

TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE DELIVERY AND PAYMENT

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS DRIVE CULTURAL BUY-IN AND CONSUMER PREFERENCE

By Jeffrey Remsik, President/CEO
Bottom Line Marketing & Public Relations

Healthcare systems across America are facing major transformations in the way care is delivered, reimbursed and judged for its quality. As you prepare and execute your system strategy in anticipation of these changes, consider these insights:

"Communication is considered a measure of quality planning (APQC 1996). Companies that excel ... ensure that communication of both the plan and the planning process occurs at all levels of the organization, is strongly supported and is a formal and significant element of the process.

*"Senior managers also should devote attention to the cultural change required when introducing a new process. This includes instilling a spirit of debate that gives managers across hierarchical levels permission to identify and communicate uncomfortable truths and to question the assumptions on which strategies are built (Rothschild, Balaban, and Duggal 2004) The importance of creating a culture that supports planning and adapts readily to change cannot be overemphasized." **

You know from your own experience how important clear and consistent communication is to your leadership team's ability to effectively execute around your business strategy and decisions. Imagine having a communications partner with the experience, expertise and skills to make your strategy more effective by fostering an environment where:

- Clinicians and staff embrace continuous quality improvements that drive greater efficiency by eliminating waste and preventing errors in the processes to treat your patients;

- Employees understand and value how what they do in their non-clinical jobs everyday affects the quality and cost of care delivered to your patients;
- Employers and patients want to receive care at your facilities because you are positioned as the best value in the marketplace, based on the quality of care and positive outcomes for your patients;
- Public officials hold you up as an example of how healthcare is healing itself and cite your quality and cost when proposing changes to the way government pays for healthcare through Medicaid and Medicare by rewarding value over volume.

There is no learning curve at Bottom Line Marketing & Public Relations, Inc. We have the relevant expertise to help as you focus your planning, strategy and execution around the cost, quality and value transformations. Since 2002, we have worked with several of the leaders in this movement, including ThedaCare, www.thedacare.org, and helped create the Wisconsin Collaborative for Healthcare Quality, www.wchq.org and the Wisconsin Health Information Organization (see enclosed Fact Sheet).

At Bottom Line, our talented team:

- Understands the issues, challenges and the politics (internally and externally)
- Keeps its collective fingers on the pulse of these emerging trends
- Provides open access to an impressive network of industry connections

BOTTOM LINE
Marketing & Public Relations
600 W. Virginia St., Suite 100
Milwaukee, WI 53204-1551
414-270-3000 414-270-3015 fax
www.blmpr.com

We know how to translate complex concepts about health reform, reimbursement, quality, transparency into useful and meaningful explanations that resonate with employees, clinicians, community leaders and, most importantly, patients.

In the enclosed folder, we included some examples of the communication channels and messages. The ThedaCare Report Out summary is part of the standard work used when public officials and community leaders attend the weekly sessions. The Intranet and the monthly employee newsletter are two examples of channels used to communicate regularly with employees about the progress and results of their continuous quality improvement work. For the past two years, each issue of the newsletter highlights new achievements in continuous quality improvement to sustain internal momentum.

Our expertise and skills help innovative healthcare organizations like ThedaCare tell their unique stories in ways that affect what key internal and external stakeholders think, feel, say and do when it comes to:

- Choosing their facilities and services
- Believing in their people and processes
- Buying into their brand and reputation

Our work produces measurable results and builds long-term relationships for our clients. We link strategic thinking and creative ideas with tactics that get the job done. We use best practices to make efficient use of time and resources because we value both. It's easy to work with us. We meet our deadlines, and we keep our promises. That's our bottom line.

** Raising the Bar: Best Practices for Healthcare Strategic Planning,*
Alan M. Zuckerman, Society for Healthcare Strategy & Market
Development of the American Hospital Association, 2007

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