Dear all:

Please allow this to be an update of MAG activities since the last update in early July. As always, please feel free to forward to this email to others.

Town Hall Meeting
It is official. On August 14, 2012 at 6:30 PM, MAG will host a Town Hall meeting to address the pros and cons associated with some of the key elements of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), including the possible expansion of Medicaid in Georgia, comparative effectiveness, and the creation of a state-level health insurance exchange. This forum is designed to raise awareness among physicians in the state, as well as provide valuable context for MAG’s House of Delegates – which will meet in Savannah in October. MAG President Sandra Reed, M.D., will oversee the one-hour event that will feature:

- Maurice Sholas, M.D., the medical and practice director for Rehabilitation Services at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta and a member of the Medical Association of Atlanta’s Board of Directors who supports PPACA in general.
- M. Todd Williamson, M.D., a neurologist from Lawrenceville who served as MAG’s president in 2008-2009 who is opposed to PPACA in general.

You should have received the official notice yesterday with the call in number. Rest assured, we are recording this Town Hall and will post on our website the following day. We are in the process of scheduling future Town Hall meetings and would appreciate any feedback or recommendations you may have for topics.

MAG House of Delegates
Just a reminder that the MAG House of Delegates is fast approaching. Please remember to submit any resolutions you may have on policy issues you would have MAG address. This is your opportunity to address where MAG should be on comparative effectiveness, Medicaid expansion and health insurance exchanges. Please do not limit yourself to these topics.

I cannot stress enough the importance of the MAG House of Delegates. Health care reform will be a conversation for the next several years. If you do not discuss the issue at this House of Delegates, then your elected MAG leaders will make decisions on behalf of the Georgia physicians on policies that may or may not address the issues specifically.

Please send your resolutions to me or Liz Bulloch at ebullock@mag.org.

Medical Association of Georgia Multiple Employer Plan for 401Ks
On July 15, 2012, your Executive Committee approved MAG sponsoring a multiple employer plan for 401Ks. At the MAG House of Delegates, you will hear more of this plan and an opportunity for you and/or practice to join. This is an outstanding plan for you to reduce the costs of administration in your retirement plans. We will have more information forthcoming in
the very near future. Your Executive Committee selected Atlanta Capital Group to be the point person for the administration of the plan.

**Georgia Composite Medical Board**
The GCMB recently proposed rules addressing telemedicine. The rules can be found at [http://medicalboard.georgia.gov/sites/medicalboard.georgia.gov/files/Telemedicine%20Rule%20Posting.pdf](http://medicalboard.georgia.gov/sites/medicalboard.georgia.gov/files/Telemedicine%20Rule%20Posting.pdf). The rule provides conditions by which a patient can be seen by a physician via electronic means and not be considered unprofessional conduct. The rule is clear that all enumerated conditions must be met, such as a physical examination by a Georgia physician, etc. We need to have your comments by August 15, 2012 so we can prepare ours by the August 31, 2012 deadline.

On another note, GCMB has requested feedback from you regarding your identification card you receive from the board. The Secretary of State no longer issues the wallet size card anymore and the GCMB wants to know if you have strong feelings on continuing to receive the card? Send your response directly to me so we can discuss with GCMB.

**MAG Foundation and “Think About It”**
Great news. The MAG Foundation and its “Think About It” campaign have launched their new website, which can found at [http://rxdrugabuse.org/index.html](http://rxdrugabuse.org/index.html). If you have a moment, take a look and the website and get involved in this important initiative to reduce prescription drug abuse in Georgia. If you have any specific questions, please contact Fred Jones at fjones@mag.org.

**Physician Advocacy Institute, Inc. (PAI)**
As you may recall, MAG is a board member of PAI, a 501(c)6 corporation formed from the managed care lawsuits dating back to 2000. I just returned from a quarterly board meeting. Interestingly, we were informed of this recent “public-private” partnership investigating fraud. The “public-private” partnership includes the private payers and CMS investigating potential fraud claims. Here is an article detailing the partnership [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/26/us/politics/obama-and-insurers-join-to-cut-health-care-fraud.html?_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/26/us/politics/obama-and-insurers-join-to-cut-health-care-fraud.html?_r=1).

As a former litigator who practiced in the realm of insurance fraud defending insurance companies (50% of my practice), this has the potential to be abused. No one wants to see fraud in the system. However, sometimes those investigating fraud may be overzealous in their investigation and mistakenly pressure those that are innocent. PAI is looking into this issue and for solutions. I wanted to make sure you were aware of this new development.

Also, PAI is interested in advocacy issues important to physicians employed in health systems. Please take a moment and forward any recommendations you may have.

Lagniappe (Louisiana term for “something extra”)
We continue to attend meetings around the state demonstrating MAG’s value to physicians. A special thanks to the Georgia Society of Anesthesiologists and Jet Toney for their invitation to meet with their Executive Committee. Andrew Baumann, Director of Education, attended for MAG to give an update. A special thanks to Pamela Miller of Impacts for the invitation to speak at the Compass IPA & Northwest Georgia Physicians Association this coming weekend. Marcus Downs, Director of Government Relations, will be present on behalf of MAG. Finally, Kate Boyenga, Director of Marketing and Membership, and I spoke at the American Association of Medical Society Executives last week on our recent success in membership growth, as well as advocating for physicians in today’s ever changing environment.

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

Donald

Donald J. Palmisano, Jr.
Executive Director/CEO
Medical Association of Georgia
1849 The Exchange
Suite 200
Atlanta, Georgia 30339
678-303-9290 (Phone)
678-303-3732 (Fax)
404-312-9030 (Mobile)

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