

**SEMMELEWEIS SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
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October 15, 2007

Greetings from the President!

I am honored to have been elected as Semmelweis Society International's president for the term running 2007-2009. The shoes I will be filling from past presidents are quite large but you're your help we can fulfill our mission of protecting the public from bad faith peer review in our hospitals. I want to thank them to their tireless work in solidifying this group of physicians who have been abused by the misuse of Health Care Quality Improvement Act of 1986. Our annual meetings have become a great forum of discussion and planning as we present the inequities and need for reform of this well intentioned but much maligned bill.

I must also bow my head in honor of Vernon Waite MD who founded this society years ago as a victim himself who turned his own situation into a public cause working to promote reform and change in HCQIA till his recent death. He will be missed but his vision and passion to help doctor's enmeshed in the tangles of bad faith peer review will not be forgotten.

I am fortunate to also have supportive, loyal, and hard working officers with me. Robert Liles JD (vice president) has years of experience as an attorney who fully understands the current lack of accountability in our health care system and is focused on changing it. Our treasurer George Holmes PhD has years of experience in academia and has seen how HCQIA has been misapplied in that area of health care. His focus on academics in medicine as well as editor of the Semmelweis Society International website will reinforce the core of this organization. Ziad Akl MD (secretary) has himself suffered wounds of bad faith peer review.

This society is fortunate that these three officers, Drs. Akl, Holmes and Attorney Liles all live and work in Washington DC. Their proximity to Congress, lobbyist, will improve our ability to focus attention at the current health care system and how it is hurting patients.

In order to strengthen this society, I propose the following:

- 1) My first goal is to strengthen the membership by offering any doctor, medical student, house staff, attorney, or lay person who has either seen HCQIA misused or has been a victim of bad faith peer review the option to join our group at the Active or Associate status depending upon their financial status. House staff have been added at no cost since we need to educate up and coming physicians to the dangers of HCQIA since our major medical associations(AMA,AOA) maintain the status quo and in fact the AMA seems more intent of siding with the American Hospital Association in defeating any changes to HCQIA.
- 2) George Holmes PhD our web master and Treasurer has improved our web site as its editor and designer. He has worked tirelessly collecting dues and developing the sites own blog so that members can talk to each other in a more private environment. Members of all levels automatically receive access to this blog.
- 3) In keeping with Dr. Waite's vision and goal of helping those unfortunate doctors embroiled in a bad faith peer review, I am proposing and have developed a 24 hour email hot line. Current members are asked to join in this important role as interventionists for our colleagues who may be going through a bad faith peer review action. Dr. Waite himself would have 3-5 calls /week from doctors' desperate for help and guidance. What better way to help our fellow physician(s) and the public at large! This hot line (which will begin November 15, 2007) will not only help those doctors in need but also our organization which has also needed to stratify data to bring to light to Congress and the American people how rampant this problem is. Each interventionist will have a uniform form to fill regarding each crisis call. By providing uniformity, we will have stronger, better, and more arguable data which will also give us more credibility when presenting facts to the public.
- 4) Finally, I hope that everyone who looks at our web site and society fully understand that as a group, we want and intend to enforce, fair, unbiased peer review in the healthcare environment for the sake of our patients which we took an oath to protect and provide the best health care.

Don't hesitate to notify me with thoughts, ideas, and strategy.

I can be reached at rolandwv@verizon.net or neuroswbs@yahoo.com.

Sincerely

Roland F. Chalifoux Jr., DO