



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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Health Watch

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Chairperson's Corner

By Donna Kalin

You are probably aware of the Health Section Council's mission statement, which identifies three prime objectives: providing continuing education, developing research, and expanding marketplace relevance for health actuaries. For this issue of Chairperson's Corner we will focus on some of our strategic activities regarding continuing education (CE).

We have taken on a long-range planning effort to identify and prioritize over a dozen emerging subject areas for CE development. Volunteer "champions" for each topic create specific plans to develop CE material for our members. Recognizing that our members have different educational needs, our plans include ideas for CE delivery ranging from providing basic awareness of an issue, to moderate and advanced levels of knowledge. Members should be able to access CE at a level and via a delivery mechanism that are appropriate to their own circumstances. Delivery mechanisms include meetings and seminars, publications, webcasts and podcasts.

Some of the most exciting opportunities available to you include the following.

Canadian Health Actuary Seminar

For our Canadian members, the debut of this one-day seminar will take place in Toronto, Canada on May 5. Canadian health topics to be discussed include:

- The current body of research on the sustainability of the Canadian health care system
- Pharmacy benefit design and strategy
- Drug adherence interventions
- Recent Canadian case law and legislation.

Health Meeting

This year's health meeting will take place June 23 to 25 in San Francisco. This is the largest CE event for the section. This meeting will feature almost 100 topical sessions to provide you with the latest updates on important health issues.

There will be excellent speakers, plenty of networking events, and the opportunity to earn lots of CE credits. I would like to mention our three keynote speakers.

Mark McClellan, M.D., is senior fellow, director of the Initiative on Innovation and Value in Health Care in the Engelberg Center for Health Care Reform in the Brookings Institution. Within Brookings, his work focuses on promoting quality and value in patient-centered health care. A doctor and economist by training, he has a highly distinguished record in public service and academic research. He is a former administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and former commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). He also served as a member of the President's Council of Economic Advisers and senior director for health care policy at the White House. In these positions he developed and implemented major reforms in health policy. He will be speaking at the opening general session on topics regarding the future of health care in America.

Mike Abrashoff is a former naval commander and author of *It's Your Ship*. He established a system of management techniques that he calls GrassRoots Leadership—a process of replacing command and control with commitment and cohesion, by engaging the hearts, minds and loyalties of workers with conviction and humility. He is the founder of GLS Worldwide, a consulting firm that works with and supports leaders as they address leadership, talent and business challenges within their organization. He will be speaking at the general luncheon.

John M. Bertko, FSA, MAAA, is currently an independent actuarial consultant working with Covered California (California's insurance marketplace) and was the director of Special Initiatives and Pricing in the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight (CCIIO) at CMS. He has extensive experience



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To join the section, SOA members and non-members can locate a membership form on the Health Section Web page at <http://www.soa.org/health/>

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with risk adjustment and has served in several public policy roles. At the networking luncheon, he will be interviewed by Geoff Sandler.

Valuation Actuary Symposium

Valuation actuaries, save the date! The symposium will be held Aug. 25 to 26 in New York City. This year the Health Section Council will be coordinating eight sessions, which means one health-focused session for every session time slot.

Volunteers Needed

We expect to have a busy year, with more ideas for projects than the available resources and time will permit us to do. As you know, our efforts rely

on volunteers, and we never seem to have as many volunteers as we need. I encourage you to contribute in whatever way interests you. If you would like to get involved with the work of the Health Section (running for the Health Section Council, presenting at a meeting/seminar, coordinating meeting/seminar sessions, writing a *Health Watch* article, being a “champion” for a specific subject area for CE development, etc.) or you just want to learn about these opportunities, please fill out the volunteer interest form found on the SOA Health Section website (<http://www.soa.org/professional-interests/health/hlth-detail.aspx>) or contact me at donna.kalin@milliman.com, or contact any member of the Health Section Council. ■

On The Research Front

SOA PARTNERS WITH HEALTH CARE COST INSTITUTE (HCCI)

The Society of Actuaries (SOA) has signed a letter of intent to enter into a partnership with the Health Care Cost Institute (HCCI), an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit research organization. One of the primary activities of HCCI is to create and maintain a first-of-its-kind database of up-to-date information about public and private sector health care costs and utilization with data contributions from many U.S. insurers. The agreement will enable the SOA to access this database at HCCI and produce several major research projects per year responding to the growing need for informative, qualitative and unbiased health care research.

REC STREAMLINES EVALUATION PROCESS FOR REX POOL FUNDING

The Research Executive Committee (REC) recently undertook a thorough review of the application and evaluation processes for the SOA's “Research Expanding Boundaries Pool” (REX Pool) with the goal of better addressing the needs of its stakeholders. Several important changes have been implemented to the REX Pool that will become effective in March 2014. The changes include moving to a continuous cycle of accepting and reviewing applications, streamlining the funding decision process, and expanding the eligibility of topics submitted for REX Pool funding. Full details can be found in the updated guidelines. ■