



February 10, 2005

The Honorable David M. Walker
Comptroller General
Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Walker:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the American Medical Group Association (AMGA), I am privileged to have the opportunity to endorse Nicholas Wolter, M.D., for a second term on the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPac). Dr. Wolter's first term ends in April, 2005.

AMGA is an association that represents medical groups, including some of the nation's largest, most prestigious integrated health care delivery systems. AMGA members' 65,000 physicians deliver health care to more than 50 million patients in 40 states, including 15 million capitated lives. As integrated systems of care, AMGA members are already implementing sophisticated information technologies, providing evidence-based, coordinated care to patients with chronic conditions, and attaining improved clinical outcomes. AMGA members are involved with virtually every facet of the health care delivery system and employ many nationally recognized leaders in the healthcare field.

Dr. Wolter currently serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Deaconess Billings Clinic (DBC) in Billings, Montana. DBC is a not-for-profit, integrated health care system composed of a 200 physician group practice, a 272 bed hospital, a 90 bed nursing home, and research and teaching components. It is the largest such system in the north central Rocky Mountain states.

In his first term at MedPac, Dr. Wolter has been an attentive, strong member who has worked well with both the other commissioners and the staff. He has brought to the Commission insight on a number of important and timely

issues, such as the variation in margins among diagnostic related groups (DRGs) and the need to bring fairness to payment for all services, quality health care and the need to link quality to payment, the importance of health information technology (HIT) in improving performance and the need for government support to encourage this modernization, and the relevance of integrated group practices as the key to many of the changes needed in health care delivery.

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I sincerely thank you for your attention to this letter and I respectfully urge the reappointment of Dr. Wolter to a second term as a MedPac Commissioner.

If I can be of any service to you regarding Dr. Wolter's reappointment, please do not hesitate to contact me at (703) 838-0033 ex. 331.

Sincerely,



Donald W. Fisher, Ph.D.
President and CEO