

island scene

special issue

well-being, family, and fun for **HMSA** members | special issue fall 2016 | wellbeinghi.com

PUTTING PATIENTS FIRST

HMSA's Payment
Transformation
is Changing
Lives

WORKING TOGETHER
FOR BETTER HEALTH

HITTING A WELL-BEING
HOME RUN

PHYSICIANS LEADING
THE WAY



dear members

Welcome to this special issue of *Island Scene*. You'll also receive your regular fall issue shortly if you haven't received it already. This is the first time we've done a special issue, but we wanted to share information with you on a very important topic.

At HMSA, we have a new, innovative way to support your relationship with your PCP and make it easier for you to take control of your own health and well-being. We call it **payment transformation** and it's a partnership between HMSA and Hawai'i's doctors.

The current system of physician reimbursement focuses on treating you when you get sick. It pays doctors for every office visit, every test, and every service they provide. Under the current system, doctors must be sitting in front of the patient to get paid, so they can't afford to make house calls, answer phone calls at night, or text or email their patients.

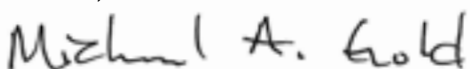
Payment transformation will change that. We no longer want to pay doctors just for seeing patients in their offices. Instead, we'll give them an overall fee to care for their patients in the way that they believe will be most effective. By aligning their payments with quality care, they'll be rewarded for giving their patients the right treatment and tests. Through payment transformation, doctors can do what they really *want* to do – help people and improve the health of their community.

Emails and text messages may not be for everyone. But a Windward O'ahu pediatrician I know says it's the best way to communicate with her teenage patients. This is easier for her patients and gives her more time to spend with other patients, so everyone benefits. As a patient, you should be able to spend more time with your doctor when you're sick and, more importantly, get preventive care when you're not.

We believe that payment transformation will lead to healthier patients, higher satisfaction, and a stronger, more sustainable health care system for our state. It's an essential part of our Māhie 2020 vision to empower everyone in Hawai'i to engage in their health and well-being.

Earlier this year, we introduced a pilot program with selected PCPs to test how to make payment transformation work for all of us. Starting next year, we'll roll out payment transformation to all the PCPs in our network. It will be one of the most exciting transformations in Hawai'i's health care in decades. And we're glad you're part of it.

Mahalo,



Michael A. Gold
President and Chief Executive Officer



island scene

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COVER: Hilo resident Barry Taniguchi (right) works in partnership with his doctor, Kevin Kurohara, M.D., to stay healthy. Article on page 2. Photo by Earl Yoshii.



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Working Together to Improve Your Care



By Mark M. Mugiishi, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Senior Vice President
and Chief Medical Officer

You've heard the saying, "It takes a village." At HMSA, we work with many people across the state to get their expertise and guidance to help transform and improve your care.

We took this teamwork approach before launching our payment transformation pilot in April. We spent more than a year working with Hawai'i physicians and health care professionals on a system that we believe will improve the way you receive care. We also convened a **Blue Ribbon Panel** of national thought leaders and other experts.

We're very fortunate to work with so many leaders on a program that can serve as a model for the rest of the U.S. The panel included these experts who developed and implemented major national health policy reforms:


- Mark McClellan, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Center for Health Policy at Duke University; former senior fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C.; former administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services; and former commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
- Ezekiel Emanuel, M.D., vice provost for Global Initiatives, chair of the Department of Medical Ethics and Health Policy at the University of Pennsylvania, former White House special adviser on health policy, and one of the architects of the Affordable Care Act.

- Gail Wilensky, Ph.D., senior fellow at Project HOPE, an international health foundation, who directed the Medicare and Medicaid programs from 1990 to 1992 and served as a health and welfare adviser to President George H.W. Bush.

Working together, we've created a system that transforms the doctor-patient relationship. So far, we've received positive feedback from patients and physicians in the pilot program. You can read some of those personal accounts in this special issue of *Island Scene*.

As HMSA's chief medical officer, the most important part of my job is to ensure you get the best health care possible. That means constantly looking for ways to innovate and improve the care you receive. That's why I'm so excited about one of HMSA's most transformational initiatives ever.

Like most big changes, there have been challenges. We're learning from them and are working to improve the program before expanding it to more physicians next year. And because the decisions we make affect you the most, we'll ask HMSA members whose doctors participate in the pilot program to give us their feedback. If you receive a survey in the mail, please fill it out. Your opinions are essential to helping us make positive changes.

Payment transformation is a major initiative to improve your care. It's another example of the good we can accomplish when we take a "village" approach and work together toward a goal of better health and well-being. 

putting patients first

By **Craig DeSilva** • Photo by **Earl Yoshii**

Kevin Kurohara, M.D., is doing what he loves most – helping people be healthy. That’s why he became a doctor.

The Hilo family practitioner wants to spend more time with his patients, but with so many appointments in a day, it’s not always possible. As a participant in the new provider payment model, Kurohara knows first-hand that he can now connect with his patients in more ways than before to give them the attention and care they deserve.

“Having a flexible payment model allows us to reach out to our patients in different ways,” Kurohara says. “It could mean seeing them between office visits, perhaps home visits, and other ways that we wouldn’t be compensated for in the past,” he says.

And that’s an advantage for both patients and doctors. Kurohara’s confident that the payment model will strengthen their bond. “This model enhances the flexibility for doctors to meet their patients’ individual needs,” he says.

Kurohara considers his patients as part of his ‘ohana. He’s just as concerned about their health and well-being as he is with members of his own family.

“I think the special thing about this payment model is the opportunity to have a more personalized relationship with patients,” he says. “The payment model of the future will hopefully help us to better meet the needs of our patients.”



Hilo physician Kevin Kurohara, M.D., (right) considers patients like Barry Taniguchi part of his family.

Trust Factor

When it comes to his health, Barry Taniguchi doesn’t trust just anyone. That’s why he’s been seeing his primary care provider, Kevin Kurohara, for 25 years.

“I rely on him to monitor any changes in my health and take care of problems early,” says Taniguchi, chairman and chief executive officer of the family-owned KTA Super Stores.

So Taniguchi was glad to hear that Kurohara was one of the first doctors in Hawai‘i to participate in HMSA’s new provider payment model. Since Taniguchi has been faced with some health issues in recent years, he relies on Kurohara to keep him on track with recommending tests and prescribing medications. He believes the new payment system is a step in the right direction.

Now, Taniguchi can find out about his lab results over the phone instead of having to make an appointment for an office visit. And since time is very important to him, that suits Taniguchi just fine.

“I trust that he’s doing everything he can to keep my health on track,” he says. **is**

hitting a **well-being** homerun

This HMSA member is focused on total health with help from his doctor.

By **Christa Hester** • Photo by **Earl Yoshii**



Gary and Leila Paracuelles (center) celebrate with HMSA employees. Gary won a prize drawing after taking his Well-Being 5.

HMSA member Gary Paracuelles won an all-expenses paid trip for two to see the San Francisco Giants and Los Angeles Dodgers baseball game at AT&T Park in San Francisco, Calif. And it's all thanks to his doctor.

Earlier this year, Randall Suzuka, M.D., asked Gary to take the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being 5® to get a complete picture of his physical, mental, and emotional health. Suzuka, who participates in HMSA's payment transformation pilot program, believes in supporting each aspect of his patients' well-being so they can be happier and healthier. "Dr. Suzuka's always been great about managing my care, especially helping me eat healthy so I feel good and keep my numbers in check," Gary says.

When Gary saw Suzuka at his next appointment, he'd forgotten to take the Well-Being 5. After more encouragement from Suzuka, Gary took the survey and won HMSA's Score a Home Run Contest. As happy as he and his wife, Leila, were about the prize, they're even happier to have a doctor who truly invests in their health and well-being. "I'm so glad Dr. Suzuka is looking out for my husband's health," Leila says.

How will
payment
transformation
**affect
me?**



- Actively participate in your health care.
- Avoid unnecessary tests and treatments.
- Focus more on prevention, not just treatment.
- Spend more time with your doctor for ongoing illnesses.
- Connect with doctors between office visits.

Premiums and benefits will not change because of payment transformation, but you may see usual annual health plan changes.

leading the **payment transformation** pilot

This year, about 100 Hawai'i physicians became the first leaders in HMSA's payment transformation pilot. Together, they care for about 100,000 HMSA members.

Here's what three of these physicians have to say about the program, the first of its kind in the U.S.

an important **transformation**

Michael Nagoshi, M.D., believes that the health care system needs to evolve from treating people only when they're sick to helping them stay well.

"There's a lot of really good patient-centered care that we provide that we don't get paid for," he says. "We get paid for taking care of people who are ill. But when we prevent illness, we don't get paid. So there's something obviously wrong with the system."

Nagoshi, chief medical officer at the Central Medical Clinic (CMC), has long been an advocate for transforming the health care system – he helped develop the advanced primary care (APC) system at CMC. Instead of working independently, primary care providers work as a team of physicians and specialists that regularly interacts with patients to keep them healthy, instead of getting involved only when they're sick.

It's a change that's needed to fix a broken system, Nagoshi says. But he admits if we want doctors to put patients in the center of their care, we have to pay for patient centered care.



Michael Nagoshi, M.D., has been working to improve Hawai'i's health care system for years.

"For the system to change, the fundamental change has to start with the way we get paid," he says, "because if we don't get paid differently, there's no way we can practice differently. And that's the reason I believe that this payment transformation is absolutely essential."

- David Frickman

changing the delivery of **comprehensive care**

Brijit "Brit" Reis, M.D., of Reis Pediatrics on O'ahu, believes that payment transformation will better support the health and well-being of her patients now and in the future.

Reis is one of the doctors participating in the pilot program through Castle Health Group, a Kailua-based physician organization that practices patient-centered care. Castle Health Group is one of four physician organizations participating in the program.



Brit Reis, M.D., of Castle Health Group, works with a patient.

Reis says the program is changing the way her practice delivers comprehensive care by giving her more flexibility and offering her patients more ways to communicate with her. She also looks forward to the next phase of the program, which focuses on preventive care. For pediatricians like Reis, these metrics include well-child visits, immunizations, nutrition counseling, and more.

“The new system lets me and my staff decide when and how to best care for our patients and not worry about getting paid for each interaction. This payment model will save our patients time and provide them with quality care in a more efficient manner,” Reis says.

As part of this process, Reis plans to offer a secure texting tool to her patients. If they prefer, they can text her about their health issues or concerns and save a trip to the office if it isn’t necessary to address them in person.

Reis says another benefit of the program is having a forum where she can easily collaborate with her peers. Physicians in the pilot program share what’s working in their offices and identify areas of care to focus on.

“Before the program, it was hard to get doctors together to discuss these topics,” Reis says. “Now, we’re able to work together to improve the health of our patients and communities.”

- Lynn Shizumura

change for the better

Lynda Dolan, M.D., a family physician in Hilo, admits that participating in HMSA’s payment transformation pilot program wasn’t an easy transition. Looking back, however, she’s glad she was one of the first doctors to make the move.

The program has transformed her practice at Family Medicine Center, which consists of two family physicians caring for almost 3,000 patients. It’s made her practice more efficient, a benefit for both patients and doctors.

Patients don’t have to wait to make an appointment for services that her medical assistants can handle, such as medication reviews. Dolan has created a system to communicate with patients so they don’t have to come in for information that she can securely email to them. And patients receive electronic reminders for appointments and health screenings, which her younger patients particularly appreciate. “I want to make it easy and convenient for them, which in turn reaps rewards for all,” she says. “It streamlines staff time, our patients’ recommended health maintenance is updated, and it leads to happier, healthier patients who are more engaged in their health.”



Lynda Dolan, M.D., (center) with her team of nurses and administrative staff at Family Medicine Center.

She’s spread out patient visits by delegating medical assistants to help patients with some basic services. This allows Dolan to focus on patients who need more care for specific illnesses, like diabetes. She also has more time to care for her patients’ total well-being, including their mental and emotional health, and not just their physical illness.

“We share the responsibility of care and can spend more time with the patient,” she says. “We’re happier and more consistent and timely with patient care.”

- Craig DeSilva

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