



2006 Board Planning Session

In Review

July 19-21, Kohler, Wisconsin



George Quinn and Chuck Shabino, MD



Stan Gaynor, Tim Wick, Bill Bruce



Jon Braddock, Bob Fale



Mike Hammer, Loren Anderson, Bill Bruce, Eric Borgerding

Once a year, the voluntary leaders on the WHA Board of Directors dedicate a day and a half to fine tuning the Association's strategic plan. In past years, their thoughtful exchanges and often lively debates have laid the groundwork for public reporting initiatives, billing and collection policies, and WHA's advocacy agenda.



Bob Fale

WHA Chair-elect Bob Fale, president, Agnesian HealthCare in Fond du Lac, led the 2006 WHA Board Planning Session. **Fale recognized the important role that these sessions have played in shaping the Association's agenda.** What is now commonly known as WHA's "transparency agenda" was first discussed at the 2002 planning session, and the plan to report community benefits stemmed from discussion at the 2005 session. "The Board Planning Sessions are first and foremost about getting results. And the results, like public reporting of quality, safety and price information, are receiving national recognition," Fale said.

"The Board Planning Sessions are about getting results."

- WHA Chair-elect Bob Fale

Wisconsin health care providers will be well represented at the national level with the announcement that Bill Petasnick, president and CEO of Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital and the Froedtert & Community Health System in Milwaukee, will be chairman-elect of the American Hospital Association's (AHA's) Board of Directors for 2007. He is then scheduled to take over as Chairman of the Board on January 1, 2008.



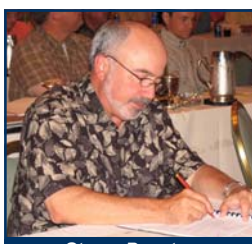
Bill Petasnick (standing)

WHA President Steve Brenton congratulated Petasnick and noted that with a Wisconsin health care leader holding a prominent position in the well-respected American Hospital Association, **it gives voice to Wisconsin ideas and initiatives at the national level.**

Petasnick said his new position affords him the opportunity to highlight the innovative work that has occurred in Wisconsin and a chance to draw on the experience of his colleagues throughout the state.

"We'll have an opportunity to look at and have a meaningful debate on health reform and to develop a strategy for insurance coverage for all," said Petasnick, adding that it was a personal honor to be elected to this top position. Brenton pointed out that the last Wisconsin CEO to chair the AHA was Gene Arnett in 1980.

Association Delivers Results

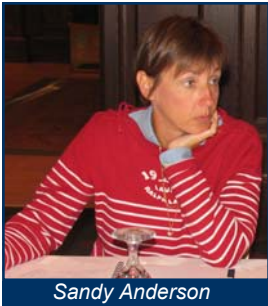


Steve Brenton

Brenton began his presentation to the Board by noting that in 2005, the WHA Board Planning Session discussion focused on the evolution of the public reporting initiative. It started with hospitals voluntarily reporting quality and safety data through CheckPoint and expanded to include PricePoint, which provides hospital charge and utilization information. Preliminary discussions to add community benefit public reporting also took place at the 2005 Planning Session. Brenton said WHA members have supported evolving the initiatives already in place and support adding new reporting programs that advance and promote the sharing of information that providers and consumers would find helpful.

WHA staff used the input from the WHA Board during the planning session, along with comments and direction provided by members, to develop a work plan for 2005. Brenton said the specific deliverables included in the work plan have all been achieved. While WHA will continue to focus on the quality, safety and patient perception quality agenda, Brenton reported the following accomplishments related to public reporting:

- ✓ **100 percent of the hospitals in Wisconsin report quality, safety and cost information.**
- ✓ **CheckPoint continues to add new measures and expand its outreach to consumers and employers.**
- ✓ **WHA has worked closely with the Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality to minimize stakeholder confusion on public reporting initiatives.**



Sandy Anderson

Going forward, Brenton said the Association plans to closely align PricePoint with emerging national pricing efforts. Just a day before the start of the planning session, Brenton was in Washington, DC explaining WHA's PricePoint at a hearing of the House Ways and Means Committee.

"This has been a significant year in Congress where we have seen a real push for pricing transparency and perhaps an expectation that it will accomplish more in the marketplace than it actually can," Brenton said. "Congress wants to use pricing transparency to facilitate consumer-driven health care and high deductible plans," he added.

Updates to PricePoint will include the addition of high volume outpatient information and user improvements that will enable comparability among hospitals. Brenton said while PricePoint is a start for consumers, **WHA will continue to advocate that health plans are ultimately the most appropriate place to find information on provider prices** that are relevant to individual subscribers.



Terri Richards

The newest component of public reporting – community benefits data—will be ready for release in aggregate later this fall. To date, all hospitals have completed the community benefits survey, and WHA staff is now analyzing and checking the results. Hospitals will receive an individual report in August and a preview of the statewide report in September.

Lastly, Brenton reminded the Board that the Supreme Court struck down the non-economic damage limit for medical liability just days before the 2005 Board planning session. Immediately, restoration of a cap on those damages became the Association's number one short-term priority.

The Association's strategic action steps regarding the medical liability crisis were:

- ✓ **Communicate urgency of the issue;**
- ✓ **Identify a legislative fix;**
- ✓ **Lead and sustain coalition building and advocacy; and**
- ✓ **Pass legislation and get it to the Governor's desk.**

Brenton thanked the Board members present and acknowledged the efforts of every hospital whether they met with their legislator, spearheaded local grassroots efforts in their community, or gave testimony at a hearing. By members pulling together, we were successful in getting the Legislature to restore a cap.



Ken Robbins, Mary Starmann-Harrison

Illinois: Labor Pains

Ken Robbins, president of the Illinois Hospital Association, is well versed in hospital union activities, but he still finds their tactics totally bewildering. Unions have launched unprecedented attacks on Illinois hospitals. Robbins describes it this way: "It was a tsunami approaching and I thought it was just a wave."

"It was a tsunami approaching and I thought it was just a wave."
- Ken Robbins, President, Illinois Hospital Association



Bob Fale, Steve Brenton, Ken Robbins

Robbins referred frequently to Jarol B. Manheim’s book on unionization entitled, “Labor Pains: The Corporate Campaign Against the Healthcare Industry,” as preparatory reading for health care administrators. Unions attack what they perceive as weaknesses in health care organizations, and **their campaigns can bring with them legislative attention and a rash of ill-conceived bills.**

Robbins said the Illinois Hospital Association employed several strategies that led to legislation being defeated or modified. Among the lessons learned he shared with the WHA Board were:

- ✓ Recognize the value of strong political action
- ✓ Look beyond today
- ✓ Quickly analyze complex issues and communicate to members
- ✓ Get member input to develop strategy and action plan
- ✓ Aggressively communicate with members, media, legislators
- ✓ Develop alliance with other organizations
- ✓ Maintain unity

Robbins advises that individual hospitals:

- ✓ Review Billing and Collection Policies
- ✓ Tell Your Stories of Caring for the Community
- ✓ Aggressively Communicate with the Public and Legislators
- ✓ Meet with Local Editorial Board
- ✓ Emphasize the Importance of Local Decision Making



David Grundstrom, Phil Stuart

Robbins emphasized that the time to build awareness is now because, “What happens in one state affects the others.”

“It is almost impossible to make peace with the unions. The best you can hope for is temporary truces.”
- Duane Dauner, President, California Hospital Association

The Wisconsin Perspective



George M. Lange, MD, Bill Bruce, Michael Westcott

Attorney Michael J. Westcott, a partner at Axley Brynelson, described union corporate campaign activities as “death by a thousand cuts.” Westcott described the union’s strategy as being one of cutting down the organization until the union achieves its purpose. Westcott said corporate campaigns have gained in popularity because elections are time consuming and expensive, and because unions get better results by using a campaign.

“Right now, there is a lot of union activity in Minnesota and Illinois, and Wisconsin is right in the middle of those two states,” Westcott observed. He encouraged Wisconsin hospitals to be aware of the activities taking place in other states.

In a summary presented later during the planning session, Steve Brenton observed that the “best way to be prepared to deal with this issue is to stay the course with our ongoing public reporting initiatives. Those initiatives have given us credibility to date and begin to allow us to have a counterpoint in areas where we have been vulnerable in the past.”

Revisiting the WHA Strategic Plan

An important aspect of the WHA Board Planning Session was the review of the current strategic plan. Identifying factors in the health care environment that will drive industry change, over both the long and short term, is an important step in the process of ensuring that WHA remains relevant to its member hospitals.



Michael Decker



Greg Roraff

Brenton said the Association has worked to promote health care system reform and that will continue in the near future, while Medicaid payment will continue to be the top priority. “Education has a constituency, but Medicaid does not. As mission-driven organizations, **we need to look at the serious and debilitating impact that this issue is having, especially in Metro Milwaukee where six hospitals serve 40 percent of the Medicaid population,**” Brenton said.

Building a workforce for the future is on the front burner, especially as it relates to ensuring an adequate supply of physicians. The evolving health care delivery model, as well as increasing demand for physician services, will require closer alignment of physician and hospital agendas. The WHA will contribute to this alignment by continuously evaluating the physician supply issue by developing strategies to adequately meet future demand, while recognizing and helping members address the changing nature of physician relations.

Key strategic areas of focus identified in the strategic plan are:

- ✓ Promoting health care system reform
- ✓ Pursuing adequate health care funding
- ✓ Supporting and promoting initiatives that assure an adequate supply of health professionals
- ✓ Leading and encouraging continuous quality and patient safety improvement
- ✓ Developing and sustaining strategic relationships
- ✓ Helping build and sustain a relationship of trust between our members and their communities

Using data from the WHA 2006 Member Survey, **Brenton said the Association’s mission of “making advocacy and representation WHA’s highest priority” has been realized and is now identified as a top-rated benefit of WHA membership.** Tremendous strides taken by staff, backed by grassroots efforts by member hospitals, have moved WHA into a position of credibility and action at the state capitol. In addition to the mission, Brenton also shared the key elements of WHA’s vision:

- ✓ Advocating for improved community health
- ✓ Serving as a forum for health care organizations
- ✓ Education and training for member hospitals
- ✓ Assuming a leadership role in fostering a climate of collaboration
- ✓ Providing value-added services that meet member needs through the Association and its subsidiaries.

WHA’s goals are built on three key principles that attendees agreed remain current:

- ✓ **Enable consumerism**
 - CheckPoint and PricePoint information
 - Promote health reform referencing “Healthier Choices”
- ✓ **Improve access and coverage**
 - As outlined in “Healthier Choices”
 - New WHA Task Force on Access and Coverage
- ✓ **Be accountable to our communities**
 - Report community benefits
 - Review WHA billing and collection guidelines

Next Steps

Revision of the strategic plan will be a work in progress with a revised plan taken to the Board in October.