



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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Chairperson's Corner

by Susan Pantely



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An Historic Year for Health Care (and Health Care Actuaries!)

My term as chairperson of the Health Section Council coincided with the largest change to the health care industry in decades—the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) on March 23, 2010.

The major change posed by reform increases the importance of the SOA's continuing education programs, which are intended to provide basic education in the principles of actuarial science, advanced education and professional development in areas requiring specific technical or regulatory knowledge, and continuing education for practicing actuaries. The Health Section Council will continue to provide content-rich educational programs that address new issues related to the PPACA and respond to our market research findings in addition to our traditional offerings.

One example is the SOA's recent market research. We heard from respondents that actuaries could benefit from some additional clinical knowledge to better understand the perspective, terminology, and rigor of health care professionals. To address this need, we are adding a new session, "medical school for actuaries," at the next Actuarial Boot Camp.

The session is intended to allow actuaries to look beyond cost and utilization toward the underlying causes of those cost and utilization patterns, with an increased appreciation of the medical and pharmaceutical science behind many of the most impactful chronic conditions.

The Actuarial Boot Camp will be held in November 2010, to provide hands on training related to pricing and valuation issues. For the pricing track, actuaries may choose between small group and Medicare pricing. For the valuation track, there will be separate sessions for both experienced valuation actuaries and for those with less experience, as well as training for retiree health issues. We will also offer a half-day professionalism course, all in addition to the medical school for actuaries detailed above.

This issue of our newsletter includes a letter to the editor discussing the pressures faced by actuaries at this time when the financial infrastructure of the insurance indus-

try and our country in general is under the microscope. I am confident that actuaries will respond to this pressure by relying on our basic and continuing actuarial science education to continue to do work that is based on actuarially sound principles and is of the highest professional and ethical standards. In addition to serving its members as an educational organization, the SOA serves as a professional organization. The SOA promotes high standards of professional competence and conduct within the actuarial profession. The SOA has adopted a Code of Professional Conduct, and in matters of conduct and discipline, it cooperates with the Canadian Institute of Actuaries and with the American Academy of Actuaries, including the Actuarial Standards Board and the Actuarial Board for Counseling and Discipline. I encourage actuaries to review the Code of Professional Conduct and Standards of Practice, and speak with colleagues if faced with pressure to produce any work product that does not conform to the highest professional and ethical standards of our profession.

We encourage you to reach out to any of the Health Section Council members listed on the masthead of this issue of *Health Watch* if you have ideas or suggestions regarding future webcasts or other educational events.

Recognition for a Job Well Done

I would like to thank the Health Section Council and the friends of the council for their hard work this year! Thanks to their efforts, we had successful meetings in Boston and Orlando and several well-received webinars. We published three issues of *Health Watch* offering a wide array of interesting articles. We finished the market research on Untapped Opportunities for Actuaries in Health and began moving ahead with the actionable items from the market research. We completed several research projects, kicked off other research projects, and worked with the Academy to publish two reports regarding health care reform issues.

Thank you to those who have finished their terms on the Health Section Council: Dan Bailey, Joan Barrett, and Grady Catterall. A special thanks to Sara Teppema, SOA health staff fellow and Jill Leprich, project support specialist, for their continued support. ■