



edge

Volume 8 Number 1 Winter 2007

2006 Reflections

A Letter from the President



Joe M. Inguanzo, Ph.D.,
President & CEO

Have you looked in the mirror lately? This small ritual that each of us performs every day doesn't begin to tell the story of who we really are and how we

have changed over time. As I glance at my reflection each morning, I swear that I still see that same young man who, armed with determination and a passion for research—joined by

my wife Joyce, Ken Livingston and Tom Schleff—built PRC nearly 28 years ago. In reality, a lot has changed since then.

When the company began, my children were small. I remember our girls helping deliver paper surveys to one of the two full-time telephone interviewers PRC had at the time. It has been many years since we recorded survey results on paper! Today our oldest daughter, Christine, is a family practice physician. Cynthia is working on her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology at the University of Texas at Austin. Two sons-in-law have joined the Inguanzo family.

I still remember the days when PRC's business was conducted from a basement office in Ken's Lincoln, Nebraska home. We had to turn the furnace off when making business phone calls in order to hear. The 10-acre PRC research campus that we have today wasn't even something I could imagine all those years ago. In the 80's, we drew stem plots on paper to discuss statistical results, used Dictaphones to detail our report findings, and had only a couple of PCs in the office. It is safe to say that much about the way we produce your data and research findings has evolved over time.

In fact, PRC continues to expand; with growth comes the

need for added office space to accommodate our continually increasing staff. In 2006, PRC made the commitment to add the largest number of interviewing stations ever; we'll have 70 percent more capacity to conduct surveys for our clients in 2007 with the addition of our newest interviewing facility.

If it were as easy as just mailing out a survey, the whole research phase of data collection would be simple. At PRC, we still believe that the best way to find out how your physicians, patients and employees feel is talk to with them. This past year, PRC personally spoke via phone with one million Americans who gave us their personal perceptions about hospitals and physicians.

The April 1992 edition of "Focal Point," PRC's client newsletter of that time, quotes me as saying "The key today is to make your institution a better place to practice medicine than your competitors." This article referred to ways to increase loyalty among your medical staff members and those words still ring true today. Along with making your hospital the best place for physicians to practice comes the responsibility of meeting the needs and expectations of your patients, as well as your employees. One of our goals for the coming year is to communicate specific recommendations about the importance of linking physician, patient, and employee perceptions. I have seen firsthand how powerful the relationship is between these

continued on next page

Inside...

The New
PRCEasyview.com®.....page 2

2006 National Consumer
Perception Study.....page 3

HCAHPs: What's Ahead
for 2007?.....page 4

Continuing Education
CyberSeminars.....page 5

2007 Client Education
Conference Update...page 6

2006 Reflections

continued from page 1

three stakeholder groups in predicting an organization's success.

And, speaking of things that haven't changed, my mother Yolanda celebrated her 85th birthday this year. She still works at PRC several hours a week. Along with translating Spanish surveys, she makes it her personal responsibility to motivate and encourage PRC associates, much like she used to encourage me when I was young. If anyone wonders where PRC's "nothing short of excellence" philosophy originated, I encourage you to visit briefly with my mother.

Another thing that hasn't changed is my passion for meaningful research and PRC's determination to provide the best quality research and direction for our clients. Even more

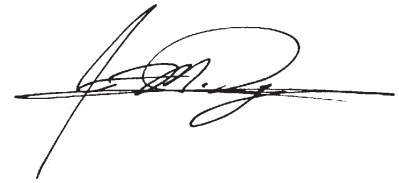
important to me is knowing that the work we do at PRC every day makes an important difference in healthcare; I am more certain than ever before that we are making valuable contributions toward helping hospitals enhance the quality of care provided to patients, making hospitals better places for physicians to practice medicine and enhancing the work environments for hundreds of thousands of hospital employees.

To be completely honest, the reflection in my mirror does reveal a few more grey hairs—perhaps a little more substance to my chin and a wrinkle or two. With experience comes change. Many healthcare research firms have come and gone since 1980. The same four people who started PRC in 1980 are still here making sure that PRC continues to provide you and your organization with the quality

information and direction you need to become excellent on all levels.

Working in healthcare, we have the perfect example of an environment where "very good" is not enough. When you next look in the mirror, I hope you find a reflection of your own commitment to excellence. I look forward to working with each of you in the coming year as you strive to attain your own goals.

Happy New Year!



Joe M. Inguanzo, Ph.D.
President & CEO



PRC Prepares to Unveil the New PRCEasyview.com®

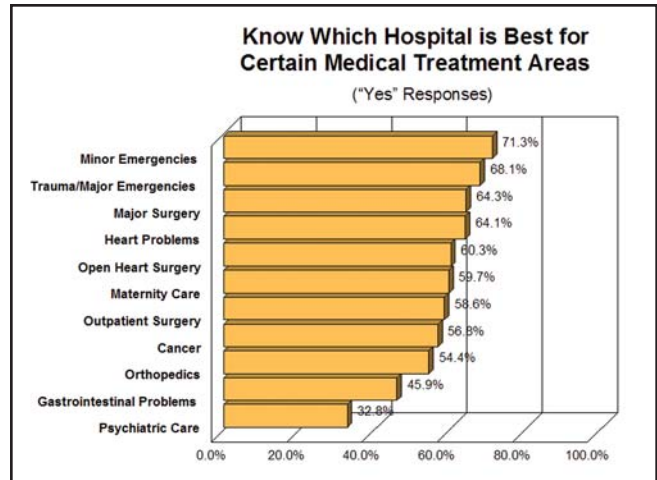
Just when you think that accessing your research results in real time couldn't get any easier, PRC's Research & Development team has done it again!

In the next three months, PRC will transition all PRCEasyview.com® users to the new, updated version. Here's what you can expect from the new and improved PRCEasyview.com®:

- Increased speed and usability of the site.
- Faster loading data allows you to do more than before!
- Save your answers and reports in the format you choose.
- Export your data to Excel, Adobe Acrobat (PDF) or PowerPoint slide shows!
- "Bookmarkable" pages! Save the address to your current report in your browser's favorites, then go straight to them later by just clicking on the link!
- Revamped Real-time Results.
- More powerful and easier to use!
- Snapshots with more flexibility.
- Improved Key Drivers of Excellence reporting.
- See all your data in one view!

PRC is offering a variety of FREE CyberSeminar training sessions devoted to helping you get the most from the new version of PRCEasyView.com®. Visit our CyberSeminar Education page for dates, times, and registration instructions:
<http://www.pronline.com/education/cyberseminars/index.asp>

PRC Presents its 2006 National Consumer Perception Study

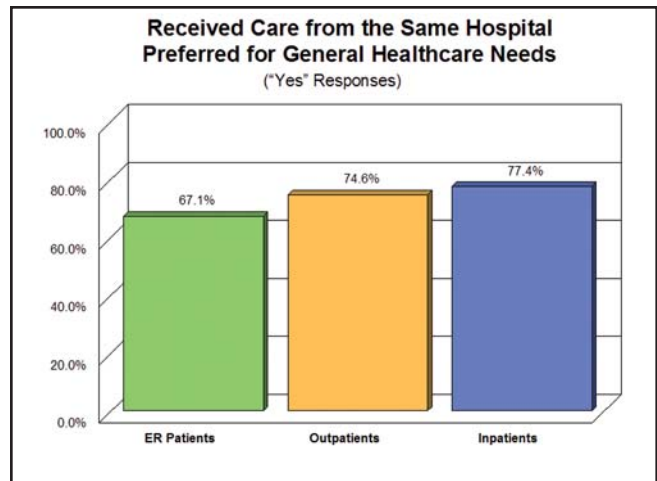


The move toward consumer-driven healthcare means that individuals will be making more decisions about their own healthcare. Understanding what consumers are thinking, what comprises their healthcare needs, and how they define quality healthcare services is more important than ever before. Every Fall, Professional Research Consultants, Inc. conducts a randomized telephone survey of 1,000 adult consumers across the United States to help identify and monitor changing perceptions among this important stakeholder group.

The study also found that most consumers prefer to use the hospital that is easiest to reach from their homes. In fact, 64.1% of consumers with a preferred hospital also say their hospital of choice is the easiest hospital to reach. Among those recent ER patients, outpatients, and inpatients, the percentage who said they received care from the same hospital they prefer exceeds sixty percent.

...Understanding what consumers are thinking...is more important than ever before.

The 2006 results show that consumers continue to rely on their own judgment when making decisions about their own healthcare, and are hesitant to use certain information such as quality ratings (only 13.9% of consumers said they have looked for hospital quality ratings or data when choosing a hospital). As public reporting becomes better known, this is expected to change.



For now, one-third of consumers remain unsure of which hospital provides the best quality of care. However, when asked about specific treatment areas, consumers appear to be gaining awareness. Increased awareness regarding the "best" hospital was recorded since 2004 for: trauma/major emergencies (+0.7); maternity care (+1.3); minor emergencies (+1.5); orthopedics (+1.6); gastrointestinal problems (+1.9); major surgery (+2.5); outpatient surgery (+2.6); open-heart surgery (+3.0); and cancer care (+3.2).

PRC has just released a bound, full-color report detailing the 2006 Consumer Perception Study findings. Contact: Publications@PRCOnline.com to request your complimentary copy. Please include your name and mailing information.



HCAHPS and Your Organization: What's Ahead for 2007

CMS Makes HCAHPS Mandatory to Receive Full Payments



Beginning on July 1, 2007, hospitals will be required to participate in HCAHPS to receive their full market basket payment update. This new rule is designed to promote higher quality and value in outpatient care and includes provisions for expanding the quality reporting requirements for hospital inpatient services beginning in 2008. (To participate, hospitals must join HCAHPS by July 1, 2007.)

Also, hospitals must report risk-adjusted outcome measures to receive the full payment update, including 30-day mortality measures for patients hospitalized with an acute myocardial infarction.

The final ruling announces CMS' plans to develop additional quality measures that are specifically appropriate for hospital outpatient care, and will require hospitals to report the outpatient-specific measures beginning in FY2009.

It is important to know that hospitals must participate in an HCAHPS Dry Run before they can participate in full HCAHPS. Hospitals who did not join in 2006 with data collection beginning October 1, 2006 will need to participate in the March 2007 HCAHPS Dry Run—even if the hospital has already completed a Dry Run in 2006. If you are not currently participating in HCAHPS, plan now for the HCAHPS Dry Run in March

2007 so that you can participate in the full HCAHPS implementation in July 2007.

The implications of this new CMS ruling are significant for hospitals across our nation. If you have questions about how this latest CMS announcement will affect your organization and how PRC can help, contact our full-time HCAHPS experts at Info@PRConline.com.

PRC has produced an all-new, updated guide to assist you with HCAHPS—"Making a Positive Impact with HCAHPS: A Hospital's Guide to Understanding & Communicating the HCAHPS Initiative."



To request your complimentary copy, please send an email with your name and mailing information to:

Publications@PRConline.com



CURRENT TIMELINE (AS OF JANUARY 1, 2007)

- **October 2006** – National Implementation data collection begins with October discharges; data collection continues ongoing from this point
- **April 2007** – Deadline for submitting first quarter HCAHPS data to QNet Exchange; data submission continues quarterly from this point
- **March 2007** – Dry run period for hospitals first joining HCAHPS in the second round of data collection.
- **June 2007** – First round of surveying ends with June 30th discharges.
- **July 2007** – Second round of surveying begins; to continue through June 2008.
- **September 2007** – Data collection ends for the first 9 months of publicly-reported data (3 months after the discharge date; June 30 + 3 months = Sept. 30). Data collection continues for next quarter's reporting update.
- **October 2007** – Deadline for submitting third quarter HCAHPS data to QNet Exchange; CMS has all data for the first round of public reporting
- **Late 2007/Early 2008** – First publicly-reported data is posted on the Hospital Compare website at www.HospitalCompare.hhs.gov. Data will be updated quarterly from this point forward to reflect the most recent four quarters.

PRC's Continuing Education CyberSeminars Offer Something for Everyone

Cost-Effective Learning Without Leaving Your Desk!

One of the many benefits to PRC's clients is the opportunity to attend educational CyberSeminars. Throughout the year, PRC hosts several CyberSeminars on different topics of interest to healthcare professionals. These seminars generally run 50 minutes in length, with a 10-minute question and answer forum at the end of each session. The PRC CyberSeminar is an interactive, educational forum utilizing an internet connection. Audio is provided through a telephone conference session.

We encourage attendees to invite as many people as possible to join in attending the seminar; you will only be charged for the number of computers/telephones connecting to the session. These sessions are for anyone wanting to learn more about PRC and how to use their PRC data. In addition, PRC frequently invites clients to share successful case studies with others through this interactive forum.

The cost for each session (unless otherwise noted) is \$100 per session, per site. To register, please email kmattes@PRCOnline.com.

For complete session descriptions, or for more information, visit:
<http://www.pronline.com/education/cyberseminars>



Upcoming sessions for 2007 include:

Wednesday, January 31

"Taking the Wheel—Empowering People to Make Informed Healthcare Choices and Improve Their Health"

Presented by Wayne Sensor
(CEO, Alegent Health)

Wednesday, February 21

"Setting Goals"

Presented by John Gnida and Hope Brown (PRC)

Wednesday, February 28

"Wow! What a Difference!"

Presented by Deb Brooks
(Clinical Manager, Emergency Services, Roper Saint Francis Healthcare)

Wednesday, March 21

"The Truth Behind Key Drivers"

Presented by Joe Snipp and Jan Gnida (PRC)

Thursday, March 29

"Make it Your Own: Customizing a Recipe for Success"

Presented by Bill Nole
(Director of Quality, St. Francis Health System)

Wednesday, April 18

"Tips on Action Planning"

Presented by John Gnida and Hope Brown (PRC)

Wednesday, April 25

"Reinventing Physician-Hospital Relationships"

Presented by Dr. Andrew Epstein
(CEO, The Bard Group)

Wednesday, May 2

"The Difference Between Service Excellence and Operational Excellence"

Presented by John Gnida and Hope Brown (PRC)

Tuesday, May 15

"Innovative Employee Strategies"

Presented by Dr. William VanNess
(President/CEO, Community Hospital Anderson)
and
Steve Majors
(Chief Administrative Officer/
Director of HR, Community Hospital Anderson)



2007 Client Education Conference
Bonita Springs, Florida

2007 Client Education Conference Update

Palm trees, majestic sunsets, warm breezes and sparkling waters coupled with intriguing keynote speakers, fun networking opportunities, educational breakout sessions and gourmet food makes for a PRC 2007 Client Education Conference you won't want to miss! Be watching for your email invitation coming soon. Or, visit www.PRCOnline.com for more information.

2007 Conference Exhibiting Schedule

Professional Research Consultants, Inc. will be present and exhibiting at a number of professional conferences in 2007. Some of the confirmed dates are listed below. If you find yourself attending any of these events, please stop by PRC's booth and say hello!

January 31 – February 2, 2007
California Patient Relation
Association Annual Conference
(CaPRA)
Palm Springs, CA

February 25—27, 2007
Forum Physician Strategies Summit
Orlando, CA
www.healthcarestrategy.com

March 7 – 9, 2007
Communities Joined in Action /
Association for Community Health
Improvement
New Orleans, LA
www.communityhlth.org
www.cjaonline.net

April 22 – 24, 2007
Consumer-Based Marketing
Strategies Forum
Orlando, FL
www.healthcarestrategy.com

June 11 – 13, 2007
What's RIGHT in Health Care 2007
(The Studer Group)
Orlando, FL
www.studergroup.com

July 22 – 23, 2007
AHA/Health Forum Leadership
Summit
San Diego, CA
www.healthforum.com

September 30 – October 2, 2007
American Society for Healthcare
Human Resources Administration
National Conference (ASHHRA)
Anaheim, CA
www.ashhra.org

October 3 – 6, 2007
Society for Healthcare Strategy &
Market Development (SHSMD)
Washington, D.C.
www.aha.org

October 21 – 23, 2007
Hospital & Physician Relations:
An Executive Summit
Phoenix, AZ
www.healthcarestrategy.com

For the most up-to-date list of conferences where PRC will be in attendance and/or exhibiting, please visit our website at www.PRCOnline.com



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We want to hear from you! If you have a story you'd like to share, a subject you'd like to learn more about, or general comments about PRC Edge, please contact Jill Reeves, MHA, Director of Communications: (800) 428-7455, or jreeves@PRCOnline.com

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