



At A Glance

- Catholic, nonprofit health system, affiliated with Catholic Health Initiatives.
- Includes eight full-service hospitals, a large network of physician clinics, a participant of the Rainier Health Network ACO and other healthcare services.
- Serves approximately 150,000 Medicare patients across the Puget Sound.

The Situation

CHI Franciscan was formally notified in September 2016 that effective January 1, 2017, it would be excluded from a Medicare Advantage provider network, thus impacting 4,900 Medicare patients. Unable to resolve differences, a targeted outreach campaign was needed with a timeline of three months to transition patients to alternate insurance plans that were accepted by the health system.

MCUSA Consulting Helps Health System Successfully Respond to Medicare Advantage Contract Termination



The Strategy

A communication outreach program was organized and managed by MCUSA Consulting who brought to the assignment a proven track record of helping providers facing similar challenges to maximize patient retention through a well-thought-out and carefully executed strategy. To help with the execution, MCUSA Consulting utilized licensed insurance agents from a national insurance agency specializing in supporting healthcare providers. CHI Franciscan mobilized an internal task force to include leadership from both marketing and managed care that met weekly to review the effectiveness of the execution through the AEP timeline.

The Implementation

Based on MCUSA's recommendations and the ongoing collegial support of CHI Franciscan's leadership team, the following plan was implemented:

- ✓ MCUSA Consulting assigned at least eight dedicated call center representatives to support more than 10,000 inbound/outbound calls on behalf of the health system.
- ✓ Ten insurance agents were trained and mobilized to counsel patients at one of eight select locations on the health system's campuses that were identified as CMS compliant consultation space. An additional agent was assigned to meet with patients that were homebound.
- ✓ An internal communications program was put into place so as to ensure that hospital and physician practice managers knew where and how to direct patients seeking assistance.

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About MCUSA Consulting

MCUSA Consulting has a proven track record for developing innovative Medicare insurance solutions tailored to the needs of healthcare organizations and the Medicare patients it serves.

Included in the MCUSA portfolio of services is a Medicare insurance helpline (served by MedicareCompareUSA) that helps Medicare beneficiaries select a health plan that is accepted by their existing hospital and doctors, thus assuring continuity of care and preserving the trusted relationships many providers have built up over time with their patients. MCUSA Consulting also helps hospitals, health systems and physicians with turning 65 patient communications, health plan contract termination support, Medicare strategy and Medicare compliance audits. With its strong foundation and impressive track record, an increasing number of hospitals and doctors are looking to MCUSA Consulting as an indispensable part of a proactive patient-communication and population-management strategy.

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- ✓ A patient-focused mail campaign was coordinated by MCUSA Consulting that included more than 10,000 mail pieces staged over the three-month period.
- ✓ A survey was deployed with a return envelope requesting patients confirm their understanding of the need to change insurers and how the health system could provide assistance in that endeavor.
- ✓ The health system's web page was expanded to include the ability to ask questions over the internet to MedicareCompareUSA licensed agents. Web tools allowed patients to schedule their own appointments at the various health system locations or request a home visit.
- ✓ All patient inquiries or appointments were confirmed in writing via mail and/or email. Agent appointment confirmations were conducted prior to each appointment.
- ✓ Agent appointment scheduling standards were set, targeting a 75 percent appointment accommodation within a week of a request and 90 percent within two weeks unless otherwise requested by the patient.
- ✓ Voicemails left were returned within 24 hours (average returned in less than 4 hours).
- ✓ MCUSA's call center staff was rigorously trained to confidentially and confidently support confused and often upset patients. A CRM system was deployed to manage each point of contact, including agent appointments and outcomes. Timely information and disposition tracking was imperative for weekly reporting to the task force.

The Results

The program put in place resulted in outstanding results for CHI Franciscan:

- Of those patients with primary care physician relationships, greater than **80 percent** were in contact with MCUSA and provided confirmation of changing insurance or enrolled through MedicareCompareUSA into a CHI Franciscan Health contracted MA plan.
- Sixty percent of patients were dispositioned within 30 days after the start of the AEP.
- Of the 4,900 patients affected, only 102 confirmed their intent to stay with the carrier and change physicians (**98 percent patient retention**).
- High levels of patient satisfaction were achieved with minimal disruption in the continuity of patient care.

Contributing to the project's success was the fact that MCUSA Consulting and MedicareCompareUSA already had established working relationships for several years with CHI Franciscan Health leadership and system staff. As a result, MCUSA was familiar with the organization and its patient population, having facilitated its AEP communication program. MCUSA also already had in place a sophisticated insurance education program and an executed business associate agreement for patients turning 65. And it had analyzed patient insurance demographic data for the health system's entire Medicare population. All of this allowed for prompt mobilization and confidence to get the job done cost effectively.