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## From Cycles to Portal

Welcome to the premier issue of *Portal*, HMS’s newest publication. *Portal* replaces *Cycles* as our internal newsletter and a forum for sharing news, information and ideas.

When we launched the new HMS last month, it made no sense to leave our internal newsletter out of it all. So, we started from scratch and created a new publication dedicated to the collaborative sharing of knowledge and the dissemination of our core values: service, excellence, innovation, and integrity.

*Portal* features a design that’s consistent with our new image. But why the name *Portal*?

Well, that’s what we call the design element in our new logo. And like our logo, the *Portal* name conveys our openness, our unique perspective in the industry, and our commitment to our clients.

We have a great first issue for you and we’re sure that this newsletter will become your “portal” to the world of HMS.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



## Building Our Culture of Excellence

I've been talking about a "culture of excellence" for quite a while now. During the past month, I've visited offices across the country to launch our new brand and introduce our mission and values, all of which begin and end with service to the client. Of course, building a culture of excellence in client service won't happen by itself; we have to make it happen. And that's what I want to talk about here.

The most important thing the branding initiative taught us was that we needed to do more to keep our clients happy and make sure that they remain loyal to us over the long term. This goal is even more important given the increased competition we are seeing in our core service areas.

The senior team discussed all of the feedback we received from clients and, as mentioned during our branding presentations, formed a Client Service Program. Its goal is to re-energize our efforts to build a culture of excellence in client service throughout the organization, and to formalize what it means to deliver high-quality service.

We expect this initiative to be implemented over the course of a year.

## Permedion Wins Award for Being a Great Place to Work

Did you know there's a company whose employees are so satisfied that they nominated it for Employer of the Year? Well, one of our own HMS companies, Permedion, was nominated for



Top, left to right - Tina Pryor, Office Assistant; Yalonda Harper, Executive Assistant

Bottom, left to right - Tom Schultz, President of Permedion; Theresa Clarke, Accounting/Administrative Assistant

and won that title in April. They were named Employer of the Year by the local chapter of the International Association of Administrative

Professionals (IAAP). The award was presented for the demonstration of commitment to the development of administrative professionals.

"My assistant, Yalonda Harper, deserves most of the credit for the award," says Tom Schultz, President of Permedion. "She is president-elect of the local chapter, the Polaris North Star (PNS) chapter, and represents us very well. I believe you always represent your company even if it's not your job to do so."

Permedion was nominated by other chapter members based on their interactions with Yalonda and two other members from Permedion: Tina Pryor and Theresa Clarke.

Yalonda has been involved in IAAP, which has more than 400,000 members nationwide, since 1999. The

organization's goal is to foster the development of administrative professionals. They aim to increase the stature and educational achievements of their members by encouraging professionalism and skills development.

Yalonda was, naturally, thrilled by the award. "It is truly an honor to receive such recognition. Permedion has a culture where administrative professionals are truly treated as professionals who are an integral part of the company's success. It is a terrific place to work."

Tina Pryor is the office assistant and receptionist. She's been at Permedion for nearly 10 years and has been a PNS member for one year. She also enjoys extraordinary

And, as part of this program, we will be defining what it means to deliver excellent client service, and then provide tools and training to employees at all levels to ensure we can meet our goals. The Client Service team has drafted nine preliminary HMS Service Principles, which will serve as the standards by which we measure our success.

The first step will be to gather data from our current clients to help us better understand how they perceive us and gauge how well we are doing against our Service Principles. We plan to issue a survey to all clients later this month. We will then

compile the data, look for common themes, and implement ways to address the issues most important to our clients. You will all hear about the results, and will be asked to take an active role in improving our performance. We will also update our Principles so they truly align with clients' expectations.

We need to learn from you, as well. That's why we're planning an employee survey in the near future. You can read more about it in this issue.

You may be aware that HMS has hired Mike Kendall as Vice President of Process Engineering. Mike and his team, including

Katherine Benedict, will focus initially on addressing some of the systemic obstacles that hinder our ability to deliver excellent service to our clients. You can read a brief introduction to Mike's work in this issue.

We look forward to creating new ways to engage everyone in the company, regardless of your role, in this pursuit of excellence.



Bill Lucia

job satisfaction. "It's a joy to work for Permedion," she said. "There are so many doors open here. The company encourages growth and development among its entire team of nine admins."

Theresa Clarke has been with Permedion since 2006, when she was hired for the Finance Department on a part-time basis. "I really like working for Tom," she said. "He has a true open-door policy and a great sense of humor."

IAAP wants to see administrative professionals reach their highest potential. And PNS chapter president, Sharon Swinehart, believes that, in the greater Columbus community, Permedion has consistently led the way in achieving that goal with them. "I am honored to be able to announce Permedion as the winner this year and proud that we have three members of their staff within our chapter," said Swinehart. "If the quality of the rest of Permedion's

personnel is reflected by the caliber of these women, it must be a very special place to work, indeed!"

Permedion is not the biggest company, nor the one with the highest revenue, among those represented by the PNS chapter. Yet, for three years it has paid the full cost for its entire administrative team to attend PNS's annual Administrative Professionals Training event and Luncheon. This is a solid testament to their support of the PNS chapter, IAAP values, and their commitment to showing appreciation to valued employees at all levels.

"Every year we send them all to the special event," explained Tom. "We have to arrange for phone coverage. Four hours without them is about all we can manage!"

All the support and encouragement result in a great deal of pride for both management and staff. "It makes me proud to lead an organization that people are proud to work for," explained Tom. "And, that pride found a kindred spirit in HMS and led to a beneficial merger."

The entire HMS community is committed to excellence as part of our mission and culture. But, excellence has to be more than a concept. It must

become a way of life at any company that hopes to achieve it. And, that takes dedication and support for professional development at every level. We can be proud of Tom, Yalonda, Tina, Theresa, and everyone at Permedion for setting such a great example, both in their local community and in our corporate community.



# HMS Service Principles

1. We strive to give clients high-quality, error-free deliverables.
2. We will work hard to put customer interests first.
3. We will honor our commitments.
4. We will produce timely deliverables.
5. We will strive for effective and proactive communications.
6. We embrace a collaborative and respectful style of working with clients and each other.
7. We will be a highly responsive partner.
8. In our interactions we aspire to drive high-value and creative solutions and results.
9. We will always demonstrate the highest level of honesty, ethics, and integrity.

## Catching the Quality Wave

Surfing a big wave successfully (that is, without wiping out) requires skill, balance, and practice—constant practice. That's the only way to become proficient and stay that way. The same is true for building a culture of excellence here at HMS.

Mike Kendall, together with Katherine Benedict and the rest of Mike's team, lead the effort at HMS to engineer quality into all of our core processes. He intends to build quality into every stage, from beginning to end. "It's important to get it right from the very first step," says Mike.

He sees the effort as three towers of a bridge that support a Culture of Excellence. Here's how he explains it:



- » Tower 1, Organizational Excellence, is about aligning all resources around common goals. Our brand launch was a great starting point.
- » Tower 2, Process Excellence, is about core process management and assigning ownership, as well as accountability, to the different processes. This is the stage in which specialized management methods like Lean and Six Sigma are important.
- » Tower 3, Outcome Excellence, is the last quality check in any process. This is where you inspect the product before it goes out the door.

This three-part plan will be applied in three gigantic waves, according to Mike. Each wave corresponds to a different portion of our processes and will initially last about seven weeks. And this is where each of us gets to participate. Mike, Katherine, and the team are not working alone. This endeavor will require the participation of everyone in the organization.

So it's time to get into the surf, HMS Dudes and Dudettes, and paddle for that first big wave. Mike and his team aim to produce a high-quality ride.

## Q&A with Jim Carlough



Jim Carlough joined the MCO team in March as Vice President for Client Development, West Region and Medicare Services. He's responsible for developing the Medicare Advantage and Part D markets, and the Wellpoint national account, among other duties.

### What drew you to working for HMS?

There were a number of factors that drew me to HMS. Clearly, the company's position as industry leader was important. I was particularly attracted to the focused strategy and the vision of HMS's view of itself now, as well as in the future. There are still many companies that lack focus and try to be too many different things. I was also impressed with the people that I met during the interview process. The knowledge these individuals had of the industry, our services, and the friendly attitudes made me feel part of the team even prior to joining HMS.

Lastly, I would be remiss if I didn't mention that there are also a few current HMS employees who have worked with me in the past and their recommendations clearly played a role. Both David Schmid and David Dawson were instrumental in that process.

### What have been your biggest challenges and successes since starting here?

Clearly, the biggest challenge has been learning the HMS Acronym Library. Having spent more than twenty years in healthcare, I thought I knew them all. But, after arriving here and being given a copy of the library, I feel I'm well on my way to achieving acronym mastery.

### How much of a change is HMS compared to your previous employers?

Like all companies today, we face challenges with the economy and Wall Street expectations. This can create a tremendously stressed organization. The biggest change for me was seeing, despite the challenges, how everyone at HMS enjoyed what they do and enjoyed coming to work each day. During my first several weeks here, I rode the elevator every morning with the same employees and began every day with cheerful greetings and smiling faces. That means a lot to a new employee and certainly says a lot about our company.

The Human Resources Operations department was very busy during the first quarter of 2008. We closed enrollment for 2007 and processed new hire paperwork and subsequent benefits information for 104 new employees! We moved our personnel and benefit files from the New York office to the Irving office and began the process of streamlining the flow of information into and out of the HR Operations unit.

In this quarter, we will roll out several additional modules of PeopleSoft to further maximize our investment in this tool. Employee Self Service

is the first of these on the schedule and it will allow you to change your personal information by signing on to PeopleSoft and updating the information yourself. For those of you who were here during 2007 open enrollment, you will see an extended menu of items to choose from. We are very excited about the great new features PeopleSoft brings to employees and we look forward to additional modules, including Manager Self Service and E-recruit tools.

In addition to these updates, we will carry out a wide variety of data audits to ensure that our HR information is up to date. We will also roll out new policies and procedures to aid in the growth of the organization. We are looking forward to a great 2008 for HR Operations and look forward to improving employee customer service levels to five-star status!

## Now Playing: New Supervisor Orientation

Whether you're a Supervisor, Manager, Director, or Executive, you'll probably agree that managing staff is a big responsibility. At HMS, we realize that the challenges of leadership can be even more daunting for newly hired or newly promoted supervisors. To ensure that our new leaders are familiar with the basic guidelines, processes, and resources they need to effectively manage their staff, we've created a New Supervisor Orientation (NSO).



Although it was created with new supervisors in mind, the NSO will be open to any HMS leader with one or more direct reports. The NSO will include brief overviews on a variety of HMS procedures, such as employment policies, recruiting, timekeeping, progressive discipline, and annual HR processes.

The first NSO was presented on May 29th, and will continue on a monthly basis. As we move forward with this program, all suggestions are welcome. Please contact Sara Epperlein or Janet Saavedra if you have ideas that you want to share.

## Benefits On Top of Benefits

HMS is pleased to continually offer new benefits and options, even outside of the annual open enrollment.

Recently we added:

- » MetLaw: a prepaid legal benefit that provides employees with access to attorneys located where employees live. We've already had quite a few of our employees take advantage of this program.
- » Health Advocate: a special benefit that helps employees and their families navigate the healthcare system and maximize healthcare benefits.
- » MyAonAssist: a website full of information about our current benefits, a pathway to health-related information, interesting stories, and more.

Stay tuned for more developments.

## Refer Your Friends and Earn a Bonus

Under the Employee Referral Program, any qualifying employee\* who makes a referral resulting in a new hire will receive a cash bonus of \$300 for office support staff and \$1,000 for professional staff.

If you have a friend, former colleague, or professional acquaintance who you think may be well-suited for one of our jobs, you can submit a resumé referral to [humanresources@hms.com](mailto:humanresources@hms.com).

In order to qualify for a bonus, the candidate must confirm the employee as the source of hire. Both the referring employee and the new hire must be employed and in good standing on the scheduled payment date.

Please visit the careers section of our corporate website at [www.hmsholdings.com](http://www.hmsholdings.com) to view vacancies across the country.

\*Some exclusions apply. Please refer to the Employee Referral Program rules in the Employee Handbook.



## Conference Schedule through August 2008

America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP): Annual Institute	June 18-20	San Francisco, CA
National Governor's Association (NGA) Centennial Annual Meeting	July 11-14	Philadelphia, PA
National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO)	Jul 20-23	Honolulu, HI
Association for Community Affiliated Plans (ACAP) CEO Summit	July 15-16	Washington, DC
National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)	July 22-26	New Orleans, LA
National Child Support Enforcement Association (NCSEA) 57th Annual Training Conference & Expo	August 3-7	San Francisco, CA
National Association of State Human Services Finance Officers (HSFo) Annual Conference	August 3-8	Charlotte, NC
National Association of Medicaid Program Integrity (NAMPI) Annual Conference	August 24-27	Williamsburg, VA

## And the Survey Says...

In early July, HMS will release its first Employee Survey, which is designed to find out what employees think about the job we're doing as a company in serving our clients' needs.

In particular, we want to find out what you think is working, as well as what barriers and roadblocks you see that prevent us from doing a better job for our clients. We're especially interested in learning about your suggestions for removing those barriers to produce truly excellent results.

You'll have about seven business days to complete this anonymous, Internet-based survey. In-depth comments, analysis, results, and an initial action plan will be communicated in August.

So stay tuned for more announcements in the near future and get ready to experience the power of collaboration.



## Boise HMS Office Helps Fight Breast Cancer

Dedication, passion, and the loss of a dear friend inspired Melody Stachowicz of the HMS Boise office to make a difference. She helped raise funds to increase breast cancer awareness and prevention through the Boise Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, which took place on May 10, 2008.

Melody lost her friend and former PCG co-worker Terri Hermasilo to breast cancer in 2002. Since that time, she has walked and organized a team to participate in the local Boise Komen Race for the Cure. This year, the team consisted of 28 members including HMS staff, friends and family of HMS staff, and Idaho Medicaid staff.

Through their dedicated effort and the generosity of a matching donation from HMS, the Boise office was able to raise \$2,020 to help in the fight against breast cancer. In addition to organizing the team, Melody took vacation time and donated more than 50 hours of her time to the Komen Foundation

during the week of the event.

The Susan G. Komen Foundation is the world's largest and most progressive grassroots network fighting to end breast cancer. The Foundation was born from a promise between Nancy Brinker and her sister, Susan G. Komen, who died from breast

cancer at the age of 36. Seventy five percent of the funds raised in the community are spent locally.

Kudos to Melody and "Team HMS" for making a difference in their community and helping increase access to preventive breast cancer screenings and treatment.

Early detection is the best weapon in fighting breast cancer. For more information and

prevention guidelines, call Susan G. Komen for the Cure at 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636) or visit [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org).

