latey, the home and specialty infusion industry has been bolstered by increasing optimism over a possible future that could include a meaningful Medicare benefit for home infusion. Yet, the field must also remain keenly attuned to the ongoing private and public reform efforts that are reshaping our health care delivery system. With a growing emphasis on pay-for-performance and bundled payment methodologies and an intensified evaluation of clinical services, members of the home and specialty infusion community gathered at the 2015 NHIA Annual Conference & Exposition (held in Phoenix March 23-26) to consider how best to demonstrate their vital role in a more integrated care delivery model—and here is a retrospective overview of the many key concepts and discussions that transpired during the energizing conference general sessions...

“At no other moment have we been presented with such extraordinary prospects for advancing home and specialty infusion therapy’s reach and access,” exclaimed NHIA’s Senior Vice President & COO Steve Jurich at the conference’s opening general session. “Now is the time for all stakeholders to stand together, collaborate, and establish partnerships that will benefit us all as a community,” he said.

“Now is the time for us to share ideas to develop innovative approaches to the challenges that lie ahead. Now is the time to more effectively leverage data that will further demonstrate our value and help strengthen the delivery of patient care,” continued Jurich. “And, now is the time for all of us to take action and amplify our engagement in activities that will enable the future growth of the field, including rallying behind our recently introduced Medicare legislation,” he explained.

“Our conference theme for this year: Now is the Time—Amplifying Our Engagement, speaks to the realities we face and makes it clear that collaborating together is—and always has been—the key to our success,” said Jurich.

STANDING TOGETHER

Collaboration has led to many industry milestones, according to NHIA’s Outgoing Board Chair Paul Mastrapa, who reflected on some of the Association’s accomplishments during his two-year tenure. “We
emerged from the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) committee “would have made it extremely difficult for home infusion pharmacies to operate.”

Numerous meetings and persistent outreach to members of Congress and committee staff resulted in the final legislation being favorable, according to Mastrapa. “But the situation is far from over,” he warned, referring to new troubling proposals that have emerged related to intrastate shipping of compounded drugs that “reinforce the need to continually stand together, and advocate on our own behalf.” See the article on p. 22 for more information.

Mastrapa also praised Association efforts to strengthen the flow of information between payers and providers. “We felt that initiating a dialogue with payers would create transparency and establish a better understanding of each other’s mission and goals,” he explained, noting that in meetings with several large national insurers, the payers appeared to recognize the value of the home as a cost-effective site of patient care. “They also became more aware of the high-quality care that we provide,” Mastrapa added.

Additionally, he heralded the launch of the National Home Infusion Foundation (NHIF) as a vehicle for focusing on the future of the industry and its people. “While both NHIA and NHIF share similar missions to advance the industry, the Foundation is focused on building the capabilities of infusion professionals and ensuring that the delivery of high-quality infusion care continues to improve with future generations,” he observed.

The debut of the NHIF Lynn Giglione Memorial Scholarship Award is only a first step, Mastrapa promised (see p. 7 for information on this year’s recipient). “The Foundation is still in its infancy, so it’s going to need ongoing dedication, commitment, financial support, volunteers and partners who can collaborate on new ideas and approaches to deliver on its mission.”

NHIA’s work has never been more important than it is right now, Mastrapa concluded. “As health care experiences ongoing changes, I believe NHIA’s role will be an even more important part of the health care delivery continuum.”

**SHARING IDEAS**

NHIA is well positioned to meet the demands of that potentially expanding role, according to NHIA CEO & President Russ Bodoff, who presented the audience with an update on the state of the Association. “Today, our trade association is strong. None of our success could have been achieved without the community’s collaborative spirit and its fantastic support of me personally—and the Association overall,” observed Bodoff, who announced his retirement at the beginning of this year (see p. 18 for more). “As a community, we must continue to share innovative ideas for advancing the field, as we collaborate for our collective benefit,” he asserted.

Bodoff went on to describe the progress the home and specialty infusion community has achieved during his time at the helm. “Together, as a team, we took a struggling, mostly individual member organization and turned it into a dynamic trade association that is highly respected in Washington. There is no question we are now a voice that is heard,” he pronounced.
“Our fiscal house is in order,” he continued. Bodoff announced that NHIA was carrying a debt of over $1.8 million when he came onboard, which has now been totally eliminated. “One of the critical factors that enabled the amazing turnaround was the generous leadership and support we receive from the Future of Infusion Advisory Council (FIAC) member companies,” he added. “These companies stand out in their level of commitment. I appreciate the trust that their management placed in me and their strong desire to contribute the creative ideas and support necessary to advance the success of the Association and the home infusion community overall.”

NHIA has established a strong, proactive advocacy program, and a group of dedicated staff and volunteers committed to brainstorming and executing initiatives and programs that benefit the field, Bodoff explained. “Overall, we are well positioned to face policy and market challenges that are sure to come and seize the opportunities that will surface,” he said.

It’s critical that NHIA members work together to analyze the landscape as it evolves, sharing the best ideas for adopting and adjusting to fit the new models. “Challenges pertaining to health care policy, reimbursements, competition, and other areas of concern are not going away,” asserted Bodoff. “Success lies in reading the future. Embrace change and don’t let feelings of uncertainty and discomfort prevent you from exploring new opportunities,” advised Bodoff. “There is no question we are seeing an acceptance that the home needs to be an important site for providing care to patients,” he stated.

“I know of no group that has more highly skilled, clinical experience in caring for patients in the home than home infusion providers,” he concluded. “Leverage that experience, understand the changes that are coming, and share your thoughts for how to best respond to new opportunities for caring for patients in their homes. Use the power of your voice in Washington to create the best possible future for your business and the patients who depend on your compassion and dedication. Now is the time to share your creative ideas and get engaged!”

**Key Components of NHIA’s 2015 – 2017 Strategic Plan**

- Advocacy
- Data
- Awareness
- The National Home Infusion Foundation (NHIF)
- Education

**Note:** Please go to [www.nhia.org/strategicplan](http://www.nhia.org/strategicplan) to read the full NHIA strategic plan.

**Taking Action with NHIA’s Latest Strategic Plan**

“Getting engaged is about taking control of our destiny and not letting opportunities pass us by,” said Jurich, who presented the Association’s newly approved 2015 – 2017 strategic plan to attendees in Phoenix. Developed collaboratively by the NHIA Board of Directors, the FIAC, and senior staff, the full plan is available on NHIA’s website at: [www.nhia.org/strategicplan](http://www.nhia.org/strategicplan). The five key components of the plan are: advocacy, data, awareness, the National Home Infusion Foundation (NHIF), and education.

“Even with the Association’s many advocacy-related achievements, NHIA must continue to push for the attainment of a meaningful Medicare benefit,” Jurich reminded attendees. And while the benefit legislation remains a vital priority, NHIA’s strategic plan commits the Association to remain vigilant and proactive in addressing a wide variety of other legislative and regulatory challenges, including government-imposed activity in compounding, Medicare’s Competitive Bidding program, payer audits—both public and private—Medicare Part D, and Medicaid issues on a state level.

“NHIA has an excellent, highly skilled advocacy team, and we’ve attained much success,” he contin-
research, education, and leadership,” he explained. “But, chances of influencing public policy are much greater when there are large numbers of people supporting a cause. Advocacy is a collaborative venture and requires us all to take action,” said Jurich.

The strategic plan also recognizes the significant power of—and mounting need for—data. “Over the next three years, NHIA will tremendously expand its data collection efforts as part of its continuous work to improve patient care and operational performance,” Jurich explained, noting the need to accurately report and leverage quality data in a pay-for-performance environment.

“Data will also become a necessity once our legislation is passed,” he added. “NHIA is amplifying its engagement in this area by bringing on board additional clinical and data expertise,” said Jurich, announcing that Connie Sullivan, a well-respected colleague and pharmacist from the industry, had recently joined the NHIA team as Senior Director of Education & Data and as the NHIF Vice President of Research. “Connie will partner closely with Nancy Kramer (NHIA’s Vice President of Clinical Affairs), and others to further advance the NHIA Industry-Wide Data Initiative, among other important projects,” he explained (see p. 20 to learn more).

Developing high-quality data that demonstrates value is a solid step to further raising awareness in the shifting health care landscape, according to Jurich. “We cannot sit back and wait for others to recognize our value. We must tell our story,” he urged. “We must create consistent, clear messaging across multiple stakeholder audiences—including patients, health care professionals, government officials, pharmaceutical manufacturers, the media, and others.”

Another objective in securing the future of the field has been the establishment of the National Home Infusion Foundation (NHIF), according to Jurich. “We finally have a vehicle in place to invest in the future of our field by building the capabilities of the next generation of home infusion professionals through research, education, and leadership,” he explained.

Building upon NHIA’s core strength of providing quality education, the strategic plan calls for expanding shared learning opportunities. “We will look to expand the reach of our educational, training, and technical assistance programs to better connect with all employees of member companies—not just those who are able to attend the conference,” said Jurich.

Working together and taking action are key to success, Jurich asserted. “Achieving the goals set forth in the plan will require action and engagement by all of us in this room, and back home by all NHIA member companies and their employees,” he said.

At the conclusion of the 2015 NHIA Annual Conference & Exposition, Danette Frauenholtz, RN, MBA stepped into the role of Chair of NHIA’s Board of Directors. Frauenholtz is Executive Director of the University of Iowa Community Home Care in Iowa City. A nurse by training, she practiced at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics for 20 years before becoming involved in home care at the senior management level.

“NHIA has been an integral part of my professional life for many years,” said Frauenholtz, who has been an active member since 1998, where she served on the Government Affairs Task Force and participated in the work of the NHIA Industry-Wide Data Initiative before joining the Board of Directors in 2012. She is also an adjunct lecturer at the University of Iowa College of Nursing and serves on the Board of the Midwest Area Medical Equipment Suppliers.

“Working at Red Cross blood drives as a teenager made me realize my passion for nursing,” recalled Frauenholtz, whose career in home infusion began in 1996 when the administrator from the hospital where she worked asked her to start up a home care division. “It took one of our first chemotherapy patients to help me realize what this industry was truly all about—home is where the patient belongs,” she said.

“Taking action is the most important way to become engaged,” she continued. “Challenges to our businesses, our field, will always exist. How we deal with them is what will determine our future. It is within our control to create positive change for our field. But, the time to act is now!”

Frauenholtz encouraged NHIA members to embrace the theme of the conference and consider how they might amplify their engagement. “If every one of you would set aside just one hour a week to actively work on the industry issues impacting you and your patients, the progress achieved would be amazing. It seems so little to give for such a large return in investment,” she concluded.

Danette Frauenholtz, RN, MBA, incoming NHIA Board Chair
NHIA PAUSES TO RECOGNIZE RETIRING PRESIDENT & CEO
RUS S BODOFF

During Tuesday’s General Session, NHIA’s Outgoing Board Chair Paul Mastrapa, President of Walgreens Infusion Services, paused to recognize NHIA’s President & CEO Russ Bodoff, who will retire later this year. Mastrapa announced that during his tenure, Bodoff improved overall operations, strengthened the Association’s advocacy program, and stabilized finances, eliminating $1.8 million in debt.

“Russ was challenged to improve overall operations and turn around the Association to not only survive but effectively serve our needs,” he explained. “Through a combination of talent, vision, passion, and a no-fail attitude, he has led the transformation of NHIA into the strong, dynamic organization it is today.”

Bodoff initiated the 2008 change in dues structure from individual to company membership, which allowed NHIA to evolve into a trade association that is better positioned to financially support the needs of our growing industry, added Mastrapa. “It also opened the door for all employees of member companies to access the many resources NHIA has to offer,” he said.

Bodoff also brought members together to boost collaboration between and among provider and business members within the industry by adding the networking event to the Annual Conference—now an attendee favorite—to establishing essential partnerships such, as the Future of Infusion Advisory Council (FIAC). “Since its formation in 2008, the FIAC has become an invaluable strategic partner to the Board and NHIA staff, strengthening the Association immensely,” Mastrapa observed.

Another important Bodoff endeavor was the creation of the NHIA Standards for Ethical Practice, launched in 2011. “Russ rightfully believed in the need to promote our industry’s long-standing promise to operating with the highest levels of ethical practice,” recalled Mastrapa.

Bodoff will likely be best known as the architect of a highly proactive, effective advocacy program. “This program has nurtured stronger relationships with members of Congress and their staffs, dramatically increased awareness in Washington of issues impacting our business, and gained a high level of respect for services provided by the NHIA membership,” said Mastrapa, citing the 2009 Legislative Hill Day as an example of creatively increasing awareness. “Through NHIA’s advocacy program, Russ has given us a stronger voice on the Hill.”

“After eight years of service I think many of you will see a man who is passionate about his work and who has relentlessly focused on the best interests of the industry,” Mastrapa said.

The best interest of the industry has, at times, meant awakening self-awareness in those close enough to become advocates. Along those lines, NHIA Senior Vice President & COO Steve Jurich shared a personal story about his early days as a social worker, working with older adults who were approaching end of life. “Many of them experienced trouble articulating and resolving emotional issues,” he recalled. “So, I used movies to evoke emotions that we could then discuss.”

Jurich often screened It’s a Wonderful Life with patients, “to illustrate the impact a person can have on their community by being authentic, supportive, and collaborative,” he explained. “The movie’s main character, George Bailey, didn’t realize the effect he had until he was shown what life would be like without him—all the good that had stemmed from the way he touched peoples’ lives.”

In the movie, George gains a sense of worth. “My patients could eventually see the value they had brought to others. They received the gift of self-awareness,” Jurich continued. “Russ, you are George Bailey to me,” he warmly proclaimed. “You showed me how I can purposefully guide a team to make a difference on important issues. You are authentic, collaborative, mission driven, and respectful—qualities of effective leadership that I applaud and strive to emulate,” he concluded.

Bodoff expressed appreciation to Mastrapa, Jurich, and the audience who stood, long and enthusiastically, to applaud him. He promised to continue working—even as a private citizen—to pass legislation creating a Medicare benefit for home infusion therapy.

Bodoff told providers in the audience that much of his tenure has been motivated by their dedication to clinical excellence. “Working within a community of dedicated folks that work so hard to care for their patients has been a personal privilege. There is no question that each of you represents what is best about our health care system,” he said.

“In spite of the reimbursement and policy chaos you operate under, you manage to continue to provide the highest levels of patient care,” said Bodoff. “You are a community driven by passion for the work you do. It’s that passion that has inspired me these eight years.”
THE 2015 NHIA FELLOWSHIP & NETWORKING EVENT—AN EVENING AT ARIZONA SCIENCE CENTER

NHIA members took an evening to amplify their engagement with their colleagues at Arizona Science Center. Supported by the generous sponsorship of Managed Health Care Associates, Inc., the evening offered a great opportunity to explore and discover science concepts in an exciting, hands-on way—while networking with peers.

Members were invited to take a ride on the wild sky cycle, suspended 15 feet in the air, to learn a high-wire physics lesson, as well as to encounter the forces of nature—earthquake, hurricane, forest fire, and volcano—without needing a disaster plan. Many were brave enough to test their courage on a bed of nails and their stamina in wheelchair races. The innovative exhibits, tasty cuisine, and opportunity to speak casually with colleagues, gave the sixth annual NHIA Fellowship & Networking Event the dynamic atmosphere necessary for meaningful fellowship.

“NHIA members are committed to succeeding in today’s health care environment—and they know that in order to thrive we must all stand together in the face of challenges to seize the opportunities.” said NHIA President & CEO Russ Bodoff. “Networking occasions like this are a great opportunity for everyone to amplify their engagement in a fun way so we are better prepared to share ideas and take action long after the conference has ended.”

LEVERAGING DATA

“Collecting and reporting outcomes data will inspire innovation, influence regulation, increase the demand for our care, and improve community payer reimbursement,” asserted Nancy Kramer, RN, BSN, CRNI®, NHIA’s Vice President of Clinical Affairs, elaborating on one of the five key components of the strategic plan. Kramer recapplied the Association’s progress since launching the Industry-Wide Data Initiative in 2009, which included a provider survey to obtain a thumbnail sketch of the industry and a definitions survey to better understand how providers use key terms.

According to Kramer, Data Initiative partners were able to draw on NHIA’s experience with the Avalere study to take away several lessons, including the need for a mapping tool and an automatic data submission process. “We also learned that pharmacy system-level data could form the beginning of a national normative database about home infusion care and services,” she explained.

NHIA’s next step is to conduct an initial pilot for collecting and reporting outcomes data. “We have the potential to develop evidence-based best practices for home and specialty infusion patient care,” she continued. “The next Provider Survey, planned for later this year, will dive deeper into measures that illustrate how providers deliver care today, and ultimately establish benchmarks that can lead to innovation,” said Kramer.

“Quality-based reimbursement methodologies are the future, and commercial payers are finally beginning to take an interest in how home infusion providers contribute to patient outcomes,” asserted Connie Sullivan, RPh, NHIA’s new Senior Director of Education & Data and NHIF Vice President of Research. “I believe measuring quality is the only way to ensure our industry continues to grow and thrive as part of the broader effort to reform our health care system,” added Sullivan.

“While the data we derive from outcomes will paint a picture of current care delivery processes, the Foundation offers a unique opportunity to fund research focused on specific products, administration methods, and approaches to care,” she added, noting that NHIF will actively seek grant funding for studies that explore new products and strategies that propose a benefit to patients requiring home IV therapy.”

“I’m a firm believer that data speaks volumes,” said NHIA’s Incoming Board Chair Danette Frauenholtz, RN, MBA (see the box on p. 17 and the article on p. 22 for more on NHIA’s new Board Chair). Frauenholtz has been involved in the NHIA Data Initiative since its inception and served on the Outcomes Subgroup. “I believe wholeheartedly that we need not only general operational data, but outcomes data to help prove the value of what we do,” she said, recalling how difficult it was to convince members of Congress that home infusion could save on overall health care costs, prior to publication of the Avalere report.

Frauenholtz also urged NHIA members to participate in the NHIA Phase II provider survey later this year. “Without your active support, we will not have the numbers to prove validity. Now is the time to create an industry culture of collaboration around aggregate sharing, collection, and utilization of field-specific data!”

FULLY ENGAGED

“Working together, we can—and will—achieve success for our patients, for our members, and for our field,” proclaimed Jurich. While stressing the urgency behind taking collective action, he explained the dangers of waiting for something to happen, rather than taking action.

“If we are to truly achieve success, we cannot wait to act,” he encouraged. “Now is the time for us to leverage these opportunities and become fully engaged in creating a positive future for all—particularly the patients we serve.”

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Nancy Kramer (left) and Connie Sullivan (right) talk about the need to collect and leverage industry data.