



Briefing

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EDITOR

In March 1990 I wrote an article speculating that "Healthcare System Reform May Be on the Horizon." The progress from speculation to reality has been incredibly fast. Only three years later, the Catholic Health Association's (CHA's) annual assembly on operational implications of reform attracted the most participants in a decade, and Hillary Rodham Clinton told them they will be in the forefront of change (see assembly report, p. 41).

Although we have yet to achieve formal reform nationally, healthcare providers and individual states are not waiting; they are proceeding with creative initiatives and collaborative arrangements aimed at increasing access and controlling costs. This issue of *Health Progress*, which is devoted almost exclusively to reform, covers a variety of topics relevant to these efforts.

Sr. Teresa Stanley, CCVI, addresses what many CHA members identify as their most urgent concern: maintaining Catholic identity. Will Catholic traditions and mission be threatened in a reformed system requiring collaboration with other organizations, both Catholic and non-Catholic? In her article on mission challenges, Sr. Stanley clarifies the tasks facing sponsors and administrators entering integrated delivery arrangements.

Continuing this theme, Sr. Maryanna Coyle, SC, CHA's new board chairperson, suggests a powerful role for healthcare leaders as reform takes shape. As CHA President Jack Curley explains, leadership development is one piece of CHA's comprehensive program to help the ministry respond to new challenges such as reform and to the needs of their communities.

The Canadian and German healthcare systems provide universal coverage while expending a smaller percentage of their gross domestic product on healthcare than does the United States. Thomas P. Weil's comparisons of data from the three countries raise probing questions about our

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American healthcare system and what reform might mean.

In other reform-related articles, Lynn B. Wardle examines conscience clause protection for providers who object to providing certain procedures; and Sr. Geraldine Hoyler, CSC, explores the financial concerns acute care providers face as they are called to expand primary care services.

Upcoming issues of *Health Progress* will continue to articulate the challenges and opportunities of reform. Watch for articles exploring integrated delivery; the place of tax-exempt, charitable organizations in a reformed system; information systems; and leadership.

HEALTH PROGRESS AWARDS

The Catholic Press Association has given *Health Progress* an award for general excellence. Judges described the journal as "a highly professional business publication with a strong dose of Catholic values." The CPA also recognized as best in its category the special section on tax-exempt status in the January-February 1992 issue, commending its combination of "solid thought and an easy format." An illustration by Rafael Lopez in September 1992 was also cited.

REPRINTS AVAILABLE

When readers indicate strong interest by requesting copies of particular articles, we try to make reprints available. The April special section on sponsorship and the January-February article on pain management are two recent examples. See pp. 10 and 17 for ordering information.

CHA EDUCATIONAL CALENDAR

Beginning with this issue, you will be able to find CHA-sponsored programs in a section separate from the "Calendar," which lists many organizations' conferences. See "CHA Educational Events" on p. 88.

