



**To:** Saint Vincent Hospital Employees  
**From:** Charlie Martin, Chairman and CEO Vanguard Health Systems and Joseph Mullany, President and CEO of New England and Chicago  
**Date:** July 28, 2010  
**Re:** Health for Life

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We talked in our last letter about some of the problems in the health care system, especially about its high cost and less-than-the-best quality. So why isn't health better in the United States? Well for one thing we don't get 'health' from the health care system. Private insurers and our government simply don't pay for health. Instead they buy 'health care'.

## **Promoting Health**

We're pretty sure we know what kinds of things contribute to good health - exercise, diet, preventive screenings, immunizations, stopping tobacco use. We know how to reduce the cost and improve the health and well-being of people with complex or chronic diseases. Their care needs to be coordinated across specialists. They could really benefit from a 'health coach' to guide them through the sometimes confusing health care system but also help them learn to create new and healthier habits. But the health care system doesn't pay for this - or pays so little for it that it is often not done at all.

## **What's Needed?**

Some people think that none of this can change without a complete reform of health care driven by federal decision makers. We don't agree with that. We think we can build a system that delivers health and well-being without a full scale reform of health care in Washington. And we think, if done right, Vanguard and Saint Vincent Hospital and our physician partners can become a national model for reform.

But to do so we need to quickly build new skills and begin to more effectively use some strengths we already have. Here are a few of those competencies and strengths: