

SIG TRENDS

Are you Social Networking?

Sherry Mazer, FACHE CPHQ, NAHQ's Special Interest Group Team Leader

Social networking is a term few of us used up until recently. Today, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and other social networking Web sites are household words. I even saw the job title "Director of Social Networking," which, let's admit it, sounds a lot more fun than "Director of Quality."

Many organizations, including NAHQ, host groups on these sites. Anyone can join, both members and nonmembers, to take full advantage of the postings. Social networking sites enable you to develop your own network of friends and colleagues and to read and comment on their postings. Posted pictures can help you keep in touch with friends and family easily. It allows you share updates on vacations, birthdays, and holidays all at once. It also lets professional societies like NAHQ discuss important topics such as healthcare reform and provide job postings to a wider audience at no cost.

Consider these statistics:

- More than 150 million people around the world, even Antarctica, are now actively using Facebook and almost half of them are using Facebook every day.
- If Facebook was a country, it would be the eighth most populated in the world, just ahead of Japan, Russia, and Nigeria.
- Facebook is used in more than 35 different languages and 170 countries and territories.

Some words of advice: Your picture, biographical information, and postings are open to the public. You need to remember the adage, if you can't do, say, or show it in front of Mom, don't post it online. Also, many companies don't allow you to access them from home.

For many, however, the positives outweigh the negatives. If you haven't signed up yet, go to www.Linkedin.com or www.Facebook.com to create an account. With an active account, sign up to be part of the NAHQ group on LinkedIn or a fan of NAHQ on Facebook. From there, your friends at NAHQ and others will invite you to be part of their networks. Log on to cyberspace and check out your old and new friends. I have a feeling that this social networking is going to catch on!

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The following news article was submitted by Constance Yancy, facilitator of the managed care SIG.

IOM Releases Report on Increasing Value of Health Care

National Association for Healthcare Quality
800/966-9392, 847/375-4720
www.nahq.org

The Institute of Medicine's Roundtable on Evidence-Based Medicine, representing multiple stakeholders in the healthcare sector, has devoted substantial attention over the past year to exploring the issue of value in healthcare. Over the past couple years, a series of meetings was convened to consider the challenges and opportunities related to increasing the value returned from healthcare delivered by both improving outcomes and lowering costs.

The Healthcare Imperative: Lowering Costs and Improving Outcomes consisted of a three-part workshop series exploring the drivers of spending, promising methods of cost control, and opportunities for and barriers to implementing policies. The goal of the workshop series has been to identify ways to reduce healthcare spending within the next decade without compromising health status, quality of care, or valued innovation. The meeting objectives included characterizing and discussing the major causes of excess healthcare spending, waste, and efficiency in the United States while improving health outcomes and exploring policy options relevant to those strategies.

Three workshops were organized. The first workshop, *Understanding the Targets*, focused on identifying the major drivers in the growth of healthcare spending. Five major driver categories were identified: unnecessary services, inefficiently delivered services, excess administrative costs, excessive pricing, and missed prevention opportunities. The second workshop, *Strategies that Work*, focused on identifying various strategies and their potential to lower healthcare spending in addition to improving outcomes, including knowledge enhancement-based strategies, care culture and system redesign-based strategies, transparency of cost and performance, payment and payer-based strategies, community-based and transitional care strategies, and entrepreneurial strategies and potential changes in the state of play.

The third workshop, *The Policy*, focused on exploring policy options to speed the adoption of previously discussed strategies to control the drivers of healthcare spending.

Prepublication copies of the report *The Healthcare Imperative: Lowering Costs and Improving Outcomes* Workshop Summary are currently available online. The full report will be published in 2010.