



# ***THE CRD ASSOCIATES'***

# ***HEALTH POLICY REPORT***

***March 8, 2012***

***The Headlines:***

- **SGIMers Descend on Capitol Hill**
- **Largest Capitol Hill Day in SGIM's History**
- **Advocates Address Key Issues with Senators, Reps, and Staff**

## **SGIMers Descend on Capitol Hill**

March 6 and 7 proved to be a big day for advancing the cause of general internal medicine as nearly fifty SGIM members went to Capitol Hill to meet with Members of the House and Senate, as well as with congressional staff in a day that resulted in about 80 meetings throughout the Capitol and the six House and Senate office buildings.

The events began on the evening of March 6 with a dinner at a DC law firm that has graciously made its

space available to SGIM for several years now.

At that briefing, SGIM Member Dr. Mai Pham presented remarks about her latest endeavor. She is the Director of ACO Programs at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) at CMS. Dr. Pham provided a lot of insight into both the opportunities and the challenges that confront CMMI as the new entity, created in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010 is launched.

CMMI is one of the few growth areas in research today (along with the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)) and those in attendance were treated to a real insider's look at the birth of a new and important agency.

The next morning began with a briefing by SGIM's government relations consultants – CRD Associates – and by the three chairs of the Health Policy Committee subcommittees.

Dr. Angela Jackson, chair of the Education Subcommittee, talked about SGIM's positions on such issues as Title VII training and scholarship programs; Graduate Medical Education (GME); and the need to launch the National Health Care Workforce Commission.

Dr. Scott Joy, who chairs the Clinical Practice subcommittee, discussed with the participants the need for CMS to craft and value a new set of Evaluation and Management (E&M) codes; to pay for non-face-to-face care management services; and to pay for an online E&M code. These actions would serve as a bridge until CMS could implement new payment

models that would eliminate the disincentives in the system to the practice of primary care.

Finally, Dr. Ira Wilson, the chair of the Research Subcommittee, discussed the requests SGIM is making with regard to funding the National Institutes of Health and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, as well as seeking congressional support for PCORI.

Following some logistical briefing, the intrepid physicians set out to make their case to their elected representatives throughout a long day of walking very long hallways.

To a person, the reports came back that SGIM's messages were well-received. The experience for those involved was both educational and productive. And more than a couple participants signed up to join the Health Policy Committee as a result of their experience.

Of most interest was the number of first-time participants in this year's event. Fellows and residents were plentiful among the attendees but so were the more "seasoned" veterans of SGIM's advocacy efforts.

If this sounds like something you would like to do, please consider contacting any of the SGIM members or staff listed below. The subcommittees generally meet by conference call once a month and in person at the Annual Meeting. No experience or special knowledge is needed. Just a commitment to serve your profession and your patients.

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