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PRESS GANEY UNVEILS PHYSICIAN PARTNERSHIP MODEL

Approach creates healthy relationships, strong bottom lines

February 12, 2009 (South Bend, Ind.) – Physicians are key players in health care organizations for many reasons. In addition to their most critical job— caring for patients—they help drive revenue and referrals. It's essential that organizations evaluate and improve relationships with physicians to ensure they are working to their full potential. To help with this, Press Ganey Associates, Inc. has unveiled an integrated approach to physician relationships in the health care setting—the Physician Partnership™ approach. The new framework will help health care organizations build powerful, sustainable relationships with their physicians, resulting in superior patient care and organizational outcomes.

“Working with physicians can be difficult, especially in today’s environment with pressures on reimbursement, rising malpractice insurance costs, and increased competition. It’s more challenging to create partnerships with physicians than it was twenty years ago,” said Debbie Paller, vice president of physician and employee services at Press Ganey. “However, strong, successful relationships between physicians and hospitals can be created despite challenges in the changing health care delivery system.”

The ultimate goal is to align physicians with hospital goals in order to help the relationships, and the bottom line, evolve. The first step to achieving this goal is to understand the two distinct physician motivators: satisfaction and engagement. Satisfied physicians practice health care in an efficient and effective health care facility. Their foundational expectations (the basics), which include up-to-date equipment, timely test results, qualified staff, and efficient processes, are met.

For physicians to be engaged, they also need to be involved in hospital planning and decision-making and have leaders whom they can trust. The bottom line is they must be *invested* – in the hospital, its mission, and its values, *involved* – in improving hospital performance and strategic initiatives, and they must be *advocates* – to endorse the hospital to others in including patients, colleagues, and the community.

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“Once physicians are satisfied and engaged, the new approach to partnership can be met,” added Paller. “Press Ganey’s approach to physician partnership is the foundation for building multi-faceted relationships for world-class results.”

The Physician Partnership model includes Five Partnership Principles™:

Satisfaction

1. **Ease of Practice**—Timely results, easy-to-use processes, the right equipment, efficient operating rooms, and the ability to quickly oversee care of patients.
2. **Quality of Care**—Staff quality and reliability, and collaboration for care.

Engagement

3. **Confidence and Trust**—Confidence in leaders and a strong sense of leadership’s long-term commitment.
4. **Communication and Responsiveness**—Open, two-way communication, with responsiveness to and follow-through on concerns.
5. **Involvement in Planning**—Informing physicians and welcoming their input regarding hospital decision-making and planning.

In order to address these principles, Press Ganey will continue to offer strategic consulting to help organizations achieve measurable results. Press Ganey’s strategic consultants bring the experience of hospital CEOs, medical practice executives, and other health care leaders.

Once the partnership model is achieved, health care organizations will see many benefits including: increased revenue, greater utilization of assets, improved productivity, increased innovation, decreased safety risks, fewer complaints, and improved perceptions of quality-of-care.

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Debbie Paller is available for comment upon request.

Press Ganey Associates, Inc.

For more than 20 years, Press Ganey has been committed to providing insight that allows health care organizations to improve the quality of care they provide while improving their bottom-line results. The company offers the largest comparative customer feedback databases, actionable data, solution resources, and unparalleled consulting and customer service. Press Ganey currently partners with more than 7,000 health care facilities—including over 40% of U.S. hospitals—to measure and improve the quality of their care.

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