Keeping You Informed  
January 20, 2012  
From Dr. Michael Ayers, Board Chair, Health Provider Services Organization

Dear Colleagues:

A number of you have requested more in-depth communication from your HPSO Board, as we enter a critical period with a consulting project that could have far-reaching implications for our patients and for us.

You are strongly encouraged to join us for a dinner meeting this Thursday, Jan. 26, from 6-9 p.m. at Black Rock Country Club in Hingham. At that time, we will have a presentation from John Deane of Southwind and will entertain questions about the scope of the firm's engagement.

While we have made efforts to see you at department and practice meetings, it has not been enough. We now also will provide you with regular email updates. All updates will be posted to the HPSO. And, as always, we encourage you to call or email us with questions or concerns.

Your HPSO Board met with Bill Amery and John Deane from Southwind, a national physician practice consulting firm, to kick-off the HPSO consulting engagement. The project Southwind is assisting us with will be an approximately 120-day feasibility study to look at integrating specialty and primary care practices -- while at the same time supporting primary care groups who choose not to be part of the integration.

Bill Amery presented a summary of the health care environment that physicians and hospitals will face and explained how the models of health care delivery -- to which both patients and physicians have become accustomed -- will not sustain us in the future.

John Deane discussed the alignment that physicians and hospitals must achieve to deliver high-quality care and to control expenses. He stressed the importance of physician leadership at the highest levels. Bill's and John's observations are consistent with what we are experiencing in our region and affirmed the decision you made to establish HPSO to address these trends.

HPSO Board members also attended a two-day seminar in Boston, where The Healthcare Advisory Board delivered similar messages (click here for the conference agenda). While the information we heard is disconcerting because of the magnitude of change that it persuasively suggests will be necessary, it was familiar and reinforced our decision to work with Southwind to explore a number of alternative practice models.

Your HPSO Board has confirmed the structure of the Southwind engagement, as well as the scheduling of approximately 25 interviews with physicians on our medical staff from a wide variety of specialties, demographics and practice settings to help Southwind gain an understanding of our practice environment in order to further inform the process.

I look forward to seeing you on Thursday.