

## Investing in a Sure Thing

***“An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.”***

**B**enjamin Franklin’s insightful words serve as the basis for this special edition of INFUSION magazine, which covers key highlights of NHIA’s recent 2016 Annual Conference & Exposition.

Leading up to the Association’s signature event, I had spoken with many NHIA members about the Annual Conference. I could certainly see firsthand over the past months—stretching back to 2015, that great effort went into the Conference on the part of both staff and volunteers. Still, until arriving in New Orleans, I did not truly know what the Annual Conference meant in terms of fostering the important sense of community that exists within the tight-knit home infusion field.

Throughout my time in New Orleans, many attendees spoke to me about the inspirational general session speakers, the informative discussions taking place at the various symposia and roundtables, the networking, and the valuable information gained while walking the aisles of the exhibit hall. Moreover, it was very apparent that the Annual Conference serves a critical need as a venue for the home infusion community to come together, share ideas, discuss changes underway, and look toward the future.

I gained many insights about the educational curriculum and other programming. There were many compliments, but there were also ideas to keep the Conference responsive to the changing needs of the home and specialty infusion community. The challenge for NHIA, not unlike that confronted by many other associations, is that there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach. The NHIA Annual Conference must have a range of programs that can span the broad needs of a diverse group of attendees. A well-rounded curriculum should include sessions that challenge long-time home infusion professionals, while also offering more basic clinical and business elements for others newer to the field. Remaining “current,” is critical for key executives as well as for front-line employees.

No doubt, though, it is expensive to ensure everyone in a company is up-to-date on the latest industry developments and clinical advancements. Yet, continuing education is a necessary and strategic investment for every home infusion provider that wants to make sure its team has the skills and competency to deliver safe and effective infusion therapy. Equally important, is doing what it takes so that all employees have the right level of business acumen when it comes to sales, marketing, reimbursement, and other management skills.

The many intangible benefits the conference provides should also be part of any ROI discussion. Competitive advantage comes from continually developing team capabilities, encouraging knowledge-sharing and collaboration, embracing new ideas, and being open to change. The NHIA Annual Conference must form the foundation of our members’ learning strategy and be an integral part of their path to ongoing business success.

For those who were in New Orleans, the best way to maximize the investment of time and resources is to put your ideas, insights, best practices, and latest clinical information to work immediately. While not everything learned will be instantly applicable, the key is not to lose momentum. Take the time to review your notes, prioritize and share key takeaways with others who may not have had the benefit of shared learning that occurred in New Orleans, and implement changes that reflect the good ideas gained at the meeting. Attending the NHIA Annual Conference & Exposition is an investment in the future—be sure to maximize the value.

Although attendance at the Association’s Annual Conferences remains relatively steady, there are many members who have never joined us at the event. I am curious to know why. I encourage NHIA members who rarely or never participate in the Annual Conference to share thoughts and ideas that will improve the likelihood of your future participation. Contact me directly at: [Tyler.Wilson@NHIA.org](mailto:Tyler.Wilson@NHIA.org), or to the magazine’s editor, [Jeannie.Counce@NHIA.org](mailto:Jeannie.Counce@NHIA.org).

Next year’s Annual Conference & Exposition will be held in Orlando on May 22-25, 2017. As you mark your calendar, look around at colleagues who could also benefit from the intensive learning and professional development opportunity. Use NHIA’s Annual Conference event to strengthen your team’s capabilities and to build stronger working relationships within the community. It’s an investment that’s sure to pay off.

*Tyler J. Wilson*

