

touchpoints

Connecting you to the Heritage Provider Network

Issue 20 | Winter 2015



Setting Heritage Apart **The Five Star Quality Rating System**

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We're making a difference across Southern California! Heritage Provider Network groups receive awards from Integrated Healthcare Association Awards (IHA). Find out more on page 4.

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Targeted quality measures that support our goals of better care, healthier communities, and lower costs through improvements are the goals of HPN – and

what the Five Star Quality Rating System is all about. The quality measures we follow as an organization span several broad domains, including outcomes, intermediate outcomes, patient experience, access, and process.

In this issue, you'll learn more about the Star program and how our physicians can benefit from the resources, education, and assistance we provide to help them provide top-notch patient care.

You'll also read about Heritage Victor Valley Medical Group's childhood obesity program, *In It To Thin It* that is helping teenagers achieve weight loss and healthier lifestyles.

We have many programs and services that truly make a difference in the lives of our members. The year 2015 is already promising to be a fantastic one.

Richard Merkin, M.D.
President and CEO of HPN

Setting Heritage Apart: The Five Star system reflects improved patient

Affordable and preventive care. A positive patient experience from beginning to end. Robust quality improvement markers.

All of these factors – and more – are at the core of Heritage Provider Network's (HPN) participation in the Five Star Quality Rating System for Medicare Advantage (MA) Plans.

This ratings system was originally created by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in 2008 as a tool for consumers to evaluate Medicare health plans based on quality. Meeting or exceeding the five star metrics signifies to providers, patients, and health plans that Heritage is committed to providing quality health care to all members across the entire network.

HPN's integrated approach to the management of healthcare fuels 30-plus years of service area expansion and membership growth. Since 1995, HPN has had a 12.4 percent compounded growth rate. This growth is significant of the high levels of quality provided across the organization.

"We are leaders in the health care field and our success is congruent with how we are growing," said Dr. Syed Hasan, chief medical director. "That enormous expansion and ongoing achievement across Southern California is what is reflected in our positive Star scores and quality measures."

How does the program work?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Ratings are based on 36 criteria, including preventive care, managing chronic conditions, customer service, and member satisfaction. CMS evaluates and scores each on a scale of 1 to 5 stars, 5 stars representing the highest quality of care.

The ratings data is obtained from a variety of sources, including Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) and surveys from state and federal entities. These surveys assess each physician's office by asking patients questions about their visits – focusing on quality of care and patient satisfaction.

CMS also develops and administers patient experience surveys that patients use to rate their experience with health care providers and plans. The patient's perception of quality is broken down by quality of care delivery (systems and services) and quality of delivered care (outcomes). Excellent services coupled with great outcome equals retention and recruitment of happy and satisfied members and providers.

A core principle of healthcare reform is the creation of a healthcare system where there is better care, healthier communities, and lower costs through improvements.



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Star Quality Rating System

care and outcome

Helping providers achieve high ratings

What else does this mean for physicians who are part of HPN?
As a Heritage provider, the physicians receive ongoing support, education, and information about what can be done in the office to impact the ratings. At Regal Medical Group, Lakeside Community Healthcare, Greater Covina Medical Group, and ADOC Medical Group, the STAR team organizes outreach to providers and patients. They mail information to patients, call patients, send non-compliant lists to providers, and work with provider offices to send in correct notes for quality measures.

The Star team works hard to ensure that our metrics are met. The outreach they conduct and the time they spend helping improve outcomes plays a significant part in the success of the Star program.

— Stacey Brenner, M.D.



Examples of the team's outreaches include:

- ✔ **Breast cancer screening:** Contacts members to assist with breast cancer screening and inputs authorizations, makes appointments, and follows up to ensure the total circle of care.
- ✔ **Diabetes:** Mails each diabetic patient a checklist of yearly recommendations (i.e., eye and foot exams, kidney and cholesterol tests, and Hgb A1c). In October, the team calls patients who have not received either an Hgb A1c and/or LDL test to order it for them, and assists in scheduling the appointment with the lab.
- ✔ **Colon cancer screening:** Mails out FIT kits directly to patients who have not had appropriate colon cancer screening.
- ✔ **Recent fractures:** Assists in obtaining a DEXA or bone density test for women aged 67 and older with recent fractures. The team inputs the authorization, works with the patient to schedule appointments, and coordinates with other appointments/radiology studies.
- ✔ **Special needs patients:** Completes the “Care of Older Adult” measures by calling patients, then completes a pain survey, functional status assessment, and medication reconciliation. The team also works with provider offices to complete the assessments on their patients when they are in the office.



Creating a healthcare experience culture

At Desert Oasis Healthcare (DOHC), the group has worked hard to create an overall culture that begins with the healthcare experience. They have patient-centered health education programs, specialized case management support, individualized pharmacist assistance for patients with medical concerns, as well as compassionate primary care providers.

“When we are successful, patients are committed to doing what needs to be done, and quality measure scores are merely reflections of the quality care that patients are receiving by our organization,” said Teresa L. Hodgkins, Pharm.D., Associate Vice President, Clinical Performance and Outcome. “We consistently perform well on quality metrics because we know, when it comes to supporting our patients best, it takes a village of caring.”

For the first time, quality is on equal footing with clinical measures. The patient’s perception of their care, which is very subjective, is just as important as clinical outcomes in determining our rating. We want to foster an office culture where our patients leave the encounter with the perception of five-star service.

— Kenneth Epstein, MD

Quality Improvement Medical Director

»» LATEST NEWS

HPN groups receive awards from Integrated Healthcare Association Awards (IHA)

HPN is making a difference across Southern California! The Integrated Healthcare Association (IHA) is a statewide multi-stakeholder leadership group that promotes quality improvement, accountability, and affordability of healthcare in California. In recent weeks, three HPN groups received awards for their STAR score achievements.

An outside agency recognizing HPN’s efforts is a significant accomplishment. — Stacey Brenner, M.D.



Sierra Medical Group



True Stories of CalMediConnect

HPN has created a specialized outreach and service program to meet the unique needs of the Cal MediConnect duals population. The program includes multilingual support, a dedicated member service department, an expanded provider network, and specially-trained member advocates who engage, educate, and assist our duals members in the community. Below is a true story from the point of view of a member advocate.



Paul's Story: Looking Up

Things had been tough for Paul. As a result of a devastating health condition, he had lost everything, including his family and girlfriend. He had minimal income and never really left the house. He was having scary thoughts. It wasn't until I visited Paul to tell him about his Cal MediConnect benefits that Paul began talking. There was finally someone who wanted to listen.

I realized that Paul needed help, and quickly. I told Paul that there was a whole team to help him get healthy and back on track. I called a hotline and scheduled a time that day for them to come by and get Paul the assistance he needed. While waiting, we chatted and I set up his free cell phone so he could be connected to his new care team. I also gave him my contact information.

We watered his plants on the patio, drank coffee together, and talked about whatever came to mind. Before long, the team arrived and all sat down with Paul, myself, and Paul's friend, who had just come over.

The team was able to provide Paul with the help he needed with continued, ongoing access and assistance to appropriate medical care. Paul called me a few days later. "You gave me hope," Paul said. "I just came back from a long walk. It was the first time I left my house in two weeks."



Margie and Dave Yuwiler

Part of the Family

The CareXChange program is a volunteer service provided to all senior members – putting them in touch with a volunteer who provides a friendly "check in" once a week. The volunteers also help on ACO trips to fun places like museums, casinos, and theaters.

Long before the program started, volunteers Margie Yuwiler and her son Dave were assisting on ACO trips and other projects. Recently, Dave even stepped in and helped another department, and both of them volunteered their time on a mailing that went out to other ACO members.

"Margie and Dave aren't just volunteers. They are part of our ACO family," said Laurie Torres, volunteer manager. "They go above and beyond. We're truly appreciative."

»» VOLUNTEER UPDATE

24th Annual Senior Expo Roaring Success

High Desert Medical Group

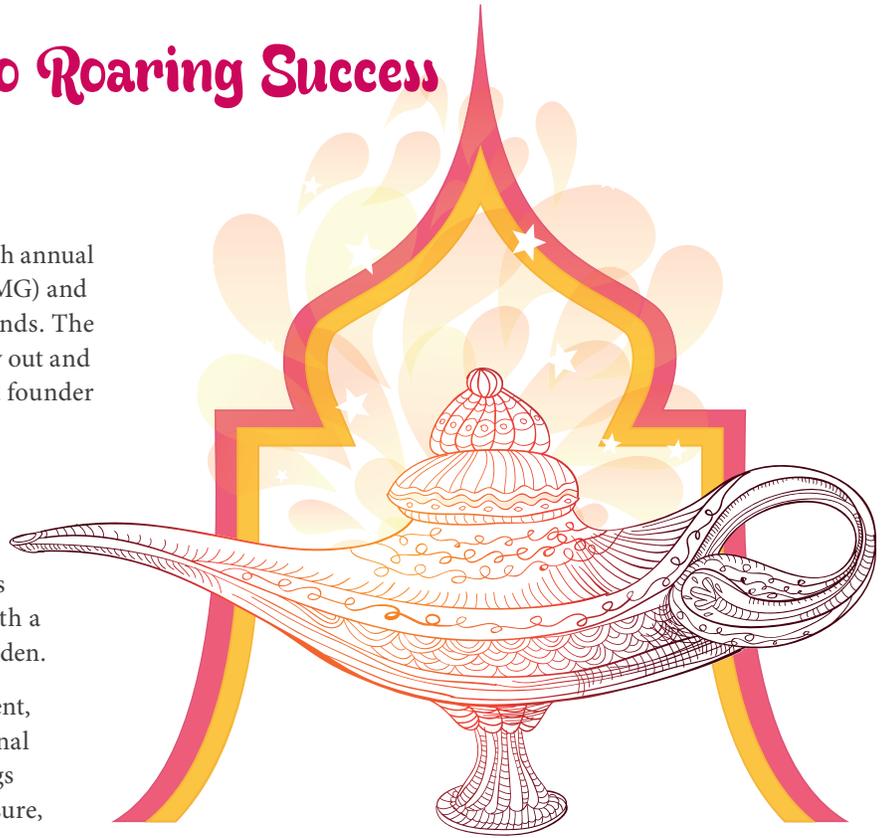
More than 7,000 seniors recently attended the recent 24th annual Senior Expo held by High Desert Medical Group (HDMG) and Heritage Health Care at the Antelope Valley Fairgrounds. The day was free of charge to seniors in continuing to carry out and preserve the vision of Dr. Richard Merkin, owner and founder of HDMG, that “seniors in the community are able to participate and enjoy, free of charge, a day focused on their health and well-being.”

Embellished with flying carpets, genies and magical lamps, HDMG’s theme for this year’s Senior Expo was “Dreams are the Key to Life,” which was enhanced with a special celebrity guest appearance by actress Barbara Eden.

The Senior Expo offered a full day of local entertainment, giveaways, free bingo, free health screenings and seasonal flu shots for seniors age 62 and over. Health screenings included bone density, cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure, vision screening and more.

The event had more than 110 vendor booths, offering attendees information and resources to assist them in leading a more energetic and productive senior lifestyle. For the first time, seniors who were 60 years and older received a free lunch co-sponsored by the City of Lancaster. City staff members served more than 2,500 turkey dogs along with a cup of fruit.

In addition, Antelope Ambulance provided seniors a free shuttle service within the fairground campus, and Antelope Valley Transit Authority shuttled seniors from local senior centers to the event. Health plan sales representatives were available with 2015 benefit options and enrollment information to help seniors make informed decisions about their health coverage for the coming year.



Other highlights: The “Senior of the Year” award that recognized Virginia Draper, a 96-year-old senior, for her contributions to the community while fostering 12 children and the second annual “Veteran’s Community Service Award” that was presented in collaboration with the Office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich.

“The Senior Expo is just one example of HDMG’s continued effort to provide quality and excellence to the senior community,” said Annette Vela, marketing director. “While the main focus of the expo is to disseminate information regarding health care options, as well as gain knowledge about their health, seniors also come to reunite with old friends and meet new people.”



In It To Thin It Program Makes Great Strides

Heritage Victor Valley Medical Group



Tackling the issue of childhood obesity – and doing something about it – is the goal of Heritage Valley Medical Group’s (HVVMG) program *In It To Thin It*, now in its third year. Guided by pediatricians and HVVMG, the weight loss program for overweight teens helps them lose

weight, exercise, and make permanent lifestyle changes – and has dramatically changed the lives of more than 150 teenagers and their families.

To qualify for the program, students sign up through their high school and undergo a health screening to ensure they are able to participate (i.e., age, gender, BMI measurement, and other tests). The participants work with a team of professionals throughout the course of the program. For three days a week, they work out and have competitions and rallies through the local high school; they are also educated on nutrition, portion sizes, and their food choices.

Childhood obesity contributes to a myriad of issues, including chronic conditions like heart, kidney, and systemic diseases such as diabetes, says Pediatrician Gunjeet Kala Ahluwalia, MD, who works directly with teens on the program. “In addition to monitoring participants’ progress on a medical level, we would like to help children understand why their health is important and how it affects their lives,” she said. “Our goal is to help them take ownership of their well-being both physically and emotionally to truly create a lifestyle change for the better.”

“The way In It To Thin It changed my life physically and mentally was by helping me lose 73 pounds. It helped me become even more attractive. And, by helping me achieve my goal, it showed me that I can do anything I set my mind to.”

— Luis, program participant

Heritage Provider Network Affiliated Medical Groups

One of the largest integrated physician associations in Southern California

- › **ADOC Medical Group**
www.adoc.us | Phone: 800.747.2362
Counties Served: Central and North Orange County
Total Number of Contracted Physicians: 1,000+
- › **Bakersfield Family Medical Center**
www.bfmc.com | Phone: 661.327.4411
Counties Served: Serving all of Kern County.
Total Number of Contracted Physicians: 400+
- › **Coastal Communities Physician Network**
www.ccpnhpn.com | Phone: 800.604.8752
Counties Served: San Luis Obispo and Tulare.
Total Number of Contracted Physicians: 600+
- › **Desert Oasis Healthcare**
www.mydohc.com | Phone: 760.320.5134
Counties Served: Imperial, Riverside & San Bernardino.
Total Number of Contracted Physicians: 500+
- › **Heritage Victor Valley Medical Group**
www.hvvmg.com | Phone: 760.245.4747
Counties Served: Los Angeles and San Bernardino.
Total Number of Contracted Physicians: 200+
- › **High Desert Medical Group**
www.hdmg.net | Phone: 661.945.5984
Counties Served: Los Angeles and Kern.
Total Number of Contracted Physicians: 275+
- › **Lakeside Medical Group**
www.lakesidemed.com | Phone: 818.637.2000
Counties Served: Los Angeles, Ventura, Riverside and San Bernardino.
Total Number of Contracted Physicians: 2,350+
- › **Regal Medical Group**
www.regalmed.com | Phone: 866.654.3471
Counties Served: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura.
Total Number of Contracted Physicians: 12,100+
- › **Sierra Medical Group**
www.sierramedicalgoup.com | Phone: 661.945.9411
Counties Served: Kern, Los Angeles and San Bernardino.
Total Number of Contracted Physicians: 100+

Members of the Heritage Provider Network:



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**The Five Star
Quality Rating System**

IN THIS ISSUE: In this issue: HPN has high standards of care and quality measures that are vigorously followed. How does the Five Star Rating Program work – and how does it affect care? Get updated on page 2.

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