



Health Care Reform- Is There A Role For Home Care?

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Changes in the health care industry started long before health care reform became a bill. Some visionary providers and insurers were already making plans not only for vertical and horizontal growth within their organizations and cultures, but to run lean and mean.

The home care industry does not change so readily. We have been doing business the same way for a long time and have rarely changed except to incorporate new regulations or develop new programs. But change is a significant factor in the various models of health care under the Affordable Care Act.

It is quite simple- Home care must change the way they do business. ***Change or die.*** We have a value to the new healthcare systems that will develop but we have to think differently about business. The old silos will be gone. Home care must become a collaborative partner and that means customer service to not only patients, but also to partner providers. It means moving our agencies and staff to a new way of thinking, to new protocols, to understanding that the patients are going to be shared along a system and that most likely we will not be drivers of the new systems. Health care reform will require new leadership skills, visionary leadership, communication skills and the ability change quickly.

Where will your agency be in the next few years? Ask yourself the following questions.

What would your staff do or say if they were asked to see patients within 4 hours of discharge from an acute care facility?

What would they say if they no longer had control over the development of the plan of care and were given a schedule (made by someone else other than themselves) of who to see on a daily basis?

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In order to accommodate large health care systems- how many new admissions could you take on a daily basis, weekly?

How prepared are you to utilize nurse practitioners and 5 year degree physician assistants?

If you believe that any of the above is a problem for your organization, then it is time to develop your leadership strategies to move your organization forward for health care reform.