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As we move forward in this era of healthcare transformation, we continue to implement timely and innovative ideas and remain mindful of making positive changes for those we serve – purchasers of healthcare who are dedicated to high quality, affordable care for their workers and families.

We would be remiss if we didn’t occasionally take the time to highlight our newest endeavors and share with you some key accomplishments.

This inaugural edition of 4WARD is the first of several in our new series that will spotlight a PBGH program and provide our stakeholders with four valuable insights into this work.

You can expect to hear from us again soon, with progress on some other important work. Up next in 4WARD: How PBGH is driving transparency.

David Lansky, Ph.D.,
President and Chief Executive Officer,
Pacific Business Group on Health

A Healthy Reunion

Sisters Reconnect at Mercy Springfield for Knee Replacements

Jan Senkbell who works at Lowe’s in Arkansas and Judy Howell who works at Walmart in Michigan are sisters who weren’t expecting to have their family reunion at an ECEN-designated hospital in Missouri.

Both needed surgery and traveled to Mercy Hospital Springfield for new knees, scheduling their surgeries less than a week apart.

The sisters were very pleased with their care, and grateful for their employers’ forward-thinking approach to their health benefits.

Centers of Excellence Network (ECEN)
High Quality Care and Value for Hip and Knee Surgeries

When PBGH launched the Employers Centers of Excellence Network (ECEN) with Lowe’s, Walmart and McKesson in early 2014, our charge was to develop a network of surgical facilities that could offer the highest quality knee and hip replacement surgeries - some of the most frequent and expensive procedures currently performed. Our premise was that, ultimately, by contracting with surgical facilities committed to the highest quality standards and historically performing far better than national norms (coined “centers of excellence” or “COE”), there would be lower complication rates, fewer repeat procedures, and a quicker recovery and return to work. There would also be long-term cost savings, even when factoring in
“Walmart has found an appropriate way to control costs for its associates while making sure the care is the absolute best. I think it’s great.”

- Jan Senkbeil

PRWeb, March 7, 2014
Click Here for more info on this ECEN story

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1 **Meaningful Benefits for Purchasers**

In addition to the obvious benefit – a healthier workforce – the program also promotes morale within organizations, resulting in a boost to employee satisfaction and loyalty. ECEN also provides cost predictability for purchasers, an advantage during times of tumultuous healthcare pricing. Typically, purchasers see downstream savings with a return on investment within two years.

2 **Cost-Effective, Easy and Voluntary for Patients**

Employees receive joint replacement procedures at carefully selected COEs and 100% coverage for their surgical care, with no deductibles or co-pays. Travel expenses, including a stipend for lodging and living expenses, are covered for both the patient and a caregiver. To ensure high quality outcomes, transitions pre-and post-operation include coordination of care between the COE and the employees’ home providers.

3 **Shared Data to Improve Outcomes**

Each participating surgical facility collects patient-reported outcomes data, submits to an orthopedic registry, collaborates with each other, and shares best practices, thus raising the already high bar for all selected COEs.

4 **Improvements to Healthcare System**

Through ECEN, we send a signal to health plans, hospitals and surgeons across the US that purchasers expect high-quality, accountable care and encourage their employees to seek the same.

For more information about ECEN, visit: http://www.pbgh.org/ecen

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