



**Gail Sillman, Executive Director
Central Massachusetts Independent
Physician Association, LLC**

Industry: *Health Care*

Business Description: *Formed in 1998 and based in Worcester, Mass., CMIPA is the largest physician group of its kind in the area not affiliated with a hospital. Consisting of nearly 200 primary care physicians and specialists, CMIPA cares for about 35,000 patients, almost half of those in the area. Dedicated to the delivery of personalized, compassionate, cost-effective healthcare, CMIPA believes that choice for physicians and patients is the best way to ensure the highest quality of care.*

How will your industry change in 2007?

The healthcare industry will shift more costs to employees/patients by “tiering” physicians based on quality and cost measures and then redesigning their products so patients will pay more if they see providers with lower scores. This could lead to patients selecting providers designated as less expensive, and providers avoiding noncompliant patients.

A health plan would evaluate physician “quality” based on performance measures such as breast cancer screening. The plan would sift through claims data and flag patients aged 52-65

who received a mammogram that year. It would compare this information to the network average and then rank physicians according to network performance. The problem is, if doctors order the mammograms but patients don’t schedule appointments, the doctors are penalized for poor quality. While we may standardize physician performance around certain measures, in the long term, we may create patient access problems that are greater than the “quality” problems payers are trying to fix.

What is your organization’s forecast for 2007?

While we don’t necessarily agree with new “value-based purchasing programs,” we want to ensure that our physician members flourish under these programs. We have accordingly committed more resources to our medical management programs, we’re working with our payer and hospital partners to improve the delivery of care, and we will continue to find innovative and affordable technology solutions.

What are the areas of growth and change in your organization for 2007?

CMIPA intends to increase its staff, develop local patient outreach programs, and increase IT connectivity between private practice offices and hospital systems. We are negotiating with payers so our physicians can participate in the new connector product being offered to formerly uninsured citizens. In addition, we will further our community service initiatives, which last year included our first Step Up for Weight Loss Walk and Health Fair.

CMIPA

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