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#### ***"It's a Jungle Out There" for healthcare providers.***

Times are tough. The regulations keep piling on and reimbursement rates have been cut. Competition is fierce and costs are rising. Successful healthcare leaders know they must stay ahead of changes in the marketplace and continue to seek out innovative new revenue opportunities. Navigating through the maze is a challenge and leaders often don't have other leadership resources for help in strategizing the direction of their business.

Now, Clint Maun is offering consulting and executive coaching for healthcare leadership and management. Imagine being able to confidentially discuss daily challenges, opportunities and receive immediate ideas, information and action recommendations for an affordable monthly fee. Essentially, you'd have a personal consultant and life coach on retainer for much less than his on-site fee, with no expenses.

Clint would be available via live webcam, phone conferences and email to discuss and coach on the

challenges successful healthcare leaders face, such as:

- Reimbursement Issues
- Tough employees
- Strategic opportunities
- Methods to improve teamwork
- Revenue strategies
- Merger and acquisition opportunities
- Partnership with other health care providers

*If you are interested in having Clint on retainer as a personal and professional advisor and coach, please contact Kathy Cain, VP, 800.356.2233.*

## The Unique Benefits of a Multidisciplinary Team Approach

You probably have heard of a multidisciplinary team (MDT) approach. To be sure, the term has been gaining in popularity—but what exactly is it? In simple terms, a multidisciplinary team is a group of healthcare workers and social care professionals who are experts in different areas with different professional backgrounds, united as a team for the purpose of planning and implementing treatment programs for complex medical conditions. Most often, healthcare professionals are elected into a MDT team depending upon a patient's needs and the condition or disease being treated. MDT generally consists of an attending physician, a registered nurse, and other appropriate staff, however, *the most important member of the multidisciplinary team is the patient*. MDT is also often used interchangeably with interdisciplinary teams.

### The Benefits of MDT

With a diverse group of healthcare professionals, such as physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dietitians, and health educators, social service and mental health providers, there is more certainty that all of the needs of the patient will be met. Indeed, there are several proven benefits of a MDT approach:

- **Improved outcomes.** Research has shown that an MDT approach can prove especially beneficial for chronic conditions like Type II diabetes, arthritis and coronary heart disease, just to name a few. *The Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology* recently published a study that looked at a MDT approach to chronic kidney disease (CKD). The MDT consisted of an HMO-based nephrologist, pharmacy specialist, diabetes educator, dietitian, social worker, and nephrology nurse. In this integrated care setting, MDT care resulted in a slower decline in glomerular filtration rate (GFR) than usual care. This occurred despite a lack of significant differences for secondary disease-specific measures, suggesting that other differences in the MDT population or care process accounted for the slower decline in GFR in the MDT group. Moreover, other studies have documented that for patients with Type II diabetes, a multidisciplinary approach can actually lead to the improvement of glycemic control and improved quality of life.
- **A variety of views and solutions.** An MDT is comprised of professionals from diverse disciplines and backgrounds. Therefore, the team is more apt to provide a comprehensive assessment through their individual expertise and in consultation with one another. If differences in opinion or approach arise, they can be discussed and resolved within the group and with the patient. The patient is presented with comprehensive options and is involved in the group discussion.
- **Dynamic and interactive learning opportunities.** An MDT offers a forum for its members to learn more about the strategies, resources, and approaches used by various disciplines within the team. It also provides healthcare professionals with ongoing support. An MDT approach can ultimately prove extremely valuable as team members deal with difficult situations and cases.

While the MDT approach offers many benefits, it is worth mentioning that it can be complicated to coordinate schedules for meetings and the time required to effectively discuss and treat patients in

a group setting. No doubt—ensuring that all professionals make the time to participate can be a challenge. That being said, the benefits certainly seem to outweigh the drawbacks, and it's likely that an MDT approach will only continue to grow in popularity.

*"To succeed as a team is to hold all of the members accountable for their expertise."  
— Mitchell Caplan*

## Tech Talk! Leverage Healthcare's Best Apps

Apps for healthcare professionals are plentiful and in many cases the sheer volume of apps can prove overwhelming and confusing. To help professionals steer through the clutter, Apple now offers a healthcare section with several categories of apps, including reference apps, educational apps, electronic medical records (EMR) and patient monitoring apps, imaging apps, point-of-care apps, and personal care apps (for consumers).

### Category Highlights

You're probably well-aware of reference and educational apps, but other sections, such as point of care and EMR may be a little newer. Here's some background:

- **EMR & patient monitoring group of apps** include a number of high profile applications like Epic's Haiku, GE's CA Mobile, DrChrono, Nimble, and more.
- **Point-of-care apps** is a group apps for physicians to use with patients at the bed side. DrawMD: Urology, iSpineCare, and Medical French are among a handful of apps for healthcare professionals with iPads.

### Check these *Free* Apps Out

There are several great free apps you can check out on iTunes. Here are among some of the very best:

- **Medscape** offers a free medical app for medical professionals. The app is rich with free content including thousands of drug references disease clinical references, clinical images and procedure videos.
- **The New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) app** is excellent for all healthcare professionals. The app allows you to access the last 7 days worth of published articles, along with images of various medical conditions and videos on how to perform procedures such as LPs and chest tubes.
- **Epocrates** is one of the best medical reference tools in the mobile format. The free version of Epocrates, Epocrates Rx, provides great content including drug monographs and health plan formularies, a drug interaction tool, pill identifier, and medical calculator.

To find these and other great apps, simply go to iTunes and click on **App Store**. From there, select **Medical** under **Categories**.

*"Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."  
—Arthur C. Clarke*

## A Look at 2012 Healthcare Legislation

Being that this is an election year, we have certainly seen a lot of movement and action within healthcare legislation. Here is a look at some of the key highlights that affect the healthcare profession.

**Linking Payment to Quality Outcomes.** This law became effective for payments for discharges occurring on or after October 1, 2012 and establishes a hospital Value-Based Purchasing program

(VBP) in Traditional Medicare. This program offers financial incentives to hospitals to improve the quality of care.

**Encouraging Integrated Health Systems.** This new law became effective January 1, 2012 and provides incentives for physicians to join together to form *Accountable Care Organizations*. If Accountable Care Organizations provide high quality care and reduce costs to the health care system, they can keep some of the money that they have helped save.

**Reducing Paperwork and Administrative Costs.** This new law implements a series of changes to standardize billing and requires health plans to begin adopting and implementing rules for the secure, confidential, electronic exchange of health information. The first regulation became effective October 1, 2012.

**Understanding and Fighting Health Disparities.** This act became effective March, 2012 and aims to reduce persistent health disparities. The law requires any ongoing or new federal health program to collect and report racial, ethnic and language data.

For more information on healthcare legislation, past, present and future, visit [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

*"Technology... the knack of so arranging the world that we don't have to experience it."*  
—Max Frisch

## New Healthcare Technology

A lady came to the hospital to visit a friend. She had not been in a hospital for several years and felt very ignorant about all the new technology. A technician followed her onto the elevator, wheeling a large, intimidating looking machine with tubes and wires and dials. "Boy, would I hate to be hooked up to that thing," she said.

"So would I," replied the technician. "It's a floor-cleaning machine."

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8031 W. Center Rd.  
Suite #222  
Omaha, NE 68124

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