

Standardized Definitions For Our Industry— *The Time Is Now!*

by **Russ Bodoff**

NHIA President & Chief Executive Officer

We all endeavor, day in and day out, to make a difference through the work we do. In our field of alternate-site infusion, this “difference” literally impacts the lives of hundreds of thousands of patients. We know what we do is important—and we know it saves the health care system money. The difference between what we intuitively know to be true, and proving it to Congress and to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in order to attain a comprehensive Medicare benefit, is data—*proof*.



As health care costs continue to skyrocket at an unsustainable rate, providers are being asked to prove their value. Pay-for-performance (P4P) initiatives began several years ago in the acute care setting. We’re now beginning to see the next step in this P4P process: Providers who achieve good outcomes are paid more than those who are not as successful. However the Supreme Court responds to the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* challenge this summer, we know this fundamental direction will continue. The delivery of all health-related services will be outcomes-oriented, and coordinated—paying for what works, as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible. The alternate-site infusion industry can be a partner in this new health care paradigm *if we bring our proof to the table*.

Following the exciting release of our ground-breaking *Phase I: 2010 NHIA Provider Survey Comprehensive Aggregate Analysis Report*, the NHIA Industry-Wide Data Initiative is poised to enter its next chapter (see page 20 for more on data). As we seek to expand the scope of data we collect, and enhance the level of benchmarking available from the information we report, we must first address a critical, foundational key to future success—**Standardized Definitions**. Benchmarking results requires us to compare data, and to do that we must nail down standardized definitions of key aspects of our business operations and clinical care. When providers define and collect common data, the opportunity for benchmarking increases. From this critical next step, future surveys can be developed that will eventually allow us to capture data around clinical care and outcomes—and ultimately better define the value that we offer patients and the entire health care sector.

NHIA will be releasing a “Data Definitions Survey” at the end of June that seeks to establish those standardized definitions our industry can rally around, adopt and advance in future Provider Surveys. Just as it takes a multi-disciplinary team to provide home infusion services, it will take the perspectives of all disciplines in our industry to validate the Standardized Definitions our Data Initiative Work Group volunteers are proposing. We need participation from as many member companies as possible. And we need your commitment to help achieve completion of the Data Definitions Survey at your organization.

I strongly urge you to support this critical effort within your own organization. Stay tuned for the launch of our Data Definitions Survey—and please contact the NHIA Data Initiative staff liaisons, **Kristen Santaromita** (Kristen.Santaromita@nhia.org) and/or **Nancy Kramer** (Nancy.Kramer@nhia.org), if you have any questions, or are interested in taking a more active role with this important endeavor.

Your company’s support is greatly needed—and appreciated.

Regards,

