

# IntelliCare's Service Consistency Nationwide

THE consistency in service of HMOs must never vary. If patients get outstanding service in Metro Manila or where an HMO's business is concentrated, then patients from other parts of the country must get the same deal. In the world of health care, no discrimination or neglect of any form should ever be allowed.

Leading HMO IntelliCare is one HMO that strongly adheres to this belief.

HMOs are not entirely business ventures, as IntelliCare has been tirelessly pointing out. It's a business that should actually care, where one must be very keen 24/7, no matter the stress caused by irate patients and their families. Health care is a venture that has no room for compromises or excuses.

Unpleasant experiences with HMOs usually come from their lack of consistency in service. This consistency is manifested on two fronts—customer service and their medical facility affiliates.

## On Customer Service

When one's business covers a wide scale, especially if, the tendency for their customer service is to become uneven. Most of the quality service is usually afforded to those in Metro Manila, as those in the rural areas are left to inexperienced professionals. It is not because qualified professionals are hard to find in the rural areas. It's always because of the company's own prejudice against the provinces or plain lack of interest, considering these areas cannot bring in the numbers.

Fortunately at IntelliCare, they do not discriminate. In fact, they make sure all instruction and training emanate from one group, so that whatever is learned here in Metro Manila by a customer service professional is also what is learned by their manpower in the provinces.

"We hardly get those kinds of complaints. That's because when we train our staff outside Metro Manila, we make sure the training is similar. And we never fail to drive home this point to them," Pen Sabuga, head of IntelliCare's Customer Service Department, says.

Mario Silos, the president of IntelliCare says it in another way, "Consistency in service is what gets the company far, no matter how far-flung the area one patient is situated. One must never underestimate the power of word of mouth."

"We require graduates of Nursing or a related field to come in as Customer Service Officers both in Manila and the provinces," Sabuga adds.

Rest of all IntelliCare makes sure that all their manpower

time or the rates they give doctors are meager enough to be negligible.

That is hardly the experience at IntelliCare. "In fact, they come to us applying, Jose says.

## What it Boils Down To

"We hardly hear those horror stories that involve doctors not giving patients enough importance just because they are cardholders of IntelliCare," Jose says.

But both Jose and Sabuga echo the values of IntelliCare. They both know that what will greatly help them achieve this kind of consistency is the very consistency of their treatment towards their customer service officers and medical providers.

"Our hands-on policy ensures that," Jose says.

By hands-on policy, Jose means that they go out of their way to learn the needs of their affiliates or customer service officers. For if a company expects their personnel to perform at a level that guarantees customer satisfaction, they have to also be keenly attuned to valid sentiments and issues brought to them.

Jose says, "Dr. Jocson and I actually spend some days of the year in areas outside of Metro Manila just to check up on our affiliates there. We engage them in thorough, often non-formal discussions on current medical trends, facility

service of an HMO, one expects a kind of service that is both conscious and conscientious. That is what one gets from IntelliCare. No more, no less. /PN

## On Affiliate-Facilities

Ed Jose, the Medical Relations head of IntelliCare says, "When it comes to affiliate medical facilities and doctors, IntelliCare covers a lot of ground."

If their phones noisily ring throughout the day, it's for reasons other than complaints. The consistency in service of IntelliCare's medical providers comes in two aspects—qualification and compassion.

"We set a standard for the affiliation of our medical providers and we make sure they are adhered to," Jose adds.

In the process of affiliation, IntelliCare makes sure that its network of medical facilities and professionals are already a cut above the rest.

"We make sure they come highly recommended by our trusted affiliates. And we know that no affiliate of ours will ever compromise their reputation by recommending unqualified professionals," Jose says.

Jose continues, "We found some of them through their own volition. They apply in IntelliCare but we always do our own background research.

Using the company's medical relations team, headed by Dr. Jocson, IntelliCare's Medical Director and Medical City's Head of Surgery, they find out how far these applicants have gone in their studies and what their experiences are.

There is some form of resistance against HMOs among doctors, especially the start-ups. The reason being that HMOs have a reputation for not paying on