



**Walter G. Suarez, MD, MPH**

Dr. Suarez is a physician and a public health and medical information systems specialist, and President and CEO of SGA, LLC and the Midwest Center for HIPAA Education (MCHE). SGA/MCHE is a Minnesota-based health care education and research company established in 2002 to assist health care organizations plan, manage and implement large-scale projects in the areas of quality measurement, patient safety, health disparities and HIPAA, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

Before establishing SGA, Dr. Suarez was the Executive Director and CEO of the Minnesota Health Data Institute, a non-profit, public-private partnership created in 1993 to support the information needs of consumers, purchasers, providers, plans, and policymakers, in measuring and improving the quality and cost-efficiency of health care in Minnesota. Prior to joining the Institute, Dr. Suarez worked for the Minnesota Department of Health directing the Health Care Cost Information System, the statewide hospital and surgical center data system.

Dr. Suarez is a member of several state and national organizations. He is a Founding Member and President of the Board of Directors of the Public Health Data Standards Consortium, member of the National Association of Health Data Organizations (where he serves as Board Member), the National Uniform Claims Committee, the Workgroup on Electronic Data Interchange (WEDi) Strategic National Implementation Process (where he serves as a member of the SNIP Steering Committee, Co-Chair of the WEDi/SNIP Regional Efforts Group and Co-Chair of the National Provider Identifier Workgroup), and a member of the National CAHPS Benchmarking Database Advisory Board. He is also an active member in the Minnesota community, serving as Chair of the Advisory Board of the Minnesota Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative and a Board member of the Minnesota Partnership for Action Against Tobacco (MPAAT).

Dr. Suarez is a frequent writer, lecturer and speaker to university, business, government and health care groups on a variety of issues related to health disparities, quality measurement, data privacy, and HIPAA administrative simplification. Over the past four years, Dr. Suarez has delivered more than 120 one-day and half-day provider workshops, seminars and training programs in Minnesota, the Midwest and throughout the country.

Dr. Suarez received his M.D. degree from the Colombian School of Medicine in 1985, and his Master in Public Health from Tulane University in 1986. Dr. Suarez practiced medicine in his native Colombia for several years before coming to the United States. He worked in the fields of community and preventive medicine and general pediatrics, with special emphasis on management information systems and computer applications in primary health care.