Dear all:

Please allow this to be a brief summary of MAG’s activities since my last update. As always, my previous updates can be found at http://www.mag.org/resources/executive-directors-message. Please feel free to forward to others.

**MAG Legislative Agenda/Council on Legislation**

Over the next two months, the Council on Legislation will meet to discuss our 2014 Legislative Priorities. The COL makes a recommendation to the Board of Directors, which approves the 2014 Legislative Priorities. The Legislative Priorities are an allocation of our resources during the legislative session and are the issues that MAG is the point organization. The first meeting of this process will take place on August 7. Please have your representatives ready to discuss issues important to your organizations. Some early issues already submitted to our attention include the following:

- Prohibition of All Product Clauses in health insurance contracts
- Transparency/Truth in Advertising for physicians and health care providers
- Early Resolution- a version of tort reform
- Physician Tax Credit
- Funding for Prescription Drug Monitoring Program
- Licensing of Lactation Consultants
- E-Discovery

All information should be submitted to Marcus Downs at mdowns@mag.org.

**Summer Legislative Update**

For the first time in years, we brought back the Summer Legislative Update to a resounding success with legislators and physicians. In fact, here is a quote from Dr. Peter Buckley of the Medical College of Georgia:

*Great Information… Hearing Happenings*

Our colleagues at the Medical Association of Georgia held a Legislative Update recently that provided very helpful information on key topics like health care reform, scope of practice, primary care workforce development, and medical malpractice reform. Participants expressed a lot of appreciation for House Bill 499, see http://1.usa.gov/18FDgwe and http://bit.ly/11haqgi that deals with the impact of federal guidelines on medical liability lawsuits filed in the state. Participants also received guidance on how best to work with our lawmakers and how important it is that these key decision makers always understand and know who we are, that they don’t just hear from and about us when we think we need something. In fact, times like now, where we are in between legislative sessions, are great times to connect. Frankly, there is much to be learned as well by all of us from the lawmakers who serve our state. We want them to know that we also are here for them and are always happy to share our expertise.

A special thanks for Marcus Downs for taking the lead in putting the event together. Also, in planning for next year, we believe we could have an even better event with specialty society and county medical society participation. What better way to bring organized medicine together.

**SGR, ICD-10**

We continue to meet with our congressional delegation, most notable Rep. Tom Price and Rep. Phil Gingrey, to discuss the SGR solution being proposed by Congress. The bill is being marked up in full committee this week and various amendments are expected. We will keep you informed as this matter progresses.

Also, we continue to voice our opposition to our congressional delegation to ICD-10 and the huge practice expense it will cost physicians. In the event we are unsuccessful in halting the implementation of ICD-10, physicians need to be prepared for implementation which begins October 2014. On that date, you will no longer receive payment if you are not using ICD-10. For more information on ICD-10, please go to http://www.mag.org/advocacy/issues/icd-10-5010.

**Physician Advocacy Institute (PAI)**
PAI is an advocacy organization which MAG, along with a number of other state medical societies, is a member of the board of directors. PAI formed as a result of the managed care lawsuits that MAG was instrumental in filing against the major health insurance carriers around 2000. Over the last few months, PAI has drafted the attached document entitled Physician Employment – Top Five Issues to Consider. Trey Reese of Hall, Booth, Smith was instrumental in drafting this document with input from a variety of sources – physicians, medical societies, etc. Please let us know any feedback you would like to share.

**Department of Community Health and Payment Parity**
MAG, Georgia Chapter - American College of Physicians, the Georgia Chapter - American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Georgia Academy of Family Physicians submitted a letter to DCH protesting the delay in payment increase for primary care physicians that accept Medicaid. We also supported the GAACP in their request to delay the completion of the attestation forms to coincide with the delay in the payment parity. DCH responded that in addition to a number of contributing factors, the cause of the delay at this point is due to the scope of work required to implement the increase in the Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS). Toward that end, DCH is working with the vendor to address these issues and that DCH will grant an extension to sign the attestation form until August 31. More information can be found at [http://www.mag.org/news/articles/dubberly-medicaid](http://www.mag.org/news/articles/dubberly-medicaid).

**MAG Town Hall on State Health Insurance Exchanges**
We conducted a Town Hall on the impact of health insurance exchanges in Georgia. A copy of the recording can be found at [http://www.mag.org/news/articles/shp-call-recording](http://www.mag.org/news/articles/shp-call-recording).

**Amicus Brief (Tort)**
We filed an amicus brief with the Georgia Supreme Court to oppose a Georgia Court of Appeals decision – Gaulden et al. v. Green et al. – that would expand the scope of liability to envelop physicians who did not see an affected patient or was not contacted about an affected patient and did not provide any services to an affected patient under the guise of the "voluntary undertaking" theory. This case could have an impact on the scope of the liability of medical directors in the state of Georgia. More information can be found at [http://www.mag.org/news/articles/gaulden2](http://www.mag.org/news/articles/gaulden2).

**American Health Quality Association Installs New President**
Congratulations to Adrienne Mims, MD, on her installation as the new President of the American Health Quality Association. Dr. Mims is the Medical Director for the Alliant GMCF, the Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) for Georgia. We work closely with GMCF and this is a great honor for Dr. Mims and the physicians of Georgia. More information can be found at [http://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20130723/NEWS/307239940/ahqa-names-mims-president](http://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20130723/NEWS/307239940/ahqa-names-mims-president).

**AMA Advocacy Update**
Please see the attached AMA Advocacy Update on recent federal activities.

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

Donald

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