

## A NEW ERA OF LEADERSHIP

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When *The American Journal of Managed Care* was launched in September of 1995, it set for itself an innovative and exciting challenge: to advance and stimulate scientific investigation and enhance communication about the challenges and opportunities facing managed care. For the past seven years, the *Journal* has published rigorous clinical research on patient outcomes, clinical effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, quality management, and health policy. As the leading peer-reviewed publication for managed care physicians, medical directors, and other healthcare leaders, the *Journal* has served as an important vehicle for communication within the managed care community.

While much has been accomplished in the past seven years (much more, quite frankly, than I could have hoped for when I became the *Journal's* Editor-in-Chief), the fundamental challenges facing American medicine and managed care remain largely unchanged. The evidence underlying the efficient delivery of cost-effective medical care is increasing and improving, but we are still struggling with incremental, market-driven reform to constrain medical care costs while trying to enhance (and sometimes simply maintain) the quality of care. Medical care expenditures continue to grow far faster than the economy and general inflation, escalating at a rate that society cannot—and ultimately will not—sustain. Several decades of medical innovation have increased demand for medical services. Yet these opportunities and advances are still accompanied by large inequities in access to services, disparities in outcomes, and fundamental problems in financing and delivering safe and effective care. Despite our progress, both the opportunities and the challenges facing American medicine—and thus the need for *The American Journal of Managed Care*—have never been greater.

As we wrestle with these challenges, the *Journal* begins an important transition in leadership. After a highly competitive national search, a subcommittee of the editorial board has selected a two-person team who now shares the responsibility of providing editorial direction and intellectual leadership for the publication. It is my great pleasure to announce the appointment of A. Mark Fendrick, MD and Michael E. Chernew, PhD as the *Journal's* new Co-Editors-in-Chief. Mark and Mike are highly accomplished and respected health services and policy researchers from the University of Michigan. Their work is notable for effectively integrating theory and practice, while addressing important clinically- and policy-relevant issues. The perspectives, insights, and breadth of experiences of this unique “physician + health economist” team make them ideally suited to lead *The American Journal of Managed Care* in the coming years. Their complementary areas of expertise and wide range of contacts will help readers keep pace with and better understand the changes that affect managed care research, policy, and delivery. Their selection is also personally gratifying. Mark and Mike have been valued colleagues for many years. I have known them both since they were students at the University of Pennsylvania. In fact, I was one of Mark's early career mentors (an experience from which he successfully recovered). My personal history with them—as students and as editorial board members—allows me to assure a level of continuity in the *Journal's* leadership.

In a future issue, the new Co-Editors will share their vision for the *Journal* and solicit your input on how to address the evolving needs and interests of readers. Building upon its solid research foundation, the *Journal* is poised to further expand intellectual exchange and debate through publication of policy relevant sounding boards and editorials, state-of-the-art clinical and research review articles, and clinically relevant

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continuing education articles for managed care physicians and pharmacists. Now is a particularly opportune time for readers to communicate their thoughts and ideas about the *Journal* to the new editors and the editorial staff.

The past seven years have been very rewarding for me as I've seen the *Journal* grow from Joe Carver's vision (then a medical director at U.S. Healthcare) to become the leading independent, peer-reviewed journal that addresses issues of concern and import to managed care decision makers. *The American Journal of Managed Care's* success is largely a testimony to our outstanding editorial staff headed by Lyn Beamesderfer and Colin Gittens, an excellent and diverse editorial board, a group of exceptionally dedicated peer reviewers, and, most important, the many authors whose innovative, high-quality research is the foundation of any scientific journal.

While much progress has been made to advance and facilitate the transition to the next stage of managed care, basic challenges remain unchanged. To successfully provide high quality medical care efficiently, we must advance beyond our current focus on financial and managerial efficiency and more forthrightly and effectively confront the complex challenge of what services we need and can afford. This, in turn, will require better understanding of the relationships among health inputs, health outcomes, quality, and cost. Mark and Mike, in their new roles as Co-Editors-in-Chief, are uniquely qualified to lead the *Journal* in this new era. With their outstanding editorial leadership and the continued dedication and hard work by all of us in the managed care community, I look forward to a brighter future for American medicine and the health of the public.



J. Sanford Schwartz, MD  
Editor-in-Chief Emeritus