Dear Colleague:

I want to remind you that a review committee, appointed by the AHA board, is holding a special forum July 11 in Chicago to receive your input on the Medicare Area Wage Index (AWI) Task Force’s report and recommendations. The members-only event will be held at the Chicago O’Hare Hilton from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Central Time. All AHA members are welcome to attend as observers and/or to make remarks, but you must register in advance. The registration deadline has been extended to Friday, June 28. You may also submit written comments to AWI@aha.org by Friday, June 28.

Background:
The AHA Board of Trustees in 2011 created a task force to identify and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the current AWI; develop a set of principles by which to evaluate various proposals to modify the AWI, including review of AHA’s existing principles; evaluate public policy proposals and studies to change the AWI; and make recommendations to improve the accuracy, fairness and effectiveness of the AWI.

After an extensive process that included education, analysis and discussion, and input from AHA’s Regional Policy Boards and Governing Councils, the task force agreed to principles and recommendations to reform the AWI. Task force members agreed that no set of recommendations will satisfy the concerns of every hospital but felt specific actions could improve the system for the field as a whole. For the estimated impact on your hospital and the field, please click here.

At its April 2013 meeting, the AHA Board of Trustees determined that more feedback from the membership would be beneficial. It authorized the creation of a review committee with both board and task force members to gather further member input and make recommendations to the board on the disposition of the report.

The July 11 open forum is a critical part of this process. All AHA members who wish to have input into the board’s consideration of the task force report are invited to either attend the session or submit comments.

Thank you in advance for your feedback. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Member Relations at 1-800-424-4301. We greatly appreciate your participation in this process.