; and to improve administrative functions throughout the system. More information can be found at http://www.mag.org/news/articles/president-vabill. MAG has collected a registry of physicians willing to see VA patients to improve access.

Sunshine Act
We were one of more than 100 state and national medical associations that signed a letter that was submitted to Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Administrator Marilyn Tavenner on August 5 to “register serious concerns with (the) implementation of the Physician Payments Sunshine Act (Sunshine Act) and to request an expanded timeframe to allow recipients to register, review, and dispute their data in the Open Payments System before (its) publication.” The letter states that, “Many of our organizations supported passage of the Sunshine Act and, fundamentally, we have no issue with efforts to increase transparency in the interactions between physicians and industry. However, we have a number of serious concerns regarding how the Open Payments System has been implemented.” The letter also includes a number of specific recommendations and is attached to this email.
House of Delegates – Important Deadlines

You will elect its officers for 2014-2015 during the annual House of Delegates (HOD) meeting, which will take place at The Lodge and Spa at Callaway Gardens in Pine Mountain on October 18-19. MAG members who are interested in running for office should contact Donna Glass at dglass@mag.org or 678.303.9251.

The following is the list of candidates who are running for MAG office for 2014-2015 to date…

- President (automatic succession): Manoj H. Shah, M.D.
- President-elect: John S. Harvey, M.D.
- First Vice President (automatic succession): Thomas E. Emerson, M.D.
- Second Vice President: Madalyn N. Davidoff, M.D.
- Secretary: Matthews W. Gwynn, M.D., and Andrew Reisman, M.D.
- Speaker of the House of Delegates: E. Frank McDonald Jr., M.D.
- Vice Speaker of the House of Delegates: Edmund R. Donoghue Jr., M.D.
- AMA Delegate (for re-election): Joy A. Maxey, M.D.
- AMA Delegate (to replace Joseph P. Bailey Jr., M.D.): Michael E. Greene, M.D.
- AMA Alternate Delegate (for re-election): John S. Antalis, M.D.
- AMA Alternate Delegate (to replace Michael E. Greene, M.D.): Jack M. Chapman Jr., M.D., and John A. Goldman, M.D.

Also, resolutions and annual reports for this year’s HOD meeting must be submitted by Wednesday, September 3. Please send any reports and resolutions to Trish Yeatts at pyeatts@mag.org.

As always, if you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Donald

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