

An Affirming Look Back—An Excited Look Ahead!

by **Russell Bodoff**

NHIA President

Looking back over 2008 and ahead to 2009, I find numerous reasons to feel a deep sense of pride and accomplishment in what we have collectively attained together—and in what we are poised to achieve, moving forward. While our industry does face the current economic difficulties impacting both national and world markets, I am truly encouraged to also see other, more positive dynamics at work in our field.

During the previous year, I was very fortunate to visit many NHIA provider and business firm affiliate member companies, and to meet their staffs. I learned a great deal about solid advancements in care, the deep pipeline of infusible drugs and how our marketplace still is expanding due to the innovation and stewardship of our members. And now, via the efforts we've all collaborated around throughout 2008, we just had our critical Medicare legislation re-introduced into both the House and the Senate, in only the second week of the 111th Congress (see p. 12)—a major achievement demonstrating the excellent work that is possible when the NHIA Legislative Team and our members actively coordinate and partner on even higher levels. Yes, last year's diligent efforts have positioned us for many opportunities in 2009, including our best prospects ever for legislation being passed (actually within the 111th Congress), along with the expansion of care and business growth that would flow from such success!

The above journey we find ourselves on as a field is paved with many examples of leadership and commitment—some highly visible, some not as apparent (but, nonetheless, deeply rooted and vitally important). When I reflect upon conversations I had with our members throughout 2008, I am struck by the genuine passion and purpose that runs through every organization, and is manifested in every person. With each visit I made, I've become more and more impressed with the quality and dedication of our member company employees, regardless of the role they may play. Beyond the many important encounters I had with members about clinical, legislative and reimbursement issues, perhaps the most unexpected treasure I discovered on my travels in 2008 was to learn about and talk with the skilled employees that work behind the scenes to make a home infusion company successful—I like to call these devoted individuals the “faces behind-the-scenes.”

Could your business thrive without the knowledge, skills and experience demonstrated by warehouse staff, technicians, intake staff, dieticians, drivers and others who display the passion and caring for the patient through the work they do everyday? I heard wonderful stories about drivers who go out of their way in poor weather conditions to assure the patient has needed medication and supplies, the warehouse manager who developed a tracking system to reduce the number of lost pumps, and the intake staff who assist worried patients in a calming, friendly and timely manner. These instances just scratch the surface of the many stories I've heard—and **the stories that should be told**. In fact, if you have an example of an employee(s) who made an extraordinary effort on behalf of a patient or developed a process that makes your company more efficient or profitable, please let us know—we plan on starting a regular series of stories in INFUSION that will better recognize these faces behind-the-scenes!

In closing, let me affirm how excited I am about the invigorating year ahead! I hope to see you March 1st - 5th in Baltimore at the 2009 NHIA Annual Conference & Exposition—and I urge you to be with us on March 5th for our major Legislative Hill Day event in Washington, DC. Passage of the **Medicare Home Infusion Therapy Coverage Act of 2009** is essential for your future success and for the quality care that our patients deserve. Without question, we need your personal time, commitment and passion to stand with us on March 5th and throughout 2009 to make this legislation a reality.

A wise person once told me never to look back with regret on the things that you have done, but only to look back with regret on those things you never took the time to do. In 2009, let's ensure there are no such regrets—and, instead, collaborate more than ever to chart our course for success!

Regards,

