



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: August 12, 2010
Re: Health for Life

Your Role

We talked in our last two letters about what the country needs to do in order to provide universal access to care in an affordable way and what the Vanguard family of hospitals and health professionals needs to be prepared to do in order to lead that change. Now we need to talk about how all of you can be a part of this movement toward Health for Life.

Adaptable

First, we need you to be adaptable. No useful system change can be made without all of you buying in and pitching in. We plan to ask a lot from you in the next year but what we ask of you will build our strength as a corporation and will build your security and your future.

Committed

Second, we need your active participation and pledge to work with us to be healthier. For some of you we expect that will be like the air you breathe. You already take care of yourself and already invest in keeping you and your family young, vital and thriving no matter what your age. Others of you struggle with weight, with a chronic disease or with family members who fight these battles every day.

Come Back

Third, we need you to help us better serve you. Many of you already find our doctors and hospitals the best place for you to get the care you need. For others of you it is easier and simpler for you to see doctors who practice outside of Saint Vincent Hospital. For those of you who take your care outside of our family, we want to invite you back. We promise to make our system friendly and responsive to you – quick appointments, a commitment to absolute confidentiality and special access for you to tell us what you liked and what fell short of your expectations for convenience, for compassion and for quality.

There is after all no better audience for us than you. You will keep us straight and honest. You are invested in our improvement. And you will benefit from our improvement as a care provider.

Help Innovate

Finally, we need to know how we can help you improve your own health and well-being. Is there a way to construct your benefits that will help? If we offered health coaches for you? If we offered health club and fitness benefits? If we helped you find time in your day for exercise and fitness? If we found ways to make it easier to eat healthy foods?

We don't know for sure how best to help. We need your ideas. But mostly we need your commitment to be healthier. If we are to convince employers in Worcester that we can help them make their workforce healthier, we need to show them what you as members of the Vanguard family and Saint Vincent Hospital have been able to accomplish. If we can demonstrate how we can manage our own health benefits cost and improve the health of our own team members we can convince other employers that we can help them manage the health of their workforce.

It is a pretty big challenge. But we are ready to do what you think might help. Health for Life is a nice slogan. But it is only meaningful if we can show that concepts of wellness and careful management of health can work to make a company's workforce healthier. This is where you come in.