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. As always, please feel free to pass this update to others.

**Blue Cross Blue Shield (Updated Status Report)**

For the last few months, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia has sent a new “Amendment” to physicians across the state which was really a new contract. We have heard from a number of physicians the concerns about this new amendment. As such, we brought our concerns to BCBS, as well as the Commissioner of Insurance. We notified both parties of our concerns as reported by the physicians. We have also sent out a number of notices to physicians across the state. Please see http://www.mag.org/news/articles/bcbsga-amendments. We also contend that BCBS circumvented the law by failing to send the new contract to the Commissioner of Insurance for review prior to sending to the physicians.

We continue to have meetings with the Commissioner of Insurance and explained to him that these contracts will go into effect on November 15 and have asked for a resolution to this matter. We anticipate receiving this resolution in the very near future. An all physician alert will be sent out as soon as we receive a response from the Commissioner of Insurance. Rest assured we are working diligently on this issue to ensure BCBS complies with the law going forward.

**Ebola**

On Monday, we will host a special call to update physicians on the status of the Department of Public Health and the preparations for any issues related to Ebola. To participate in the call, please go to http://www.mag.org/news/articles/mag-ebola-th-promo to register. A recording will be forwarded to the membership in our E-Monthly Newsletter. Also, please see our new Ebola resource page at http://www.mag.org/news/articles/ebola-resources.

**2015 Legislative Priorities**

The Board of Directors approved the 2015 Legislative Priorities for the upcoming General Assembly. Some of the items to be pursued include the following:

- Promoting transparency amongst physicians and health care providers as to whom the patient is receiving care.
- Promoting an early resolution of claims as an alternative to traditional medical malpractice litigation.
- Health insurance reform which includes holding health insurers accountable to the contracts with physicians as well as a prohibition on “all product clauses”.
- Improving the time limit to credential physicians who accept Medicaid and ensuring the payment parity for primary care physicians who accept Medicaid.
- More information can be found at http://www.mag.org/news/articles/2015-priorities.

Additionally, we will work with various stakeholders to ensure the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) continues to be funded beyond September 2015 and to make it easier for physicians to utilize the program. For more information on the status of funding for the PDMP, please go to http://www.mag.org/news/articles/pdmp-doubt.

**Board of Director’s Actions**

In addition to the 2015 Legislative Priorities above, the board of directors approved the following actions at the October meeting:

- Authorizing MAG to move forward with forming a new subsidiary called the MAG Premier Connect subject to funding by third party sources. MAG Premier Connect would be a physician led health information exchange organization. We have already approached potential funders
who are current partners and are awaiting their response before seeking others. We anticipate approaching a host of other potential funders over the course of the next few months if our current partners decline to participate. We will keep you updated as this matter progresses.

- Adopting the 2015 proposed budget as submitted by the Treasurer.
- Approving the September Financial Statements as presented by the Treasurer.
- Approving MAG’s membership dues at the current rate.
- Appointing Steve Walsh, MD for another term on the MAG Foundation.

**House of Delegates**
I want to personally thank everyone that participated in the House of Delegates last weekend. In the upcoming E-Monthly Newsletter, we will provide highlights of the meeting, which include the outcome of the items of business submitted to the House of Delegates and the outcome of elections. If you are interested in the reference committee reports, please go to [http://www.mag.org/about-us/house-of-delegates](http://www.mag.org/about-us/house-of-delegates). Please note you will need your password to access the reports. Also, items that were amended on the floor of the House of Delegates are not reflected in the reports online. The amended language will be reflected in the E-Monthly Newsletter.

**Physician Advocacy Institute**
We have a seat on the board of directors for PAI. PAI is working to address the “network adequacy” issues in partnership with the American Medical Association. These issues are being debated at the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). For more information on the work being done at the NAIC, please go to [http://www.mag.org/news/articles/pai-naic](http://www.mag.org/news/articles/pai-naic).

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

Have a great weekend.

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