The most crucial issue facing otolaryngology is the re-empowerment of physicians. I believe this is best done by first taking back our role as the patient’s advocate. This role has been incrementally taken from us, over the course of the rapid, and at times, radical changes in the American healthcare system. The sole reason being an overwhelming obsession with cost reduction. We too have an obligation to provide cost-effective healthcare; but our first and greatest obligation is to do what we know to be the right thing on behalf of our patients.

What do you feel is the most important issue facing otolaryngology and why?

We must now speak out boldly whenever their best interests clearly conflict with any of the insidious cost reduction schemes. This applies to government, third party payers, or the insurance industry. We must do so individually and collectively in an organized force. An action plan is needed to take back our patient advocacy role, and we need it now.