

I am honored to have had the opportunity to participate in the 2011 ACS Health Policy and Management Leadership program at Brandeis University. I would strongly endorse continuing to offer the program through joint sponsorship between the College and subspecialty societies.

I came to the program with very high expectations relative to the health policy curriculum. Specifically, I was in quest of information to make me a more knowledgeable and therefore, more credible and effective advocate on Capitol Hill for surgical patients and surgeons. Overall, the program met my high expectations in this area. Dr. Altman brings a career's worth of experience, knowledge and expertise to the program. He is both uniquely qualified as an expert and uniquely gifted as an instructor to teach others about health policy. His sessions both educated and inspired me. If asked what one thing to change about the current curricula, I would suggest adding more sessions with him perhaps on student selected topic(s). The lectures on ACOs by Mr. Mechanic and Improving Value by Dr. Tompkins were also concise, informative and extremely useful to me. In my opinion, giving Dr. Tompkins another block in which to expound further on his expertise in payment system reform would be useful.

Credible, effective leadership is another topic of profound interest to me. The two sessions on leadership presented by Dr. Chilingirian came highly recommended to me from multiple previous attendees. Those previous participants were correct in their assessment. In addition to being an obvious subject expert, Dr. Chilingirian's ability to relate to a room of surgeons and effectively convey his topic is extraordinary. These two sessions had the most direct and immediate impact upon me.

With regards to opportunities for improvement, I would suggest there be some serious consideration given to eliminating some of the management/"MBA-type" sessions. Though I admittedly came to the course with more of a "policy wonk" agenda, I feel the College's intent to educate leaders in health policy would be better served with fewer hours spent on decision making, management, negotiations and accounting. In my opinion, replacing some of those hours with a health care lobbyist or other subject expert in advocacy sharing knowledge to sharpen our own individual advocacy skills with Members of Congress and their staffs would be extremely valuable.

In summation, this is an excellent program and well worth continuing to sponsor. It served not only to educate and inspire me but also to narrow my focus onto which areas of continued study I wish to pursue in the future. My sincere thanks to the faculty at Brandeis, the American College of Surgeons and the American Pediatric Surgical Association for allowing me to participate.

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Year 2011 ACS/APSA Health Policy Scholar