

Now is the Time to Collectively Demonstrate Our Long-Standing Integrity

by **Russ Bodoff**

NHIA President

What a great 2011 conference! Our association's annual gathering is always a wonderful experience for me, and this year was no exception. It was invigorating to see the excitement on attendees' faces and witness the energy generated by all the learning, sharing, networking and fun that took place in Orlando this year. Initial feedback has been exceptionally positive—it was, indeed, spectacular and I am pleased you thought so too. Thank you for your considerate comments and your participation in the industry's finest educational program.

My only disappointment is that, with all the events taking place at the conference, I did not have a chance to chat with more of you. One of the most rewarding aspects of the conference is the opportunity to reconnect with peers and friends, meet new members of the NHIA family, and put a face to colleagues you speak to by phone in your daily work—but have never met. As I travel throughout the year, I always make every effort to visit with as many members as possible. Learning even more about each NHIA member is a personal goal I earnestly strive to achieve. Equally important is also hearing from you—your thoughts and comments are critical to me and my staff. Let us know how we are doing. Tell us where we are hitting the mark and what we can do to even better meet your needs. Don't be shy!

Among the many energizing things that transpired at the conference, the Board announced the launch of the **NHIA Standards for Ethical Practice**. These newly-created standards outline a set of guiding principles that reflect the industry's commitment to operating with the highest levels of integrity and to delivering safe, high-quality infusion therapy to home-based patients. While the standards will formally become effective with membership renewals for 2012, all NHIA member organizations have the opportunity to *attest now* and take a proactive approach to reaffirming their commitment to upholding the long-standing integrity of our profession.

You may be asking why attesting to these standards is necessary when so many of you may already have your own ethics guidelines. I believe that the collaborative development of these standards represents an important milestone for our field. For the first time ever, the industry is publically affirming with one voice its long-time commitment to patients and to operating with integrity. The **NHIA Standards for Ethical Practice** are built around the core rules, laws and regulations already applicable to our industry. Thus, if your company's program complies with, or exceeds, the requirements outlined in the NHIA standards, signing the attestation statement is simple and straightforward—and it will then allow us all to express together our integrity as an entire field. This is finally our chance as an industry to stand up and collectively demonstrate our steadfast commitment to ethical practices.

The development and launch of the NHIA standards is especially timely, as we witness the transformation taking place within the broader health care community. We have to face reality. The fact remains that all segments of health care are challenged by the ramifications of sensational headlines highlighting alleged billing error rates, waste, fraud and abuse. At the same time, greater complexity in regulatory requirements will place health care organizations under a "regulatory magnifying glass" and increasingly require organizations to work hand-in-hand with members of Congress. The NHIA standards help to proactively demonstrate to regulatory agencies our compliance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to the alternate-site infusion field.

You will be receiving additional information on the new **NHIA Standards for Ethical Practice** in the mail and via e-mail. Your NHIA Board of Directors and NHIA Management Team urge you to review the standards and make the commitment to support this important endeavor that will not only provide increased visibility for your company and the field, but will enhance the overall reputation of our industry in the eyes of our various constituencies.

The time to take a stand is now. Let's take that step forward, together.



Russ