

Volume 1 Issue 4
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Strategic Advisory Group: Project Updates

Advocacy Update

Inaugural Meeting with CMMI

On November 3rd, we had our first meeting with the [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation](#). The CMMI representatives included:

Deputy Administrator and Director of the CMS Innovation Center, and her Special Assistant

Deputy Directors of the CMS Innovation Center and their Special Assistant

Chief Strategy Officer of the CMS Innovation Center

Chief Quality Officer of the CMS Innovation Center

Health Insurance Specialists of the CMS Innovation Center

These were the individuals who were invited, so we were pleasantly surprised that they did not send junior substitutes in their stead. This was the same experience with our first CMS meeting, so we continue to be impressed that McDermott+ is able to get us into higher-level conversations.

We made a similar pitch to them as to CMS: how can we partner with them on finding ways to grow urgent care across the country so that we can fulfill our role of keeping their beneficiaries out of emergency departments, thereby keeping down costs overall and reducing overcrowding and expanding access.

CMMI is generally known to be well-funded and have more flexibility with choosing what projects they take on, so we were hopeful to capture their interest. The downside with CMMI is that any project would likely only include a sector of Urgent Care vs. the entire industry.

They were engaged and asked questions, but at the end of the meeting did not seem likely to jump on Urgent Care any time soon. This was our last “regulatory-only” approach before we implemented the legislative side of our strategy, which will likely be longer and more expensive – but no one was surprised at this outcome.

We moved forward with launching the legislative strategy later in November. Read on.

*Leadership &
Advocacy
Conference*

Lobby Day Summary

In November, during the Leadership and Advocacy Conference, a group of Strategic Advisory Group members, plus Chapter Leaders and Delegates Council members spent the day with the McDermott+ team preparing for our Hill visits. Kudos to everyone there for working hard to dial in their pitches and sticking to our one message.

For the Hill visits we divided into 7 groups with McDermott+ team members supporting each group. We focused on districts/states that our attendees were from, and members who were on select Committees. Combined, these groups met with 40 different congressional offices in the House and Senate.

Our “ask” was for the congressperson to sign onto (or co-lead) a letter to CMS recommending that they make it a priority to work with UCA and Urgent Care to reduce inappropriate ED visits.

Our House letter is currently being led by Representative Annie Kuster (D-NH) and we are looking for a Republican co-lead as well as sign-ons. We are also working on a letter for the Senate, but do not yet have leads for that letter.

Overall, the meetings went extremely well. We no longer have to explain what Urgent Care is, and almost everyone we spoke to has had at least one personal experience going to an Urgent Care. We did have interest in supporting our letter and in the coming weeks the McDermott+ team and the Lobby Day teams will be following up with each congressional office.

McDermott will also be setting up meetings with the offices and Committee members we were not able to visit with. We hope to obtain at least 30 House Member signatures before the letter goes to CMS early next year.

Next Meeting

Q1 2024 - Virtual - date TBA

Q2 at UCA Convention April
13-17 - exact dates TBA

Questions? Email Lou Ellen at lhowitz@urgentcareassociation.org