How Bronson Hospital Built, Launched, and Executed a New Lab Outreach Program to Backfill Losses on Reimbursement Rates

⊕ BRONSON

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- hc1 provides Bronson with access to real-time analytics that inform growth-oriented decisions.

- Bronson implemented an impactful outreach program to increase long-term lab revenue.

- The hospital's outreach program is projected to grow by 80% in the next seven years.

THE CHALLENGE

New regulations, reimbursement cuts, and resource constraints are pinching the revenue margins of most laboratories.

While innovative labs seek to grow their outreach operations to backfill the losses they are experiencing from tighter reimbursement rates, very few accomplish it. The harsh reality is laboratories without a focus on outreach may be forced to close by the end of 2017. The only way to sustain and increase long-term revenue is by implementing an effective outreach program that doesn't deplete lab resources.

Bronson Healthcare Group recognized that to sustain and increase long-term revenue it needed to conceive, build, and implement an outreach program that made both an immediate and long-term impact upon the organization.

THE SOLUTION

Joe Seestadt joined Bronson as Director of Lab Outreach after serving in a similar role at a large, leading Midwest laboratory. From his experience, he knew how to successfully lead a clinical laboratory through the process of implementing an outreach program that resulted in growth.

Seestadt used a structural tension model – which combines LEAN process design with employee engagement – to assess the organization's outreach needs from every angle, including goals, infrastructure, resources, personnel, and technology.

> *"The structural tension model is about visualizing where you want to go as a company and using resources, including critical technology such as a healthcare CRM, to get to the desired state," Seestadt said. "It combines creativity and structure, encouraging employees to work together to address issues and develop solutions from different angles."*

In addition to determining that an investment in both capital equipment (Bronson is on track to build a new, state-of-the-art lab within the next 12 months) and personnel would be worthwhile, Seestadt also helped Bronson uncover the need to employ a healthcare-specific CRM to ensure that Bronson could deliver the highest level of service to its existing provider clients while also handling the demands of new client relationships.

Bronson selected a healthcare relationship management platform – including healthcare CRM, real-time analytics, and secure collaboration – to:

- Improve issue resolution workflows and better anticipate client needs.

- Track and manage all sales activities.

- Access real-time analytics that inform decisions for growth.

"Labs need the right technology in place to have an unobstructed view into client issues and the sales pipeline for proactive and precise targeting," Seestadt said.

RESULTS

Seestadt has implemented this strategy into two major clinical laboratories with great success:

- The outreach program at his previous Midwest lab grew by 90% in four years.

- Bronson's outreach program is projected to grow by 80% in the next seven years.

This year, 2017, is projected to be a harsh landscape for labs when it comes to receiving reimbursement rates. Outreach programs help backfill that revenue loss. hc1 is supporting Bronson's sustainable solution.

BRONSON HEALTHCARE GROUP

Bronson Healthcare Group operates a healthcare system that services patients and families throughout southwest Michigan and northern Indiana. The healthcare system operates 12 facilities and employs more than 8,600, making it one of the area's largest employers.

Bronson Awards:

- Bronson Methodist Hospital is nationally recognized by Healthgrades for providing an Outstanding Patient Experience (2009-2016).

- Bronson Battle Creek is among the top ten percent in the nation as a recipient of Healthgrades Patient Safety Excellence Award (2016).

- Bronson LakeView Hospital is recognized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services as a top 20 hospital for neuro psychiatric care (2016).