



Hospital-Employer Partnerships:
Best Practices for Growing Market Share

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 Aegis Health Group



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WORKSITE HEALTH: A BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROPOSITION FOR HOSPITALS

Today's consumers are inundated with news, studies and statistics substantiating a claim that seems so obvious: poor health habits lead to chronic disease and significantly higher healthcare costs. Employers have really begun to take notice of how this affects them through higher premiums, absenteeism and lost productivity. As a result, smart employers are seeking ways to improve the health of employees as a way to mitigate escalating health-related costs.

According to a recent study, employees' poor health habits top the list of challenges to employers' ability to offer affordable health coverage. This would explain why 58 percent of employers that offer health benefits also offer health-management programs to the workforce.

As community healthcare leaders, hospitals are logical partners to help area employers achieve these goals. After all, hospitals are the consistent and trusted healthcare resource; and while many companies are horning in on the workplace-health trend, none is better positioned than hospitals to

have a major impact. Hospitals bring credibility, staying power and expertise to the proposition. And while serving community good and quantifying their community benefit (which is becoming more and more important for nonprofit hospitals), workforce health initiatives have another benefit, too. Forming relationships with local employers creates vital business development opportunities for a hospital – opportunities to build market share for themselves and their medical staff as they tap into the 176.3 million Americans with employer-based health insurance.

Healthcare executives have many customers, but few are as important to sustainable, long-term growth as employers. On a daily basis, business leaders in every community are asking important purchasing questions that can impact hospital and physician practice revenue growth, including:

- » Which health plans should we make available to employees?
- » Which providers should be included in these plans?

- » How can we better address employees' health risks as a means to reduce claims and lower health-related costs?
- » Who is best equipped to meet the workforce's occupational health needs?
- » Who should we trust to navigate these important issues?

These questions represent a clear opportunity for astute hospital leaders. Building trusting, mutually beneficial relationships with the employer community is one of the best approaches to efficiently increasing market share and enhancing revenue.

The following pages contain many examples of best practices used by forward-thinking hospitals across the country that have formed solid relationships with local employers, while simultaneously gaining valuable market share over their competitors. These facilities, all Aegis clients, have discovered the bottom-line benefits of these programs as they improve their payer mix by gaining access to a commercially insured population.

LINKING INSURED PATIENTS WITH PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS

Workforce health initiatives provide a platform to link commercially insured patients with primary care physicians (PCPs) interested in growing their practices. By taking care of the PCPs, whether employed by the hospital or not, the hospital gains the opportunity to build brand loyalty with the physicians that ultimately control market share. Here are two examples of how hospitals are tapping into their workforce health programs to enhance their own physician relationships.

Discovering a Window of Opportunity

West Coast The hospital saw this as an opportunity to grow its market share and that of its largest medical group. Working together to reach this desirable market of employed, insured consumers, several of the doctors delivered presentations on myriad health-related topics at the various worksites about the importance of having a primary care physician. The medical group then offered Saturday appointments to lecture attendees, adding new patients to the practice. This was considered a contributing factor to the hospital's overall 2.24:1 return on investment for their employer engagement strategy.

This effort directly impacted the hospital by:

1. Solidifying its relationship with a large and influential medical group.
2. Improving its relationships with referring physicians.
3. Directing patients to PCPs interested in growing their practices.
4. Increasing referrals to hospital service lines.
5. Enhancing access to an underserved population of workers.

Supporting primary care physicians is an essential part of every hospital's success, as this is often the first chance to make an impression on a new patient. Through local employers, hospitals can identify and encourage workers to access healthcare resources before they become ill or face an emergency.

Aligning Prospective Patients with Medical Groups

The South

A hospital in the Deep South discovered that an astonishing 30 percent of insured workers in its service area do not have a PCP. Through the workforce health initiative, they discovered that nearly half of the employees at one company, in particular, hadn't selected a PCP despite having full health coverage with no out-of-pocket costs. Armed with this knowledge, the hospital has begun a concerted effort to align these "unattached" commercially insured consumers with one of the physician groups affiliated with the hospital.

One way the hospital has begun linking prospective patients with the medical groups is arranging for a PCP to be at every workplace-screening event. Doctors are available to counsel participants on their screening results, make recommendations, answer questions and schedule follow-up appointments.

Taking it a step further, the physicians send thank you letters to participating employees, complete with information about how to schedule an appointment. This added personal touch point has gone a long way toward strengthening the new relationships. At least 40 new patients have selected a hospital-affiliated PCP as a result of this effort. The hospital hopes to engage at least 60 more.

For the employer with the high number of employees without a PCP, the hospital worked with a doctor located directly across the street from the worksite as well as the health insurance company to offer physicals and biometric screenings at the worksite. Employees were allowed to hold their appointments during work hours, and the doctor was given permission to bill the insurance company for the physicals. Employees made appointments with the doctor for any necessary follow-up. The physician has gained nine new patients so far.

Not only have the physicians gained new patients, the response from the employers and employees has been overwhelmingly positive, thus solidifying the hospital as the "healthcare resource of choice" in the community.

DRIVING SERVICE LINE VOLUME

Tapping into employer relationships established through its workforce-health initiative, two hospitals in the mid-Atlantic region that are part of a large healthcare system recently found a creative way to drive volume to specific service lines.

In one case a hospital invited employers to take advantage of special appointment times that were designed to get patients quickly in and out of its newly remodeled breast center, complete with recently purchased breast-imagery equipment. Taking it a step further, technicians from the breast center started joining the hospital's business health personnel at worksite health fairs where they set up a display about the breast center and allowed employees to schedule their appointments on the spot. Using laptop computers and a secured wireless network, technicians were able to access the hospital's information system to determine when a woman had her last mammogram, enter the appropriate demographic and insurance information, and schedule the appointment.

In the other case the hospital – shortly after expanding its radiology department – collaborated with nine local public schools to offer on-site scheduling for mammograms for teachers and staff. Technicians met with teachers and from their laptops scheduled 28 appointments. The school system agreed to allow teachers and staff to schedule appointments during teacher workdays throughout the school year. Certain appointment times were designated specifically for these employees to ensure that they are seen promptly and able to return to work.

Remote scheduling at worksites has contributed to an increase in volume to these service lines. It also demonstrates the hospital's understanding of people's busy schedules by making both the scheduling and screening process convenient and efficient.

A Southern California hospital created a “micro-campaign” targeting its workforce health employer-partners to encourage women to get mammograms. Participants were selected based upon the information they provided in their personal health reports. This was done in the same period the hospital was running television ads about its breast center.

A hospital-affiliated physician called the results of the campaign “unbelievable.” His office had seen more breast biopsies in a two-week period than in the previous few months. He praised the hospital for “stepping up to the plate” to support his practice.

MAXIMIZING WORKSITE SCREENINGS

Worksite screenings are perfect opportunities to “sell” the hospital and its services. Proper preparation and execution of these events can lead to an upswing in leads and increased patient traffic to a hospital. Below are seven tactics employed by a mid-western hospital that has been utilizing Aegis Health Group’s employer-directed business development program for five years.

- 1** A hospital representative proactively engages participants, explaining the breadth and depth of the hospital’s services and answers any questions participants may have.
- 2** Flyers and brochures about upcoming community events, health tips and hospital information cards complete with the physician referral phone number are nicely displayed and easily accessible to screening participants.
- 3** The hospital provides “Results Consultants,” physicians or members of the community outreach department, who review the results of cholesterol and blood pressure screenings with each participant during the event. Participants are referred directly to appropriate services as needed based on their screening test results.
- 4** As participants are waiting to speak with a health professional, they are given a calendar of community events hosted by the hospital as well as a listing of urgent care facilities.
- 5** A conveniently located information board includes recent hospital news, expansion plans and service line details.
- 6** Promotional giveaways, such as magnets, clips or notepads, are plentiful in areas where screening participants congregate.
- 7** As simple as it sounds, to create a professional image and set the stage for what’s in store, on-site screenings always include table skirts with the hospital logo and the worksite health tagline.

The screening process – which typically includes a cholesterol and glucose test, blood pressure read, body fat analysis and results consultation – usually takes just 15 to 20 minutes. When screening participants receive a friendly, professional and efficient service on-site, they will correlate that experience with what to expect at the hospital.

WORKSITE HEALTH INFORMATION CENTER: A DOOR OPENER

Health Information Centers – worksite-based displays providing hospital-branded health content that are permanently mounted to the walls of break rooms, cafeterias or employee lounges – were pioneered by Aegis more than 20 years ago. These displays (provided to client hospitals by Aegis and posted in high-traffic employer sites) serve as a highly visible focal point for the distribution of health-related information and educational materials. Located within each display is a large, monthly poster publication that features topical and informational articles on health-related subjects and a series of four quarterly Personal Health Guides designed as handy take-homes covering important health topics. Carrying a sponsorship message from the local hospital, these centers speak directly to a fully insured workforce, further cement a bond between that workforce and the hospital, and serve as a great door opener to specific hospital service lines. Concurrently, Health Information Centers provide participating employers the opportunity to visibly demonstrate to their workforce the company's commitment to good health and health promotion.



Health Information Center: A Powerful Catalyst

An influential hospital in the southwest has connected its occupational health department with a 1,200-employee company thanks to its Health Information Centers. During a routine visit to update one such display, a company employee asked about the availability of safety-related posters. Further discussion revealed the company not only had a real need for new and more effective safety programming but that the company was utilizing a competitor's occupational health clinic for its workers. Clearly, this was an opportunity for the hospital to steal market share from a competitor...and that's precisely what the hospital did!

Connecting all the dots, the hospital arranged a safety fair at the worksite with the help of the hospital's safety department and occupational health manager. The hospital is now the primary source for the company's safety programming and has become the occupational health provider of choice.

Relationships are built on understanding the needs of stakeholders and are cemented through visibility and follow-through. A Health Information Center provided the relationship the hospital needed to make a lasting and profitable connection with one large, local employer.

GENERATING LEADS USING DATABASE MARKETING

A strategic approach to database marketing allows hospitals to direct the right messages to the right recipients for maximum gain. This marketing tool can be one of the most powerful weapons in a hospital's marketing arsenal, providing the opportunity to leverage data to increase utilization of hospital service lines and facilities and to develop physician practices. This should also be particularly attractive to the C-suite and other members of hospital leadership who are looking for measurable results from their marketing dollars.

Workforce health initiatives provide hospitals the opportunity to collect valuable information that can be segmented for specific, targeted messages. Whether the audience is employers or employees, database marketing can really pay off.

Here are two examples of how hospitals are using database marketing to promote their services and reach the right consumers.

Tracking Revenues.

In 2008 a Midwestern hospital distributed nearly 10,000 direct mail pieces focused on cardiac services to select employees of its business partners. With a 6 percent response rate, about three times the usual for a direct mail piece, these recipients generated just under \$470,000 in downstream revenues to the hospital.

To track the program's effectiveness, the hospital performed a quarterly analysis of inpatient and outpatient charges with the same diagnostic codes as the subject of each quarter's database marketing campaign. They cross-referenced patient charges with a database of consumers who received the mailings.

Generating Leads.

Using a consistent database marketing direct mail program to employers, one hospital on California's central coast has discovered the key to generating leads for its workforce health initiative. Every month the hospital sends to each of its employer contacts a mail piece promoting some aspect of its facility or program, including speakers from the hospital's speakers bureau, screening opportunities, health and wellness reminders, and current health and wellness news.

This ongoing campaign keeps the hospital's offerings top of mind and consistently generates requests for speakers, screenings and other services. The hospital has found that the employers file the direct mail pieces, often referring back to them later when the time is right. It has given the hospital greater visibility among both employers and their employees.

REACHING CONSUMERS THROUGH FLU SHOT CLINICS

Worksite-based flu shot clinics offer a fantastic opportunity to increase the hospital's visibility with a commercially insured population, positively affect the health of local residents, generate revenue to the bottom line and cross-promote other hospital service lines.

Here are examples of two healthcare facilities that experienced noteworthy results from employer-directed flu shot clinic campaigns. While each took a different approach – one launched a mobile flu shot clinic and the other scheduled on-site flu shot clinics at the worksites of its employer-partners – both were met with success.

»» Mobile Flu Shot Clinics

With full support from the CEO and COO, a large eastern U.S.-based health system formed a mobile flu shot steering committee to launch its flu shot campaign in response to community requests and as a means to increase outreach to employer groups. The committee aggressively promoted this service through direct mail, flyers distributed at worksites and over the Internet. Employers welcomed a solution aimed at keeping employees healthier and reducing sick days. In its inaugural year, the mobile flu shot clinic vaccinated 2,000 residents in just 45 days.

The health system maximized its time with the participants by promoting some of its other service lines. While waiting their turn, many flu shot clinic participants completed personal health profiles, which provide actionable data the hospital can use to market its programs. (See facing page, “Generating Leads Using Database Marketing.”) The hospital also offered complimentary sleep assessments as people waited, which generated 15 leads to their sleep clinics with very little effort. Additionally, eleven new companies began offering the hospital's worksite health initiatives.

»» On-Site Flu Shot Clinics

A community hospital in the Southeast took a different approach to flu shot clinics by scheduling them within the walls of area businesses. In one season it held flu shot clinics at 72 worksites in its service area. In just four weeks, the clinics generated close to \$30,000 in net revenue. Using a small team of nurses, the hospital vaccinated nearly 4,900 employees from 84 different companies.

Demand for on-site flu shot clinics more than doubled over three years. Like the mobile flu shot clinics, this program has strengthened the hospital's existing relationships and expanded its reach into the community.

BUILDING TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR BEST CUSTOMERS

In a world that has become increasingly complex, and in an industry that has become increasingly competitive, hospitals are looking for new and inventive ways to capture desirable market share while fulfilling their community mission. Forming trusting relationships with local employers is the best way to do this as such an employer-directed business development strategy directly links commercially insured consumers with admitting physicians and corresponding hospital service lines in a way that everyone wins.

For more than two decades Aegis has been the nation's leader in advocating this approach and in working with hospitals across the country to produce measurable results. The premise of the Aegis program is creating and fostering profitable relationships with area businesses because local employers provide an untapped source for capturing desirable market share whose insurance profile matches that of the hospital and its medical staff. Aegis can help you identify key employers in the community, open doors at those employer worksites and ascertain the health-risk levels of employees.

Targeting marketing efforts toward this population minimizes the tremendous waste associated with traditional mass media advertising and builds lasting, trusting relationships with your best customers. As a result, hospitals can grow market share, increase the bottom line, and position themselves as the employer's trusted partner in understanding and controlling healthcare costs.

Recent ROI Results from Across the Country

Provider No. of Beds	Region	Market	Measurement Period (months)	ROI xx.xx:1
908	Southeast TX	Suburban	24	13.89
4-hospital system	Mid-Atlantic/Appalachia	Suburban	18	10.68
6-hospital system	Northern California	Suburban	24	10.50
680	Midwest	Urban	12	10.20
300	Southwest	Urban/Suburban	12	9.67
238	Northeast	Suburban	12	7.73

CONTACT US TO DISCUSS YOUR COMPLIMENTARY PERSONALIZED MARKET ANALYSIS:

www.aegisgroup.com/contact-us or (800) 833-0090

For 20 years Aegis has helped hospitals across the country form lasting and profitable relationships with area employers by pioneering the concept of employer-directed health-management partnerships. Today, Aegis' program can be found in many of the most progressive-thinking for-profit, nonprofit and academic medical centers across the country. No other company has been able to match the breadth of services, track record and bottom-line proven performance of Aegis' reimbursement-sensitive business development strategies.

To create a win-win-win relationship for hospitals, employers and employees, Aegis utilizes proprietary software, Internet applications, educational initiatives and the skills of a talented team of associates. Hospitals win by driving profitable marketshare into their facility and enhancing their standing in the community. Employers win by reducing their health-related costs. Employees win through increased health improvement and access to hospital services and programs geared specifically to them. No wonder Aegis has been chronicled in many of the nation's leading healthcare publications, is a member of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce "Hall of Fame" and is frequently turned to when revenue growth is fundamental to success.

The Power of Relationships.™

