

Now is the Time to Leverage Goodwill for Better Payer Contracts

While healthcare organizations are taking huge financial hits from the COVID-19 pandemic, national health insurance companies are posting record profits.

Sounds like a good time for you, as a provider, to take a hard look at your managed care strategy. And healthcare consumers agree. A recent national survey found that providers hold a nearly 30-point advantage over insurance companies when trust is measured.

Frankly, you've sealed your community's trust during this ongoing health crisis – with your caregivers rightfully re-named “healthcare heroes.” That hard-earned goodwill can be appropriately leveraged when negotiating new payer agreements, enabling you to shore up your organization's financial footing as you continue confronting future health challenges.

We can help.

Our track record delivering managed care success is unbeatable. That's because we infuse the power of communication with the politics of people.



STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS TO SUPPORT PAYER NEGOTIATIONS

We view this work through the lens of a political campaign. We start by partnering with your team to define the win. Then, together, we map out advanced planning to frame the issue with stakeholders who matter most. Your custom campaign includes:



Seizing this unique COVID-19 opportunity.

Acting now – while the media is focused on the staggering profits payers are enjoying – is essential to securing more favorable contracts.



Targeting outreach before negotiations go public.

Maintain that upper hand by getting your story out first to employers, brokers and elected leaders. Such engagement builds understanding, support and adds needed pressure on insurers.



Delivering clear, cadenced internal communication.

Ensure that your team understands what's at stake in the negotiations so they are aligned, supportive and even champions of the effort. After all, they embody your mission of protecting patients' access to care.



Reaching out proactively to patients and media.

Frame your issues first with high-road, patient-care focused messages that – while assertive – match your organization's positive culture. Experience proves scorched-Earth campaigns fail.

Client Success Stories

Strategically Going Out-of-Network in Key Market



CHALLENGE: A national health services provider was seeking its first rate increase in more than a decade. In one key market, the provider needed to engage in payer negotiations without alienating patients or disrupting partner businesses.

SOLUTION: Our communications plan anticipated potential outcomes and framed the issue on the provider's terms. We created an informational website, and trained a clinician to be the organization's "face and voice" during negotiations.

RESULT: The provider was able to make the strategic decision to remain out of network with no loss of patient volume and minimal backlash or negative coverage.

Advantageous Outcome for a Statewide Payer Dispute



CHALLENGE: A national for-profit healthcare provider made the strategic decision to be more aggressive in payer contract negotiations. For the first time ever, the organization needed to spin up a multi-disciplinary team and run a coordinated, statewide campaign that remained consistent with their company culture.

SOLUTION: Our team coordinated efforts between corporate leadership and the in-market team. We developed a ratcheted-up, two-track communications strategy that delivered positive messaging about the organization's role in the community and prepared leadership to successfully navigate a public dispute with the payer.

RESULT: The company closed the rate gap for physicians and secured stronger language to prevent policy manual changes. Feedback from the community was positive, helping to maintain the reputation of the provider.

Reaching Payer Deal before Tight Deadline



CHALLENGE: A major regional health system faced a challenging public negotiation with their largest commercial payer. The payer embarked on a public campaign to paint the provider as expensive and not value-focused. At the same time, local elected leaders questioned the need for not-for-profit status.

SOLUTION: We launched a targeted campaign to large insurance brokers and employers, creating a groundswell of support. We also positioned the organization as solutions-oriented in media engagement, highlighted pandemic, and shifted the spotlight onto the payer's record profits.

RESULT: A new contract was signed with no out-of-network period and without any disruptions in care for patients. Additionally, the system was correctly positioned as solutions-oriented and patient-focused within its community.

Community Hospital Success with Largest Commercial Payer



CHALLENGE: A successful community hospital serving a large geographic area needed to renegotiate its contract with the state's largest commercial payer. In a David vs. Goliath matchup, the hospital pursued a new, fair contract with rate increases to put them in line with industry norms.

SOLUTION: We launched a public goodwill campaign to build reputational equity for the hospital and its caregivers ahead of the public dispute, activating the board and physicians as advocates. Leadership regularly updated employees and patients about quality care during the transition.

RESULT: The hospital signed a new, five-year contract, increased public awareness of the essential care provided by the facility and maintained patient volumes during a brief out-of-network period.

Interested in learning more?

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