



Insight

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Focus On: Women Advisors

What do women advisors want? There are new and insightful answers to this question from a recent study by AXA Equitable, as well as complementary research from New York Life Insurance. The AXA Equitable Study, “Financial Advisors and the Women’s Market,” fielded in June, chronicles interesting differences between female advisors and their male counterparts.

Halina Karachuk, Vice President, Innovation, Research & Analytics, at AXA Equitable, summarizes key findings this way: “Female advisors are more likely to target the women’s market and use different methods to prospect female clients than male advisors. Female advisors also feel more comfortable selling to women. And nearly all advisors agree that women’s financial concerns are different than men’s.” The larger themes and findings emanating

from the research are of critical interest to companies that use advisor distribution, and men and women alike who want to learn more about how to best market to women.



The portrait of women advisors revealed by the study is a complex one, as seen in the detailed statistical findings. Women compared to their male counterparts tend to specifically target the women’s market, with 25% of female advisors surveyed reporting this result, compared to only 9% of men. Similarly, 50% of women use “tailored methods to prospect and sell to women,” compared to only 32% of male advisors. And finally, women are more comfortable selling to their same gender than male advisors (30% versus 13% respectively), with 77% of male

advisors reporting “the same level of comfort selling” to either gender, compared to only 68% of female advisors.

In terms of career development, women tend to turn to women. 64% report the desire to learn “from successful female advisors,” and 17% network with other women to share best practices. Only 5% of men report networking with other men.

On the client side, the majority of all advisors, regardless of their gender, felt women clients had different concerns than men. Most advisors surveyed agreed with the statements: 1) Female clients are more focused on addressing personal and family needs and less focused on the numbers; 2) Needs-based selling is more impactful with female clients; and 3) Female clients desire advice from friends/family more than men. However, women advisors are not in sync with their male counterparts

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Boomer Retirement Trends

Just as Baby Boomers redefined the life stages early in their lives—when to get married, whether or not to have children and creating blended families—there’s every indication that they’ll do the same for retirement. Whereas retirement was once a clearly delineated event, occurring in one’s mid-60s or thereabouts, Baby Boomers aren’t likely to follow that established path. For example, many are currently in or considering “revolving retirement,” where they might retire for a period of time only to go back to work at a later date.

In addition, longevity and healthcare expenses are also forcing some to think about retirement in different ways. The Boomer demographic will be looking to financial advisors to help them navigate these uncharted retirement waters.

To shed light on these trends, the Insured Retirement Institute (IRI) commissioned a study from Strategic Business Insight to

examine how this generation is approaching retirement. The study segmented Baby Boomers into two camps: Boomers near retirement (within five years) and other non-retired Boomers. Using data from MacroMonitor, the study found that the two groups have very different outlooks for retirement.

By teasing out the differences between Boomers, financial advisors can better tailor their services for Boomer clients as they transition from full-time work to retirement.

More Financially Secure

The key difference between the two groups of Boomers is how they see their retirement prospects. Those who are closer to retirement are generally more confident, buoyed by their larger asset bases and fewer financial obligations.

Though the two groups of Boomers have roughly the same debt

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...Women Advisors *continued from cover*

in believing “that women prefer more conservative investments than men.” (Only 55% of women advisors agreed versus 65% of men).

Common Ground

But based on these numbers, advisors shouldn’t conclude that women and men advisors are so far apart that they might as well be from different economic planets. The study also found vast areas of commonality. The majority of both genders thought “the sales steps are the same when selling to men and women.” And both groups named the exact same top three topics of interest to further their career: learning how to generate leads and referrals, finding and engaging centers of influence and advanced/niche sales concepts and products.

In addition, the majority of all advisors (62%), “Are highly interested in learning strategies to market/prospect specifically to women,” proof of just how valuable such studies are to an advisor community thirsty for knowledge about this market.

An earlier study of women advisors, undertaken by New York Life Insurance in 2006, offers additional insight. The study asked what factors made women advisors happiest with their career choice. “The opportunity to help people” was the most common response. Coming in a close second was women citing the independence provided by the job allowing them to integrate work and life.

Job Satisfaction

Barbara Cerf, Corporate Vice President, Women’s Market, New York Life Insurance, comments, “When I talk with women advisors today and ask what makes them happiest about their job I still get these same responses.” Cerf acknowledges that these job characteristics may be important for male advisors too, though the order of priorities might not be the same.

How can these survey findings be used by employers and women advisors? Cerf points to the many steps New York Life is taking to help women advisors, perhaps in response to a new understanding about their focus and needs. Among these initiatives is a push for leadership in the field for all advisors but especially women. The company offers an annual advanced market workshop for women. And employees have the opportunity for five hours of flexibility in their weekly schedules.

“Our society is changing,” adds Cerf. Approximately 51% of the workforce is now women and more and more assets are controlled by women. She says, “By training our women how to sell to these women and build relationships we are really replicating what is happening in society.” These efforts, and the company’s openness to women advisors, are paying off. The proof is in the pudding: One out of three new hires by New York Life is a woman, double the ratio of only five years ago.

Professional Development

AXA Equitable has also responded to research about women advisors and their needs. As Karachuk points out, “The findings suggest that programs specifically geared toward networking and fostering professional development can help female advisors further establish their practice.” For its part, AXA has an internal Women’s Leadership Council that has created a network of female professionals who can connect and share best practices and sales ideas. And the company has developed extensive marketing materials specifically for the women’s market. Among the noteworthy offering are six iPhone apps. “While available for everyone, they were designed specifically for women,” says Karachuk.

These actions all indicate that AXA Equitable is taking the women’s market, and more specifically, the career objectives of women advisors, very seriously. The overall industry, if it pays close attention to recent studies, will follow by finding new ways to empower and educate women. Says Karachuk, “I think the study reinforces that not only are women’s financial concerns different than men’s, but that male and female advisors have different approaches to how they target the women’s market, their preferences for working with female and male clients and how they approach their own career development.” ●



3 Questions with Sun Life Financial Distributors’ Terry Mullen

What was the biggest lesson you learned over the past 18 months during the crisis?

I don’t think there is a single person who could have predicted three years ago that we would experience the worst economic environment since World War II and the longest recession, at 18 months, since the Great Depression. It touched everyone in a significant way. Our parents, friends and especially our clients—today’s Baby Boomers—experienced substantial losses in their financial portfolios.

I learned that tried-and-true principles, like diversification, did not spare those who thought real estate was a safe haven for investing or thought they had substantial equity in their homes. Nevertheless, I found that diversification is still important, but with an even greater emphasis today on diversifying by adding guarantees.

We are now facing what is called “the new normal”—expect the unexpected, act conservatively, hold off on retirement, etc. If you are 60-years-old and going to live to be 90, you have to protect yourself from the inevitable bumps in the road. *continued on page B7*

Preparing for Tax Season

Sharing a few smart steps now with your clients can make their tax season less painful.

TOP 10 TIPS

DONE **TO DO**

1. Begin filing your receipts scrupulously. Any receipt lost is money lost.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Adjust your deductions to ensure you don't give Uncle Sam an interest-free loan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Increase your employer-sponsored retirement plan contributions as much as you can afford. If you are already maxed out, consider setting up a Roth IRA.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Look into using a tax-deferred variable annuity in your retirement savings portfolio to cut taxes and decrease tax-related paperwork. Because earnings from a variable annuity are tax deferred, they don't need to be reported each April. It's only when the earnings are withdrawn (usually during retirement) that the income has to be reported to the IRS.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Set up a tax-savvy savings fund for your kids' college savings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Talk to a lawyer about updating your will or living trust to ensure Uncle Sam doesn't add to the grief if the worst happens this year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Check the tax effectiveness and returns of your investment portfolio and consider selling off mutual funds that have high portfolio turnover. Commit to a "buy-and-hold" strategy for your non-tax-sheltered investments so the earnings are taxed at the capital gains tax rate rather than the usually higher ordinary income tax rate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Clear items you no longer use out of your basement, attic and garage and donate them. Your old sofa is a charity's bread and butter—and a deduction for next year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Invest in a good financial management software package so next year's records are easy to generate and file electronically.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Maximize your return by consulting with your financial advisor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Access this document, as well as more than 20 additional FINRA-cleared documents, for free at www.myIRIonline.org. Included with these materials is a letter asserting that the aforementioned document has been FINRA cleared.

Advising Older Americans

People 50 and older now make up one-third of the U.S. population according to the U.S. Census, yet they control three-quarters of the investable assets in the country. For these two reasons alone, financial advisors are eager to better understand this generation and create ways to serve them most effectively.

Indeed, advisors will be working with the over-50 set for many years to come as younger Baby Boomers age and join their ranks.

As any financial advisor knows, though, people require different messaging at different points in their lives. Without making assumptions based strictly on age, it's important for advisors to consider their clients' needs at all stages of their life.

To address the need for this type of education among advisors, the Insured Retirement Institute (IRI) and AARP, the membership organization for older Americans, collaborated in September on the first of two webinars called "Communicating with Older Clients." The program focused on meeting clients' social, generational and family challenges as they age.



"The more you can be upfront about your information, what it is that you actually do, what your credentials are and what advice you are registered and licensed to provide, the more clients will respond."

Jean Setzfand, AARP

The webinar featured Jean Setzfand, AARP's Director of Financial Security, and Danielle Holland, Spokeswoman with IRI, and was moderated by Michael Herndon, Manager of Financial Security and Institutional Outreach at AARP. The second webinar on November 17 addressed how to communicate with older clients who are facing physical and medical issues.

"We were getting unsolicited calls from advisors asking us to tell them more about our membership," explains Setzfand. "There

is such a hunger for information about older Americans."

The IRI and AARP webinars echo similar conversations taking place throughout the financial services industry, as advisors find themselves with an increasingly older clientele and want to know how to create the most effective messaging. Edward Jones of St. Louis, for example, has been addressing this in-house since 2007 with a series of research reports looking into the different generations.

"It's designed to help the advisor do things a little differently," says Jackie Clark, Product Specialist with Edward Jones. "You may want to run a client meeting differently given who is sitting across from you. It may mean saying things a little differently. There might be words or mannerisms that older clients like better."

Edward Jones' advisors can receive training on how best to communicate with the various older generations, including the Traditionalists (those now in their 70s) and the Greatest Generation (people in their 80s).

What Is Older?

But how exactly do you define older? Older is often in the eye of the beholder, and advisors may be perplexed about whether their clients are indeed "older." For the purposes of the AARP and IRI webinars, older was defined as those who are 50 and above. Yet older has other definitions depending on the context. For example, where workplace discrimination is concerned, an older worker is someone over 40. AARP membership starts at 50.

Eligibility for Social Security begins at 62 and so on.

"You need to be careful," cautioned Setzfand. "Some people may not see themselves as old."

Of course clients' age isn't the only factor that determines what and how advisors need to communicate. Life stage plays an equally important role. This is especially true of Baby Boomers who, though now in or entering the 50-plus group, look very different from past generations at this age. These 50-somethings may very well still have children living at home or may be caregivers for elderly parents or both. They may be considering working long past the traditional retirement age or may be planning to embark on a revolving retirement, coming and going from the workplace as their lifestyle and financial needs change.

Working with older clients may also mean working with their families. Again, those 50 and older have widely varied family structures today. Consider that 4.5 million children are now living with grandparents. In other families, a spouse or life partner may have died. Others may be leaning more and more on their adult children to help them make financial decisions. Some may not have children and are planning to age without the help of family. Obviously the investment advice that such families receive will be quite different.

Note that it may take some probing to fully understand these dynamics. "Because of their private and polite nature, Traditionalists may not share information readily with the branch team or their family members," notes Edward Jones' research.

A holistic approach would help advisors understand individual family circumstances and inform the best plan. Advice may go beyond what is considered traditional investment advice. "There will also be legal aspects to your relationship with your clients," notes Setzfand. "You may be looking at powers of attorney, guardianship or professional caregivers, and that's important to keep in mind."

In addition to serving clients better, developing a relationship with the entire

family can position the advisor to benefit from the intergenerational transfer of wealth that is now occurring. Despite the economic downturn, the Traditionalists and Boomers are expected to pass on \$38 trillion in wealth to their heirs and charities between 2011 and 2035.

“This would represent the largest intergenerational transfer of wealth in U.S. history,” states Edward Jones’ report.

Key Considerations

Even if older clients are in all different parts of their lives, crossing the 50-year mark can bring about physical and mental challenges for some people. For that reason, Setzfand suggests that advisors think about how they present information to their clients. For example, better lighting and larger typefaces on printed materials may be beneficial for some clients as roughly 13% of older men and 19% of older women experience vision loss. Also important is an office that allows easy access to clients in wheelchairs with ample room in doors and hallways. “It’s simple things like that make a big difference, but a lot of financial professionals may not be aware of them,” Setzfand says.

In addition, the means of communication may be different. Older clients may want more face-to-face interactions. While some are as comfortable on Facebook and Twitter as teenagers, when it comes to getting advice about their retirement planning many prefer in-person meetings. It is their hard-earned nest egg, after all, and many want handholding through the advice process.

Clients who are members of the Traditionalist generation might require a more formal approach, according to Edward Jones’ research. “When talking with Traditionalists face to face or on the phone, address them with formal titles (Mr., Mrs., Dr., Rev.) unless invited to use first names,” states the report, “Working with Aging Investors.”

Serving Older Clients

Like any client, older Americans need sound financial advice. The good news is that a recent survey commissioned by IRI from Strategic Business Insight (see cover story) shows that Baby Boomers who are

closest to retirement—defined as within five years—are turning to professionals to help them make financial decisions. Though their trust in the financial services industry has been somewhat shaken by the downturn, many still acknowledge that they need help shaping their retirement plan.

According to the report, older Boomers say their goal in retirement is to live

other planning challenges, such as inflation protection and making their assets last until the end of their life, notes Edward Jones in its report. Advisors may need to discuss equity allocation and other inflation-protection strategies.

More than experts, however, clients are looking for financial advisors who are trustworthy and keep their best interests

“We have to help consumers understand guaranteed income versus variable income and how to modulate between the two.”

Jean Setzfand, AARP

entirely on income (eight out of 10), such as Social Security, pensions and annuities, and avoid touching principal. Yet very few own annuities and many are perplexed about how to create income streams from their savings. Advisors who are aware of the details of their clients’ life and can show them ways to generate income will be able to play an active role. After decades of accumulating retirement assets, clients may need to quickly shift into spend-down mode, and will be looking for experts who can help them do that. “We have to help consumers understand guaranteed income versus variable income and how to modulate between the two,” says Setzfand.

In addition to income, older clients have

in mind. Many clients may worry about losing control of the money they worked so hard to accumulate. “There is real confusion about who they need to turn to for financial advice,” Setzfand says. “The more you can be upfront about your information, what it is that you actually do, what your credentials are and what advice you are registered and licensed to provide, the more clients will respond.”

Being upfront about services and fees can go a long way toward engendering client trust. Also important is suitability of products and services. The primary way advisors can assure suitability is by understanding their older clients and what challenges their particular life stage is presenting them. ●

Key Takeaways

- Baby Boomers look very different from past generations. These 50-somethings may have children living at home or be caregivers for elderly parents. They may work past the traditional retirement age or embark on a revolving retirement.
- Advice for older clients could go beyond traditional investment advice. Advisors may be looking at legal matters such as powers of attorney, guardianship or professional caregivers.
- Older clients have multiple planning challenges, including inflation protection and making their assets last until the end of their life. Advisors may need to discuss equity allocation and other inflation-protection strategies.
- Suitability of products and services is extremely important. The primary way advisors can assure suitability is by understanding their older clients and what challenges their particular life stage is presenting them.

For more tips and strategies, as well as information on the webinars, visit www.myIRIonline.org.

VA Benefits and RMDs

This is the season to focus on IRAs and required minimum distributions (RMDs), particularly when an IRA is funded with an annuity that has additional benefits. The IRS' Final Annuity Regulations under Section 401(a)(9) explain that RMDs are now based on the "entire interest" of the annuity contract, meaning the prior year's account value plus the actuarial value of additional benefits, including living, withdrawal and some death benefits.

"The IRS' thought behind this regulation is that an annuity may have a low contract value but extensive living and death benefits. So let's associate a value to these benefits to get a more accurate depiction for RMD and (ultimately) tax purposes," says Joseph Toledano, Vice President, Business Development at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney. Suppose, for example, a three-year-old annuity contract has a cash value of \$100,000 and death benefits worth an additional \$25,000. In this case, rather than just using \$100,000 for calculating the RMD, the carrier also needs to do a present-value adjustment for the additional death benefits.

Unfortunately, "the calculation is a complicated issue," says Jill Perlin, Vice President, Client Effectiveness and Education, Prudential Annuities. The IRS has only issued "guidelines" on how to make the calculation, and determining the actuarial present value of the additional benefits on top of the contract value varies from carrier to carrier, because each has its own cost and mortality assumptions. In addition, the actuarial present-value calculation does not need to be made if the only additional benefit is a return-of-premium death benefit. Perlin adds, "If another additional benefit is one that would be reduced proportionately in the case of a partial withdrawal, the actuarial present-value calculation could be

disregarded if it is less than 20% of the contract's account value." Note that the calculation is the responsibility of the carrier, and must be provided to the customer.

Advisors need to be particularly cognizant of the special case of "stripped" contracts and the particular dangers posed by RMDs incorporating death benefits in this situation. As Scott Stolz of Raymond James Insurance Group points out, it was not uncommon for many older variable annuities to be designed so that any withdrawal reduced the death benefit dollar for dollar rather than pro-rata. After the market decline of the early 2000s, many advisors "stripped" the annuity, withdrawing funds and allocating them to new investments, often leaving just the death benefit and a minimal account balance.

This results in a lopsided relationship between the death benefit and the account balance. When both are considered for RMD purposes, the account could quickly be drained of assets. Suppose the death benefit on a stripped contract is worth \$50,000 and the account balance is \$5,000; the net-present value for RMD purposes is \$20,000. An RMD at 5% of this is \$1,000 per year. In five years the account value goes to zero, resulting in the elimination of any death benefit, which would be catastrophic for the client. Hence it is important for the advisor to find a way to maintain a minimum account balance. Stolz advises, "People need to be aware it is in the clients best interest to take the RMD from a different asset so they can preserve account value in stripped annuities."

Advisors need to be aware of the entire interest rule and its exceptions and work with their clients' tax advisors to ensure that the proper value is used to determine their clients' RMD on the IRA annuity. ●

Government Affairs Update

by Cathy Weatherford, IRI President and CEO

On July 21, 2010, President Obama signed the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act into law to fundamentally overhaul the financial regulatory system.

Today the Obama Administration is already working on implementation with at least nine agencies. The new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is tasked with writing as many as 70 new regulations; the Commodity Futures Trading Commission could issue 54; the Federal Reserve might write 30; and the SEC could write as many as 205.

While dates are set for implementation, the Administration has already indicated that they will likely miss a number of the deadlines. In addition, the major Republican gains in the midterm elections could have a substantial impact on implementation and will likely result in attempts to repeal part or all of Dodd-Frank. However, with Democrat control of the Senate, and President Obama still in the White House, it will be extremely difficult to make major changes to the legislation. At the Insured Retirement Institute (IRI), we are working with the Administration on



the rulemakings that affect our members, and will continue to work with the Congress as legislation to amend the law is considered.

Overall, the midterm elections validated what political analysts had been predicting: that significant voter discontent with the status quo and concerns about high unemployment and the economy would manifest themselves with a change in power. Voters turned out in droves to bring about a major change in Congress. For the first time in six decades, the minority party gained more than 60 seats in the House of Representatives. Republicans will hold a commanding majority of at least 20 seats or more in the chamber.

In the Senate, strong campaigns by key incumbents preserved the majority control for Democrats. However, voters cut the Democrats' majority by more than half.

Your IRI is already making connections and building relationships with the new members of Congress, regardless of party affiliation. And we will still work with many of the same leaders on financial services and tax issues with whom we have always worked as many of the same members of Congress will remain in key leadership positions. ●

...Boomers *continued from cover*

load, research found that Boomers near retirement have nearly twice the amount of accumulated wealth, with an average-net worth of \$717,000 versus \$444,000 for other non-retired Boomers. The same pattern holds true for the two groups' financial, investable and total assets. In addition, Boomers near retirement have greater balances in their retirement accounts.

At the same time, Boomers near retirement have fewer people depending on them financially. Younger Boomers increasingly have adult children living with them and may also be helping their parents financially, which hinders their ability to focus on their own retirement saving needs.

Because the two groups of Boomers differ so much in their net worth, they also have divergent views of their retirement preparedness. Only two in five Boomers near retirement are worried about outliving their retirement savings. But three in five other non-retired Boomers have the same concern.

Even though they are more prepared financially and psychologically for retirement, Boomers near retirement are concerned about their ability to generate retirement income. They believe it is important that they be able to live on income alone (such as Social Security, pensions and annuities) without touching their principal.

Boomers near retirement are slightly less worried about this issue than other Boomers because they are more likely to have a fully vested pension. Nonetheless, the concern is very real: Only a small percentage of Boomers today have a pension, few members of either Boomer segment owns annuities with guaranteed income features and many are worried about the fate of Social Security.

The Boomer Opportunity

Given these trends, advisors can play an active role in helping their Boomer clients make the transition to retirement. In fact, this generation is already accustomed to getting financial advice from

professionals as roughly two-thirds of all Boomers receive some type of professional advice. However, like other consumers their faith in the financial advice profession has been shaken by the financial crisis.

Advisors who can position themselves as having their finger on the pulse of Boomers' retirement concerns and be able to offer the appropriate solutions will make themselves invaluable in helping Boomers achieve retirement success.

For younger Boomers, advisors can help identify saving opportunities such as financially disentangling themselves from helping parents and adult children, as that's one of the biggest obstacles to saving adequate amounts for retirement. The advisor able to help Boomer clients ramp up their savings will be called upon to play a role in helping manage those assets.

Since Boomers near retirement are so focused on living on income, advisors can help craft a retirement income strategy that includes a variety of products. For example, advisors may want to consider combining guaranteed income sources such as annuities to cover fixed and essential expenses with other investments to cover nonessential expenses that can be ratcheted up or down depending on market performance or their clients' personal situation.

The challenges and opportunities for financial advisors working with Baby Boomers are enormous. However, financial professionals must begin thinking about retirement differently for their Boomer clients because Boomers themselves are thinking differently than generations past. Traditional products and services, marketing and delivery may not necessarily work for this generation. Because of the financial crisis, Boomers are likely to stay on the job longer in order to make up lost ground, so advisors have a few years to formulate a plan for how they will cater to this group. Ultimately, though, they will need to present products and services that will address the unique circumstances of Boomer retirement. ●

To purchase the report, "Boomers Nearing Retirement," as well as browse other timely research, please visit www.myIRionline.org.

...3 Questions *continued from page B2***How are you applying what you learned during the crisis in your business today?**

At Sun Life Financial, we've always taken a conservative approach to delivering products, which makes us resilient. I'm proud of who we are and our position of strength, which has been, and will continue to be, key to delivering value.

With everyone more sensitive to risk and loss, we have a greater responsibility and opportunity to help investors get back into the market.

Our tremendous sales talent is focused on and committed to empowering our intermediary partners with the right tools and insight to restore client confidence. We also have our relationship management team front and center with customer-centric initiatives, including the new Sun Life Institute, to increase market share and positioning.

How can advisors apply what you learned to make their futures successful?

Advisors have a tremendous opportunity to offer hope and certainty to their clients with the variable annuity and life protection solutions available today. Advisors can be heroes if they can comfort people and show them the way to act now in order to secure their financial future.

More than ever, advisors can look to a wholesaler as a trusted partner. Today's wholesalers, with stronger partnerships and simpler solutions, are better equipped to help advisors address the unique concerns of their clients. ●

Terry Mullen is President of Sun Life Financial Distributors.

NOW AVAILABLE: **an *industry wide solution***

for the NAIC Model Annuity Suitability Regulation

The Insured Retirement Institute (IRI), in partnership with RegEd, is offering an **industry wide solution** for the NAIC Model Suitability Regulation annuity training requirements. The IRI training platform will provide:

- ✓ **Industry driven solution** — 70+ industry leaders engaged in the development process.
- ✓ **A seamless solution** — “one-stop” connection between insurers, advisors and regulators and includes product-specific training, as well as state-approved required training.
- ✓ **Compliance** — ensures that mandates are met for both the four-hour course and the product-specific training required by the NAIC Annuity Suitability Regulation.
- ✓ **Convenience** — ability to print certificates of completion online (if necessary), 24/7.
- ✓ **Minimal impact** — to business workflow and to consumers who rely on the products for guaranteed income.
- ✓ **A centralized location** — advisors can complete all required training for participating companies and view the status of compliance with the Model Regulation (including any updated training posted to the site subsequent the initial training) and insurers and broker/dealers can publish and update their product-specific training.
- ✓ **Timeliness** — an email notification system enables insurers to notify advisors of new or updated product-specific training requirements and customized tools to help insurers and broker/dealers meet their compliance requirements.

Beneficial to the industry and consumers alike, this IRI training platform provides an industry wide solution that meets the critical need of our industry to fulfill these new educational requirements in a way that will ensure minimal impact on both the industry and the consumers who rely on insured retirement strategies for guaranteed income.

To date, Iowa’s requirement begins January 1, 2011, and Wisconsin begins May 1, with more states to follow.

For more information about the industry wide solution, please visit www.IRIonline.org.

