Dear all:

Please allow this to be an update on MAG’s activities over the last two weeks.

Physicians Institute for Excellence in Medicine (PIEM) – Leadership Position Opening
PIEM is a MAG subsidiary and has developed a unique system of collaborative grants, whereby PIEM receives grant money and then gives out secondary grants to Continuing Medical Education (CME) providers. To date, PIEM has developed and managed fifteen distinct collaborative grants initiatives which have included sixteen collaborative organizations, representing 253 CME projects located in 21 states in the following clinical areas: Depression and Anxiety, Cardiovascular Risk Factors, Diabetes, Tobacco Cessation, COPD, Alzheimer’s and other Dementias, Chronic Pain, Pneumonia, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Low Back Pain, Stroke, Blood Management, and Sepsis. Bob Addelton and Adele Cohen have done an excellent job in making PIEM the successful organization it is today. More information about PIEM can be found at http://www.mag.org/organizations/piem.

Two physician members of the Board of Directors have finished their terms and PIEM is seeking two physicians to take their place. This is an outstanding opportunity for physicians interested in a MAG leadership position. PIEM has appointed Dr. Jack Chapman, Dr. Howard Mazier and myself to a search committee. Please email your CV to my attention if you have an interest in being on the PIEM Board of Directors. I would also encourage all past members of the Georgia Physician Leadership Academy that are interested in this position to apply. Please remember you must be a MAG member. I want to thank Dr. Jacqueline Fincher and Dr. Jim Morrow for their dedication and hard work for PIEM and their input will be missed. Thank you.

Physician Advocacy Institute and Recovery Audit Contractors
MAG is a board member on the Physician Advocacy Institute. The North Carolina Medical Society and the Physicians Advocacy Institute, Inc., (PAI) have released a documentary that details the two-year ordeal a rural North Carolina medical practice experienced during a Medicare audit. “Guilty Until Proven Innocent: When Medicare Audits Cause Casualties,” reveals the Medicare audit process as “unfair, devoid of common sense and negatively impacting doctors as they work to provide quality patient care.” Go to http://www.youtube.com/user/ncmedsociety to watch the documentary. This is a great video produced by my counterpart, Bob Seligson, in North Carolina.

If you are having problems with RACS or just have any health care issue, please remember we work closely with Sidney Welch of Arnall Golden Gregory. Sidney has extensive experience as a health care attorney whose practices focuses on physician issues. She is a child of a physician and has a Masters Degree in Public Health. Sidney’s biography can be found at http://www.agg.com/contents/AttorneyDetail.aspx?ID=1771, as well as her contact information.

State Health Benefit Plan
Prior to the 2012 General Assembly, Stan Jones and Helen Sloat of Nelson Mullins brought to our attention that United Healthcare and its subsidiary, Health Innovations, were conducting hearing screenings on-line for hearing aids and that the State Health Benefit Plan may be moving in that direction as well. We expressed our patient safety concerns to the Department of Community Health. Recently, the FDA issued a cease and desist letter to Health Innovations over this practice. The letter is attached to this email.

Georgia Board of Chiropractic Examiners
The Georgia Board of Chiropractic Examiners recently published a proposed rule allowing chiropractors to perform manipulation under anesthesia. We are opposed to the rule for patient safety concerns. We are working very closely with the Georgia Orthopedic Society and the Georgia Society of Anesthesiologists to express our opposition to this rule. The proposed rule is attached to this email.

Georgia Dental Board
Over the last few months, we have worked with Attorney General Sam Olens and the Georgia Dental Association on a proposed rule that would allow dentists to inject botox and other pharmacologics on their patients. Initially, the dentists wanted the ability to inject botox and other pharmacologics on the entire face. Through much hard work and expense, a new rule was proposed that only allows dentists to inject botox and other pharmacologics around the mouth but only when it is related to a dental procedure in a dental setting. The proposed rule has been greatly narrowed but we still have concerns and plan on submitting our comments before the Georgia Dental Board. The rule can be found at http://sos.georgia.gov/plb/dentistry/proposed_rules/Dental%20150-14-%2004%20Administration%20of%20Injectable%20Pharmacologics.pdf.

ICD-10
Over the last few months, there has been concern on the switch from ICD-9 to ICD-10. CMS is considering a delay until October 2014. MAG submitted comments requesting further study on the need to switch from ICD-9 to ICD-10 and a longer delay. MAG's comments can be found at http://www.mag.org/news/articles/Reed_ICD-10Letter.

Medicaid Redesign
The Medicaid Redesign is underway and we continue to participate in various focus groups representing all physicians in Georgia. As well as working within these focus groups and meeting with the Department of Community Health, we continue to meet with those insurers who are interested in the Medicaid contract. Earlier this week, we met with AmeriHealth Mercy who wanted to hear directly from the physicians on the issues they are having with Medicaid. I would encourage you to email any concerns you may have to sheila.Humberstone@troutmansanders.com. I have attached links to our previous letters outlining problems with the current program (http://www.mag.org/sites/default/files/downloads/dch_cook_051911.pdf) and our response to the Navigant Report (http://www.mag.org/sites/default/files/downloads/medicaid_redesign_letter_final_030112.pdf).

MAG House of Delegates
The MAG House of Delegates will be held in Savannah on October 20-21. We are in the process of securing vendors for the event. Our two most recent vendors who will take part in the event include Atlanta Capital Group (Kevin Rainwater, krainwater@atlantacapitalgroup.com) and Suntrust Bank (James Edwards, james.g.edwards@suntrust.com). We especially want to thank MAG Mutual for their sponsorship and participation of the House of Delegates.

AMA Advocacy Update
Finally, please find attached an update from the AMA on their recent advocacy efforts.

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

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