



The Final Word

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By Kuldp Sandhu, MD

WHILE WRITING THE FINAL president's message for *Sierra Sacramento Valley Medicine*, it suddenly hit home that the year of my presidency is almost over.

In my president's messages, I tried to address the issues that I thought would be relevant to physicians in general and SSVMS members in particular.

In the article entitled "To Be or Not To Be -That is the Question," I focused on the need for physicians to participate in organized medicine in order to make a difference in how healthcare is delivered. In "The Best Vs. The Rest," I attempted to highlight the issue of pay-for-performance for physicians.

The idea of the subsequent two president's messages - "What is SSVMS?" and "What Does SSVMS Do?" - came from the discussion at the SSVMS Board Retreat Meeting held in March 2006. I hope these two articles help further the understanding of who we are and what we do as an organization.

In the most recent article, "One Lucky Survivor," I shared my personal medical story with the hope that it would help other physicians in decision-making if they face a medical emergency.

In this issue, I am going to discuss some of the achievements of SSVMS in 2006, some important pending issues that will be resolved before the end of the year, and my take on what it takes to be a president of SSVMS.

Achievements

The following achievements are the result of the combined efforts of the Board, the Executive Committee, and the Management of SSVMS.

Public Health

Due to the relentless efforts of SSVMS, the Sacramento City Council authorized a Disease Prevention Demonstration Project (purchase of syringes without prescription). The City Council might expand this project to include a syringe exchange program. In addition, the SSVMS Board supported the passage of SB 1534 (Ortiz and Alarcon), which allows counties to provide health care to the undocumented as long as the county pays the expense.

Membership

Its increased membership entitled SSVMS to have two additional delegates in the CMA House of Delegates (HOD), bringing our total number of delegates to 17.

Continuing Medical Education (CME)

SSVMS is in the process of receiving accreditation from CMA's Institute for Medical Quality to provide CME activities for physicians locally and has already approved establishing the CME committee.

Sierra Sacramento Valley Medicine

The SSVMS Board approved the recommendation of the sub-committee for additional funds needed to change the style and substance of the magazine. Incidentally, you might have noticed the "Membership Has Its Benefits!" display in the Classified Advertising section of recent issues. Please stay tuned for the new look of Sierra Sacramento Valley Medicine.

Radio Spots

To increase the name recognition and profile of SSVMS, the Board approved radio spots on Capital Public Radio's KXPR and KXJZ. Have you heard them lately?

California Medical Association

SSVMS, being based in Sacramento, works very closely with the CMA on a lot of issues, especially legislative ones. This year SSVMS actively participated in the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the CMA by loaning artifacts from the SSVMS museum and manning the CMA booth at the Cal Expo State Fair. As you may recall, the CMA has also had major victories in 2006, including the reversal of the Governor's 5 percent cut in Medi-Cal and the reversal of the directive regarding balanced billing issued by the Governor without a public hearing.

Pending Issues

The Ad Hoc Committee on Representation and Governance has been meeting for the last few months to recommend changes in the current composition of the SSVMS Board to better reflect its membership base. Once the Board approves the Ad Hoc Committee report, it will be sent to membership for approval.

The issue of how best to manage pension and non-pension funds of SSVMS has had some passionate discussions in Executive Committee. Recommendations regarding changes would be coming to the November Board meeting for approval. After all is said and done, the role of the Board, Executive Committee, and Management regarding managing these funds and the accompanying fiduciary responsibility would be clearly spelled out.

My Take on the Presidency

Change is the only constant. Static organizations fall behind if other organizations are moving forward. The President should be pro-change if such a change would be in the best interests of SSVMS. Marking time does not leave a mark! In my inaugural address, I promised to you that I would give you my best. I believe that I have served you with honesty and integrity, even in situations where to go along just to get along would have been the easier way. I hope that I have met your expectations.

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