

Kaiser Permanente Communications Strategy

Company Overview

Kaiser Permanente derived from the industrial health care programs for construction, shipyard, and steel mill workers for the Kaiser industrial companies during the late 1930s and 1940s.

Opening to the public for insurance enrollment, in October 1945, Henry J. Kaiser and Sidney Garfield, MD, created the still working partnership of two organizations: the not-for-profit Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals, and the Permanente Medical Groups.

Kaiser Permanente's national structure was adopted by Kaiser Permanente physicians and leaders in 1955, and now provides care throughout eight regions in the United States.

Two types of organizations which make up each regional entity:

- Kaiser Foundation Health Plans (KFHP) work with employers, employees, and individual members to offer prepaid health plans and insurance. The not-for-profit [health plans](#) provide infrastructure for and invest in Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, while providing a tax-exempt facility for the for-profit Permanente Medical Groups.
- Permanente Medical Groups are physician-owned organizations, which provide and arrange for medical care for Kaiser Foundation Health Plan members in each respective region. The medical groups are for-profit partnerships and receive majority of their funding from Kaiser Foundation Health Plans. The Permanente

Medical Group was the first medical group formed in 1948 in Northern California. In addition, Kaiser Foundation Hospitals operates medical centers in California, Oregon and Hawaii, and [outpatient](#) facilities in the remaining Kaiser Permanente regions. The hospital foundations are not-for-profit and rely on the Kaiser Foundation Health Plans for funding. They also provide infrastructure and facilities that benefit the for-profit medical groups.

According to, "Together in Total Health," the organization's annual report. In 2011 Kaiser Permanente cared for 8.9 million Americans and contributed to health research, of which three-quarters of operations are located in California. The organization reported \$50 billion in annual revenue, and currently owns 37 hospitals and employs 17,000 doctors, all on salary.

Board of Directors:

George C. Halvorson
Chairman and chief executive officer
Bernard J. Tyson
Incoming chairman and chief executive officer
Christine K. Cassel, MD, MACP

Thomas W. Chapman, MPH, EdD
Jeff Epstein
Daniel P. Garcia
Senior vice president and chief compliance officer
William R. Graber
J. Eugene Grigsby III, PhD
Judith A. Johansen, JD
Kim J. Kaiser
Philip A. Marineau
Jenny J. Ming
Edward Pei
Meg Porfido, JD
Cynthia A. Telles, PhD

Reputation

Kaiser Permanente ensures that high quality care is possible and can be effective at an affordable price. According to the New York Times, Kaiser Permanente is currently viewed as a “holistic health system...with sophisticated electronic records and computer systems that — after 10 years and \$30 billion in technology spending — have led to better-coordinated patient care.”

Prior to their \$30 billion technology advancement Kaiser Permanente has been considered a profitable health care provider but lacking new-age technological expertise and relevance outside of the San Francisco Bay area.

Many of Kaiser Permanente’s accomplishments are attributed to George C. Halvorson, who assumed position as Chair and CEO of Kaiser Permanente in 2002. Now as he prepares to retire in December 2013, Kaiser Permanente is said to be “a force to be reckoned with throughout California, caught up in technology and has a model that is widely regarded as one of the ways to solve the healthcare crisis”, according to Sheryl Skolnick, a hospital analyst at CRT Capital Group LLC in Stamford, Connecticut.

Awaiting to assume the role of Chair and CEO, Bernard J. Tyson will join the company’s board of directors next month and assume Halvorson’s position after a six- month transition period at the end of 2013 . During this shift in ‘management, queries have surfaced focusing on the future of the healthcare provider and its policies. President Barack Obama’s healthcare overhaul, the Affordable Care Act, is expected to be in full effect in 2014. Generating new insurance marketplaces called exchanges, the overhaul is expected to persuade about 30 million people to gain coverage. This nuance is the source of the fearful queries, addressing the necessity of Kaiser Permanente in its entirety.

Kaiser Permanente has caught wind of the new exchanges, due to open in every state, and is expected to offer exchange plans in every state where it operates.

“Over the course of the last 15 years, they’ve been just going into high gear and doing everything right,” said Dr. Thomas S. Bodenheimer, a health policy expert at the University of California, San Francisco and has recently chosen Kaiser Permanente as his own health plan. While Kaiser Permanente has many supporters, the criticism of their detractors are unavoidable. Some health care experts suggest that while Kaiser

Permanente's insurance practices are efficient, its appropriateness as the country's model for healthcare is questionable. "They have not translated some of their strengths into better prices," said David Lansky, the president and chief executive of the Pacific Business Group on Health.

Although Kaiser Permanente has a plethora of strengths, its fundamental structure may uncover self prescribed boundaries. As a part of Kaiser Permanente Insurance packet, members are prohibited from using any facility outside Kaiser Permanente Hospitals and medical centers, excluding emergency circumstances. "The more you restrict the patient's ability to do what they want, you risk reigniting the backlash we had in the past," Mr. Lansky said.

Some patients surrounding California, where Kaiser operations are dispersed, complain about the affordance and availability of treatment by Kaiser providers. Arva Priola, a 62-year-old Kaiser Permanente member in Fredericksburg, Va., describes her Kaiser Permanente doctors as "wonderful". However, treatments including, IV antibiotics, a standard postoperative procedure, were needed and an hour and a half drive to a Kaiser Permanente facility was the only option permitted .

Kaiser Permanente's wait time for mental health services and inaccurate information about services provided have also succumbed to scrutiny , specifically by a California state agency.

Considering Kaiser Permanente's criticism, it comes as a surprise to learn that it has a head start on other health care and insurance providers. Due to its use of electronic records and technology systems for tracking patient care, Kaiser Permanente has an efficient and effective strategy for providing patient care services.

II) Opportunity

Kaiser Permanente has the opportunity to showcase its improvement in services and prospective affordances currently in development. Dedicated to delivering high quality healthcare and insurance at an affordable rate, Kaiser Permanente continually strives to innovate its primary practice in the patient's best interest.

Along with improving wait time for patients, and opening new exchange plans in every state it operates, Kaiser Permanente is exploring the possibilities of utilizing new technologies in providing more efficient patient care services. An increase in internet services, online medical recommendations and in-home minimal risk medical operations are among the many strategies, expected to improve services and lower healthcare costs. Consequently affecting its mission to become the premiere health care model for the United States and hopefully solving the healthcare crisis.

Kaiser Permanente has a vision for the future of health care. It involves real-time data to support patient care, connectivity, accessibility, and absolute confidentiality.

Patients should be able to do e-scheduling, e-visits, e-referrals, e-tests results, and electronic secure messaging with their caregivers. For years, customers have shied away from interacting physically with banks, for all banking transactions. Dozens of care-related functions possess characteristics suitable for similar pathways.

Kaiser Permanente now produces 30,000 lab reports for patients electronically every day. More than 20,000 patients consult electronically with their doctor, scheduling office appointments, digital X-rays, digital prescribing, and electronic care counseling daily.

Patients have the ability to discuss medical course of action via telemedicine consults with their doctors and nurses—eliminating major transportation headaches and

providing immediate responses to in-home crises and potential illnesses. Safe reliable in-home care is the obvious expectation of most patients.

Current Status:

- Our electronic health records are available, 24/7, in [every medical office](#) and [every hospital](#).
- Our members can access their care from [home, online, anytime](#).
- We're already seeing advances in the way we prevent manageable diseases from becoming life-threatening crises. In one pilot study, we were able to [reduce coronary artery disease deaths](#) by 76 percent. Now we are testing the same technologies and processes to tackle other chronic conditions.
- We are building [one of the world's largest DNA databases](#) to advance clinical research, but we also see the opportunity to one day deliver a new level of information to doctors at the point of care.
- We have designed [the Archimedes Model](#), a full-scale simulation model of human physiology, diseases, behaviors, interventions, and health care systems. Soon, our doctors will be able to use this model to develop customized treatment plans for their patients.
- We have been recognized for proving that e-connectivity between and among patients and their caregivers [results in better outcomes](#).

III) Communications Plan

Our goal is to draw the attention of clients, shareholders, government and employees to our new initiatives, developments, and healthcare practices. We plan to educate the general public on the health care opportunities available and persuade corporations to offer our benefit packets to their employees.

Research proves that the better informed people are about their health care services, the more satisfied they feel. According to Public Relation Coalition, "when transparency becomes part of the corporate vision, it can produce many long-term benefits."

Providing clearly written, honest and transparent communications will help to insure trust among Kaiser Permanente members leading to more effective services, a better reputation and stronger relationships.

By being transparent we will raise awareness of healthcare services in order to maximise access to them. By becoming more transparent we plan to generate discussion analyzing our strategies to lower cost and improve quality of service for members nationwide.

Message

Kaiser Permanente is one of the largest healthcare providers in the country, encompassing a partnership with two organizations: the not-for-profit Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals, and the Permanente Medical Groups.

We understand that patients want the best care possible for themselves and loved ones, and our mission is to provide this high-quality care. Our desire to live up to the patient expectations and improve our patient care is limitless.

Quality increase in patient care by Kaiser Permanente translates into increase in quality health for the members we serve, making high-quality care a priority and goal we all want to achieve.

With highly qualified doctors, equipped with advanced research and innovative

technology, our patients benefit from safe and informed care designed to fit their needs. Our mission at Kaiser Permanente is to be the ideal healthcare model, providing the highest quality of service at the lowest rate. We plan to grow continually, and discover further ways to improve our services.

Targeted Audience

This communication plan is targeting current long-standing customers, general public, and government.

Media

- We must prepare electrical and tangible newsletters
- Continue our social media presence, notifying followers of our services available , and changes in management
- Create an advertisement campaign, that highlights our new at-home services and technical advancements
- Create flyers listing all new initiatives to improve services
- Contact numerous media outlets to generate exposure around scientific advancements and new policies
- Create presentation comparing Kaiser Permanente to other healthcare providers
- Increase ads on all media platforms

Modalities

- Construct surveys for long-standing customers
- Initiate ad campaigns publicizing our new services available , online and in office.
- Construct Social Media posts
- Create ads, flyers, and letters

Desired Outcome

- Improved relationship between members and doctors
- Establish new initiatives based on information obtained from survey
- Establish new relations with general public and government
- Gain national publicity on health care services provided
- Inform members of current services offered, new in-home services as well as online services
- Assure shareholders, investors, and stockholders of member satisfaction
- Discover ways to improve services offered
- Improve reputation of Kaiser Permanente

In addition, this communication strategy will enable us to maintain two-way communication with all our members, being as transparent as possible. Kaiser

Permanente members will remain informed and aware of the Kaiser Permanente vision. Requiring Kaiser Permanente to remain abreast of technological developments and implementing them when feasible, while instilling respect and trust between Kaiser Permanente and its members.

Timeline

This communication strategy is expected to commence June 2013. Spanning over a two year time frame, we expect to accomplish the following:

- Constructing newsletters, emails, brochures and flyers completed within four(4) weeks
- July 2013 we will begin contacting media outlets highlighting our technical and scientific advancements
- Ad campaign produced and on display mid July, showcasing the new in-home and online services
- Promoting new management immediately, via social media, TV, radio , etc.
- Surveys constructed and administered beginning in August will help expose prospective service improvements

Methods of implementation

1. First, construct and distribute ads, newsletters, social media posts, and flyers.
2. Host press conference presenting new in-home and online services
3. Begin social media presence for new Chair and CEO
4. Survey members in all insured regions.
5. Build campaign highlighting benefits of the Kaiser Permanente healthcare model opposed to others

Along with the aforementioned five methods of implementation, we will regularly review our communications activities in order to accurately estimate their success.

Where appropriate, we will transform our methods of communication to guarantee our pursuit to provide high-quality healthcare continues.

We have in place excellent algorithms for media relations .

These are in line with communications best practice, and express our progress in promoting positive media coverage for Kaiser Permanente and its constituents.

We will continue to use the results of both formal and informal research to measure member's satisfaction with the quality and quantity of information we provide.

Resources Recommend

The Brand Communications Office of Kaiser Permanente will fund the communication plan in its entirety. This includes, but not limited to; the ads (both print and visual), press releases, brochures, letters, and surveys highlighting new in-home services, online services, and new Chair and CEO. Totaling at fifteen (15) thousand dollars.

Success Metrics

The overall success will be determined by the improved relationship between Kaiser Permanente, as a whole, and its members. After implementing new services available, increasing media coverage of scientific and technological advancements, and returning the opinion based survey of members served, we will be able to determine the effectiveness of our services provided. The survey will also help generate new innovative ideas to better providing safe, innovative and affordable healthcare.

V) Summary

Opportunity

- Pepco desires to show gratitude and appreciation, and gaining an understanding from the Washington Metropolitan area.

Plan/Course of Action

- Distribute ads, social media posts, letters, brochure
- Showcase video, host press conference
- Implement six-point, five-year Reliability Enhancement Plan
- Survey Washington Metropolitan area