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# Reconvened Health Research Committee Ready for Action!

by Steven Siegel

The last two years have seen an explosive growth in general interest related to health care issues. With health care reform leading the current administration's domestic agenda, the public has been introduced daily to the arcane twists and turns of the current health care system. Although health actuaries have ably navigated this territory for years, there is no escaping the need and urgency for more research on health related matters. Recognizing a stepped up need for objective research, the SOA's Health Section Council has recently reconvened the Health Section Research Committee to oversee funding and project selection for health section research.

With new Health Section Council member, Ross Winkelman, agreeing to chair the team, a call went out last fall for volunteers to become members of the research committee. We are happy to report that there was an outstanding response to the recruiting e-mail and notice that went into the health e-news, resulting in a highly qualified team of health experts. Committee members include:

- Ross Winkelman, Chair
- Tim Adams
- Joan Barrett
- John Cookson
- Walter James
- Dan Pribe
- Tim Rice
- Tia Sawhney
- Steele Stewart
- Steven Siegel, SOA Research Actuary
- Sara Teppema, SOA Health Staff Fellow
- Barb Scott, SOA Research Administrator

Prior to the formation of the new committee, research was overseen by a small advisory team consisting of John Cookson and Jim Toole. They skillfully handled a wide variety of decisions and recommendations that resulted in much meaningful research since 2006. The Health Section Council expresses its thanks to both of them for all of their hard work in furthering health research.

The new committee began its work in January and has been meeting by conference call regularly. Among its primary duties are deciding how to

allocate the Health Section research budget as well as brainstorm on new topics for research. Initial ideas for research efforts include an exploration of wellness programs and a call for articles related to payment reform. Look for more information on those efforts in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, it's your turn! The committee would greatly appreciate hearing from you. Please send your thoughts and suggestions for research ideas that would be useful to you or even research projects you would like to tackle. The research committee is open to new ideas—don't wait for us to post an RFP. Some of the best projects have been proposed by Health Section members. Your feedback is essential to helping the committee make the best decisions possible. While you're coming up with ideas, please consider joining one of the many project oversight groups that are formed to oversee particular research efforts. Not only is it a wonderful opportunity to expand your health care knowledge, but it's a great way to network and meet other experts in your specialty. You can find the latest information on research in progress and recent results by checking the Health Research page on the SOA web site. We're sure you'll find it thought-provoking.

There's no doubt—The Health Section Research Committee is ready for action and hoping to hear from you! ■



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