

# touchpoints

Connecting you to the Heritage Provider Network

Issue 9 | Nov/Dec 2012



## Strive for the Prize

Competition and Leadership  
Fuel HPN's Executive Retreat

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**The Medicare Annual Election Period is October 15 through December 7 this year.**

Heritage can connect members and providers to resources that can help them understand their benefit options. *Continued...*P6

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Our recent Leadership and Innovation Conference left me both energized and inspired. This annual retreat encourages our HPN leadership to think outside the box as they envision

the future of healthcare, and helps them develop solutions for more innovative care delivery. This year we decided to shake up the format, forgoing our usual outside presenters, and instead tasked our leadership team to motivate each other through collaboration and competition.

The “Strive for the Prize” competition challenged HPN leadership to form teams to tackle important initiatives, including patient experience/customer service, data management and case management. This competition provided the perfect vehicle to foster camaraderie and team building. But, it was not all fun and games. Our team members were able to identify real-world solutions to the real-world issues we face in the delivery of care to our patients.

I want to congratulate the winner, the members of the Referral Management Blue Team. All the teams are to be commended for their thoughtful and creative contributions to solving their challenges. Our leadership teams demonstrated the enthusiasm and ability to think beyond the bounds of convention. This will serve us well in our commitment to develop and implement effective, innovative healthcare delivery that benefits both our providers and our members.

As we head into the holiday season, I wish you and yours health and prosperity.

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



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# Striving for the Prize

## HPN discovers new ways to achieve goals through competition.

Key leaders from Heritage Provider Network and its affiliates came together late September in Palos Verdes, California to share knowledge, experience and camaraderie. This year, our annual symposium took a new direction, with participants actively competing to develop innovative, realistic solutions to further key strategic initiatives. Topics for the competition closely mirrored the corporate initiatives set during the 2011 retreat.

During previous retreats, outside resources had been used to educate and inspire HPN leadership. The 2012 conference shifted the focus, calling upon the HPN leadership to draw upon their own talents and expertise to collaborate, engage and inspire each other in the spirit of friendly competition.

The competition, entitled “*Strive for the Prize*,” divided participants into ten teams. The teams squared off to tackle five critical company initiatives; Patient Experience/Customer Service, Data Management, Operational Initiatives, Inpatient/Outpatient Case Management and Referral Process Management. Two teams were assigned to compete over each initiative. Presentations were judged on creativity, conceptual innovation, feasibility of implementation and the projected organizational improvement, with prizes awarded to the best team for each initiative, and best overall team. Participants enjoyed the competition and appreciated the prizes, but all agreed that the best part of the experience was the chance to learn from and educate other members of the HPN family.

The competition was filled with a variety of presentations. Some were formal, others more whimsical. Many teams employed skits, animation, media clips and other entertaining elements to capture the audience while articulating their solution. Every team brought something valuable to the stage and

*“The annual Heritage executive retreat exemplifies the spirit of leadership at HPN. It demonstrates the innovative thinking and talent of the HPN groups and the team competition provides us the forum to share ideas and to incorporate best practices amongst all companies. This motivated me to re-examine our strategies in order to achieve best practices.”*

– *Syed Hasan M.D.*  
Senior Regional Medical Director



judges were often hard-pressed to select individual initiative winners. However, judges were unanimous in their pick for overall competition winner – conferring the honor to the overachieving **Referral Management Blue Team** for not only defining, but actually building a working prototype of the best solution – an Android application for referral submission and management.



**Team Blue** were declared the winners based upon these criteria:

- **Presentation clarity** – took a complex topic and made it simple to understand, with clearly defined challenges and viable solutions.
- **Technological innovation** – Creating and demonstrating an application that streamlined a complex referral process.
- **Scalability, practicality & positive impact** – Demonstrated the real world usefulness of the proposed solution.

With the competition behind us, the real work now begins; taking the best of the ideas, integrating them with our internal operations and sharing them with our physician partners. By deploying these concepts, we hope to improve patient and physician experience, increase partner satisfaction and value, all while providing better quality care.

## Six Key Initiatives for 2013

- › **Customer Service**  
Develop unique programs and assure quality to create growth and retention.
- › **Prior Authorization**  
Develop a universal platform to streamline and improve referral management.
- › **Operational Initiatives**  
Identify and leverage standardized functional improvement opportunities across all organizations.
- › **Inpatient Management**  
Standardize care management for hospitalized patients for optimized outcome and service.
- › **Serving our Special Needs Population (SNP)**  
Develop programs customized to meet the needs of this rapidly growing patient subset.
- › **Data Management**  
Standardize metrics and data use to create universal systems and platforms for overall performance improvement.





## From the Winner's Circle

Enhancing efficiencies in the referral process through technology



**The grand prize winners in this year's HPN retreat Strive for the Prize competition meant business.** The Referral Management Blue Team, led by Leo R. Icarangal III, Senior Director, Operations for HPN's New York based affiliate group, ran away with the win.

**Their Assignment:** Overcome challenges impeding timely and accurate referral request submissions.

**The Solution:** A fully functioning smartphone application designed to eliminate guesswork and waste from the referral submission process.

The main challenge in the current authorization process, according to Team Blue, is **the length of time it takes for complete referral requests with supporting documentation to get into the queue for review.** Current methods, which range from faxes and phone entry to online submission, all fall short in some respect. For example, faxes are unreliable and slow and many providers are still resistant to providing updated computers and internet access to their office staff. Conversely, most providers and staff do have smart phones and tablets with a prevalence of Android users.

Building upon an existing Android app used by provider relations department in New York to document service calls, Leo and his team were able to develop a fully-functional authorization submission app in a matter of days. They demonstrated the app in competition, wowing both judges and audience members with a range of functionality that includes:

- **Built in security**, tying provider phone number to permission levels and providing secure upload to a Web portal which can work in real time to feed directly to authorization system like EZ Cap/Express Access.

- **Simplified, intuitive pull down diagnosis and procedure code listings** – eliminating entry error and invalid codes.
- **Simplified, intuitive pull down lists** for referred to providers searchable by specialty and name.
- **Enables end-user to photograph supporting documentation** with their phone or tablet and bundle for submission with the referral request.
- **Ability to easily and quickly customize the application**, providing only the necessary granularity and options.
- **Automatic, highly customizable queue prioritization.**

After enjoying a few hours of well-deserved celebration, Leo and his development team set to work on a pilot to test and refine the application for real world implementation. HPN affiliates are mobilizing to deploy and test the app in pilot with the goal of offering the application to HPN network physicians by mid 2013.

*Congratulations Team Blue for your amazing achievement!*



Simple Interface

Conditional Questions

Photograph Medical Records

Android and Apple iOS

Only Preferred Providers

Multiple Lookup Functions

Forms Developed Internally

Easily Modifiable

Uses Only Current Codes

*Success of mobile application developed in-house could lead to a full web-based application.*

# Reflecting on the Leadership Retreat

## Inspired and energized for 2013

*“The most recent leadership retreat was competitively enjoyable. Teams were comprised of staff from each of the HPN affiliated groups. The teams competed in presenting new innovations or conceptual innovations. Being teamed up with other HPN staff that we would not normally interface with was a very valuable experience. **After going into “battle” with these new comrades you walk away with a bond that wouldn’t be realized simply by meeting these people at a meeting.** I now have several new people in my healthcare world that I can consult with, bounce ideas off, and acquire opinions from to assist me in facing the challenges and battles of the healthcare world we all live in.*

*As always Dr. Merkin brought in fantastic key note speakers. After listening to these esteemed speakers and learning more about the activities of our own Dr. Merkin, it’s impossible not to walk away from these retreats truly inspired and re-energized. One of the greatest challenges of these retreats is to somehow carry that stoked fire back to the office and pass it on to those that weren’t fortunate enough to share in the experiences first hand.”*

– **Rick Howells, Sr. Director of IPA Operations**  
Heritage Victor Valley Medical Group

*“A key take home message from this year’s HPN UM Summit, “Strive for the Prize” was that success is best achieved through a shared approach. Although each group is competitive in nature, this year we learned to take our groups’ successes and collaborate to create new ones – Innovate!*

*Also, as each group develops strategies to improve quality, the desire to maintain a competitive edge can at times create “blind spots” for leaders. **Therefore, as we seek opportunities for change, we must encourage our staff to participate in our quest for innovative solutions.** And as was demonstrated by the overall team prize winner, begin with the end in mind – Win!”*

– **Rafael Gonzalez, M.S., Administrator**  
High Desert Medical Group

*“I appreciated the opportunity to work with colleagues from all of HPN’s affiliate groups, each of whom brought varying expertise and experience to our team. Our team was the “Outpatient Referral Management Team – White” and was composed of physicians and nurses already well vested in their existing referral processes, as well as others who were peripherally familiar with the process. **All team members, regardless of the role they have within HPN, participated in the process and offered valuable input.** Perspectives and ideas voiced by our non-clinical HPN experts from IT and other HPN Operations areas were often the most innovative. As one of those “clinical folks” I referenced earlier, I can attest that it was because of the diversity in our team’s composition that our outcome was unique.”*

– **Tom Rancilio, RN, Utilization Management**  
Desert Oasis Health Care

*“Being relatively new to HPN, this was my first UM Summit and team competition; the retreat provided a great opportunity to meet and interact with many of the talented and creative people working for HPN. I was impressed with all of the team efforts and the clearly apparent dedication to Dr. Merkin and the Organization as a whole. **I was inspired by Dr. Merkin’s encouragement to continue to “think outside the box” and by Dr. Diamandis’ presentation on X-Prize on the last day of the retreat. I am very proud to be part of the HPN family.**”*

– **Carol Sorrell, Chief Operating Officer**  
Bakersfield Family Medical Center/Heritage Physician Network  
Coastal Communities Physician Network

# Heritage in the News

## Dr. Richard Merkin selected for the Economist Magazine, Economist Intelligence Unit Report

Dr. Richard Merkin, President and CEO of HPN, is the only global healthcare CEO selected for the Economist Magazine, Economist Intelligence Unit report, "Big Data-Lessons from Leaders" published September 21, 2012. The prestigious report explores how data currently shapes the business landscape, and Dr. Merkin discusses the data driven \$3 million Heritage Health Prize and the importance of attracting and retaining qualified talent ensuring continued overall company success.

## Dr. Richard Merkin announces the \$100,000 Progress Prize Winners

Richard Merkin, President and CEO of Heritage Provider Network, recently named one of the global 10 most innovative companies in healthcare for 2012 by "Fast Company Magazine," announced the winners of the \$100,000 third progress prize in the \$3 million Heritage Health Prize ([www.heritagehealthprize.com](http://www.heritagehealthprize.com)) on Tuesday, October 23, 2012 at the CrowdConf in San Francisco, California. ([www.crowdconf.com](http://www.crowdconf.com))

The Heritage Health Prize is the world's largest predictive modeling contest, challenging entrants to create an algorithm that predicts how many days a patient will spend in the hospital. Created, developed and sponsored by Dr. Richard Merkin, the goal is to decrease the number of avoidable hospitalizations, saving the country over \$40 billion in healthcare costs. The prize is larger than the Nobel Prize for Medicine and the Gates Health Prize.

*"We are very excited that at the 18 month mark, The Heritage Health Prize has globally attracted over 23,500 entries reinforcing to us the importance of incentivizing competitions in the healthcare sector,"* said Dr. Merkin. *"As we move forward toward the end of the contest, I truly believe we have found a way to create a global community of problem solvers who can help solve our country's \$2 trillion healthcare crisis."*

## Heritage Provider Network YouTube Channel

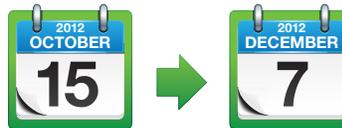
Check out HPN and Dr. Merkin's exclusive videos at the Heritage Provider Network YouTube Channel. Tune in by visiting [www.youtube.com/hpnhealth](http://www.youtube.com/hpnhealth) for the latest news and updates.

Do you have questions about **Medicare** or **Health Plan** coverage ?

We can refer members and providers to resources that can help them understand the benefit options.

For questions about Medicare or Health Plan coverage, or to RSVP for informational meetings in your area, contact the affiliated group in your area to be referred to a regional qualified benefits specialist.

- › **Affiliated Doctors of Orange County**  
888.268.1912
- › **Bakersfield Family Medical Center (BFMC) and Coastal Communities Physician Network (CCPN)**  
661.846.4662
- › **Desert Oasis Healthcare**  
800.500.5215
- › **Heritage Victor Valley Medical Group**  
760.261.1496
- › **High Desert Medical Group (HDMG)**  
661.951.3046
- › **Regal Medical Group & Lakeside Community Healthcare Patient & Provider Assistance Line (PAL)**  
888.787.1712
- › **Sierra Medical Group**  
661.273.7346



**The Medicare Advantage Annual Election Period is October 15 through December 7 this year.** This is the period of time when members may be allowed to make certain changes and/or additions to their Medicare health plan coverage.

The Heritage Provider Network family would like to wish all our members, providers and partners a very safe, healthy and happy holiday season.

We are grateful that you have chosen to be a part of our healthcare family. Your vitality and health is the measure of our success.

As we go forth into the New Year, our Purpose will remain the same; We will continually innovate and improve the business of managing healthcare in order to deliver quality, compassion and vitality to every life that we touch. The resulting health and satisfaction in the communities we serve is our reward and our compass.

Here's to the end of a fantastic year and to the beginning of the best year of our lives! We look forward to continued success and collaboration with you in 2013.

Cheers!

