

FRONT LINES

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www.tha.com/thasg.html

FISERV HEALTH-TENNESSEE

Fiserv Health-Tennessee formally was Willis Administrative Services.

In 2002, Willis joined the Fiserv company, which is one of the largest technology companies in the U.S. Fiserv Corporation uses technology to enhance transaction efficiency, is a leading provider of ATM and other transaction-based banking processes, and puts that same effort to medical plan management through its health division.

Fiserv Health-Tennessee is part of the health division. Fiserv Health pays claims on over 2.5 million lives. The goal of Fiserv Health is to provide all of the resources that a large carrier brings to the table and, at the same time, have the local presence of a flexible third-party administrator (TPA).

Fiserv Health-

Tennessee provides self-funded medical administration to groups in the southeast, and hospitals are a major target market. Flexible plan design allows hospitals to provide plans for employees that utilize their own facilities as much as practical.

Fiserv Health considers its relationship with the Tennessee Hospital Association very important, and partners with THA Solutions Group to provide services for hospitals throughout the state.

A selection of services available include:

- * Medical coverage
- * Dental and vision coverage
- * Prescription consulting and programs
- * Managed care network consulting
- * Flexible 125 administration
- * COBRA and HIPAA administration
- * Stop loss insurance placement and rela-

tionships

* Integrated Voice Response capabilities for service calls

* Internet access for clients

◆ Compliance services, including plan document preparation

Fiserv Health-Tennessee has an experienced staff that clients consider part of their benefit department. In today's environment, most employers want every department to accomplish more with less. Health plan professionals can do that by using the expertise of Fiserv Health-Tennessee. For more information, contact Fred Massa at Fiserv Health, 800-477-5782, FMassa@FiservHealth.com.

COACHING: PARTNERING TO BRING OUT THE BEST IN OTHERS

By Marie Jennings, Master Certified Coach

The bar is getting higher and higher for managers and executives these days.

Daniel Goleman, author of the international bestseller, *Emotional Intelligence*, says, "Emotional intelligence counts more than IQ or expertise for determining who excels at a job, and it counts for almost everything when it comes to outstanding leadership. The business case is compelling: companies that leverage this advantage add measurably to their bottom line.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) competencies that account for over 66 percent of success include:

- Self-awareness
- Self-confidence
- Self-control
- Commitment and integrity
- The ability to communicate and influence, to initiate and accept change

Developing these competencies is not the primary focus in most business schools, so how do talented people develop EI? It begins with self-awareness. A coach helps people see themselves as others see them. Many leaders have said after receiving honest feedback, "I had

have said after receiving honest feedback, "I had no idea I was doing that!"

Smart people can make positive changes if they know where to focus. A leader who improves his or her effectiveness by even 10 percent can set off a positive chain reaction that is compounded as it ripples through the organization.

Nothing happens without conversations—they are the molecules of business. They are used for orienting, establishing relationships, brainstorming, implementing, providing direction and feedback, making requests and promises, solving problems, learning from mistakes. . . Leaders can significantly improve their capacity to lead by improving their conversational skills. The good news is—all of this can be learned!

Managers usually are promoted into leadership because of their expertise, experience and ability to get results. They often are shocked by the way demands for their expertise and influence flip-flop when responsibilities increase. Each advancement requires a higher level of influenc-

ing skills. It is challenging to get results diplomatically while inspiring others to do more, better and faster!

Jim Collins says in his best-selling book, *Good to Great*, that the best leaders have a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will. That is just one of many paradoxes. Emerging leaders need to know where to focus their development efforts for efficient growth.

Managers and leaders create moods. What kind of mood are you creating? Pessimism?

Optimism? Resignation? Joy? Resentment? Trust? Research validates the fact that people who enjoy their work are more productive. The mood that is created defines the range of possibilities for the team.

Some environments make it easy for people to ask questions, speak the truth, learn from mistakes, innovate and produce results—does yours?

For additional information, contact Marie Jennings at 615-377-9603, mjcoach@bellsouth.net. She is with Russell, Montgomery & Associates, a THASG preferred provider.

MEDICAL WASTE, INC.

While keeping a keen eye on safety issues, Medical Waste, Inc. (MWI), has increased its account list by more than 15 percent during the past year, and now services more than 400 clients in Tennessee, Georgia and North Carolina.

Though the growth has been exceptional, the focus of MWI remains the safety of healthcare workers through safe collection and disposal of medical waste.

The Cleveland-based company equips clients with the highest

quality containers, arranges pick-up schedules according to individual needs, and disposes of waste through environmentally responsible methods.

In compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, MWI provides a written record of disposal on a regular basis. The company also offers on-site OSHA-compliant training for handling waste as well as a

disposal manual that includes information about the types of medical waste acceptable for bloodborne pathogens, and an exposure control plan.

MWI provides safe, responsible disposal of medical waste such as syringes, bandages and other materials. Their clients include hospitals, nursing homes, physicians, dentists and other healthcare providers.

For more information about MWI, call 423-472-7103.

TPL COMPANY, LLC

TPL Company, LLC, (TPL) initially was established in 1998 by the father and son team of John and Jeff Miller, a Tennessee attorney whose practice is concentrated in healthcare operations. The company began by offering third-party subrogation services to managed care organizations (MCOs) participating in the TennCare program.

While increasing TennCare subrogation recoveries nearly 2,400 percent (from 25¢ to approximately \$6 per capita), TPL found out Tennessee hospitals were being paid low rates by TennCare MCOs and other entities for accident-related claims. The company also discovered Tennessee had long ago passed an act that would fix this problem – the Hospital Lien Act (HLA). Most accident-related cases involve four parties: the injured patient; the hospital that provided treatment; the patient's health coverage, if any; and the casualty insurer that covers the patient, the wrongful third party, and/or both. In normal circum-

stances, contractual duties exist between the hospital and the patient and/or his health coverage, and between the patient and his own casualty insurance.

A tort law relationship also may exist between the patient and the wrongful party's insurer that is imposed by law; however, there is not any legal relationship--contractual, tort or otherwise--between the hospital and the patient's own, or the third-party's casualty insurer. The HLA creates this relationship and obligates the casualty insurer to the hospital for the full billed charge (verses Blue Cross-Blue Shield of Tennessee's 50¢ on the dollar or self-pay accounts that are written-off as bad debt).

TPL designed a proprietary claims management system to fully take advantage of the HLA that completely automates the collection of data from hospitals, systematizes individualized investigations for each potential accident-related case, generates the necessary lien documentation with the appropriate

official registrar(s) and filing fees, and manages the back-end follow-up to each case, as well as accounts and reports to its client hospitals each month.

All a hospital needs to do to take advantage of TPL's system is to provide the company with access to daily or weekly claim encounter information, and be able to cash the checks forwarded from the casualty insurers. TPL only bills for cases adjudicated with an actual recovery for a small percentage of the actual recovery amount. All decisions regarding claim reduction or compromise, unless mandated by law, remain with the hospital.

TPL now provides lien services for 72 hospitals in 21 states, and adjudicated over 4,000 liens worth over \$10 million in 2002. For more information, contact Melissa Sowell Puri at TPL, 615-312-9942 or 888-875-1346.

PATIENT BILLING SHOULD NOT BE COMPLICATED, EXPENSIVE

The decision to outsource patient billing process is an easy one.

Selecting the right vendor is not quite as simple. For many large hospitals and multi-unit facilities, what should be a straightforward service quickly becomes a drawn-out practice – one where the delay in receivables ultimately costs more than realized.

Patient billing should not obscure the bottom line. Invest the time in researching different vendors to identify which one best meets the hospital's needs and provides the most cost-effective service.

A professional provider should be able to offer quality production in a secure environment with regularly scheduled entry into the U.S. Postal Service. Production and de-

livery of billing statements is not a mysterious process, and a reliable provider should not be afraid to disclose the details of how they accomplished each step.

When interviewing a provider, ask questions like:

- What is the most efficient way to produce my mailing?
- Who manufactures my envelopes?
- Where are my forms produced? • How is my confidential patient information kept secure?
- When will my statements be mailed?
- Where are my materials warehoused?

At SureBill, the patient billing procedure is streamlined by executing each step--from form and envelope manufacturing to electronic data

transfer and data-processing to mail production and U.S. Postal Service delivery--under one roof. Once a hospital is set up as a customer, the company typically delivers invoices to a U.S. postal facility within 24 hours from the time the data is received.

It is accomplished in a secure environment that is fully compliant with the patient privacy guidelines dictated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Action (HIPAA) regulations.

Best of all, members of the THA qualify for preferred pricing. SureBill could save hospitals thousands of dollars on their patient billing process. For more information, contact Ralph Armistead at SureBill, 770-339-0248.

WATTERS AND ASSOCIATES

Hospitals across the U.S. struggle with the "mission versus margin" question.

Good healthcare programs often do not generate enough revenue to make them viable. In this time of declining reimbursement, community health programs such as disease education, prevention and wellness are not implemented or become vulnerable to budget cuts because of a lack of revenue to cover the costs. Many nonprofit hospitals are finding ongoing fundraising through a support foundation can generate the needed funds now while building endowments for the future.

Watters and Associates has been helping hospitals establish effective support foundations for over 15 years. The firm has created dozens of support foundations for hospitals throughout the southeastern U.S. and as far west as Colorado. These same foundations provide ongoing friend and fundraising programs that allow the community to support outreach programs, new services, equipment, construction and endowment building. Many of

the smallest clients have been able to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars each year by building a strong base of repeat community donors.

Because the company understands the daily demands on management leave little time for planning and implementing effective fundraising programs, Watters acts as an extension of management in these areas. For new programs, the firm will lead management and the board of directors through the process, beginning with a concise explanation of roles and responsibilities, continuing with a community survey to assess the level of support and identify potential foundation board members, and ending with a fully functioning development program. The company also helps existing programs with board retreats and improvement strategies.

Services available include:

- Retreat Workshops and Board Education
- Planning
- Community Feasibility Surveys
- State and Federal Application Support
- Development Policies
- Operating Budgets

- Recruitment and Training of Development Director
- Remembrance Giving
- Annual Giving
- Planned Giving
- Grant Applications
- Special Events
- Donor Recognition Programs

While the principles for effective donor cultivation and solicitation are universal, each organization has its own unique characteristics. Community size, relative wealth and level of commitment to the organization will vary.

Watters and Associates creates an implementation plan tailored to each client. Once the plan is developed, the firm works with the client until the program is fully implemented. The goal is to create an effective development program - not merely making recommendations that are never put into action.

For more information, contact Gregg Watters at Watters and Associates, 704-543-8228.

RURAL HEALTH CONSULTANTS

Rural Health Consultants, Inc. has worked with healthcare providers in rural and underserved communities since 1990. The company's approach to health systems development is based on three important assumptions:

- ◆ *Health care is a local product.* Planning of healthcare services is best retained at the local level.
- ◆ *Rural is not small urban.* Downsizing urban models is not a viable strategy.
- ◆ *For long-term viability, a coordinated, comprehensive health-care delivery system is essential in rural settings.*

Steve McDowell and Sheldon Weisgrau are the principals working

with clients in Tennessee. They have assisted rural providers and communities in Tennessee and across the nation in developing critical access hospitals (CAHs), rural health clinics, federally qualified health centers and community health organizations.

Recently, McDowell has completed several strategic planning projects for hospitals and networks, developed physician-hospital collaborations using the provider-based rural health clinic program, and facilitated the development of a not-for-profit community health organization, which created a provider network, secured third-party contracts, and has been awarded over \$2 million in grant funding to expand services in the community.

Weisgrau has worked with THA and more than 20 hospitals in the state to assess and implement CAH conversion, and has done similar work in a number of other states. He also recently completed a needs assessment/strategic planning process for a small rural hospital, assisted two large health systems to develop collaborative models for providing care in rural communities, and conducted management systems reviews that identified billing, compliance and other issues for a rural health clinic network and a community health organization.

For more information about the company's services, call 785-832-8778 or visit the web site at www.ruralhealthconsultants.com.