

Navigating payer negotiations with confidence

Health systems and payers are facing increasingly fraught network negotiations. The complexity, the volatility – never greater.

Each side wants to control the narrative. Stakes are high. Timelines are short. One communication misstep can alienate and destroy constructive work. And when news of a negotiation reaches the public, misinformation can spread, internal teams feel strain and patients worry about access.

We can help.

Enter Jarrard. For 20 years, we've helped leaders anticipate what's coming and build the support needed to secure fair agreements. Our custom communication campaigns unify internal teams, activate key influencers and protect your reputation so you can negotiate from a position of strength. Because the best outcomes preserve care – and vital relationships.

Through **Jarrard Market Research & Insights**, we bring proprietary data on consumer trust, employer sentiment and local perception trends to strengthen your negotiating posture.

Jarrard has partnered with health systems of all sizes – from regional systems to major academic medical centers to national organizations – to fuel smart communication plans that support managed care strategies and positively affect the bottom line. We harness the power of communication to navigate the politics of people. This boosts the negotiation team's efforts by creating positive impact with key audiences, initiating smart calls to action.

Interested in learning more?

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Our Work Together

Together, we define the win and your custom campaign to frame the issue with stakeholders, including:

- 1 Building strong relationships with key audiences.**
The best payer communication campaigns begin long before negotiation starts. They also take advantage of the quiet time between negotiations to build relationships and boost your organization's reputation.
- 2 Reaching out proactively to patients and media.**
You tell your story best. The groundwork you laid ahead of time with thoughtful messaging and strong relationships will create a sturdy foundation.
- 3 Targeting outreach before negotiations go public.**
Maintain the upper hand by getting your story out first to employers, brokers and elected leaders. Such engagement builds understanding and support and adds needed pressure to insurers.
- 4 Delivering clear, cadenced internal communication.**
Ensure your team understands what's at stake in the negotiations so they're aligned, supportive – even champions of the effort. After all, they embody your mission of protecting patients' access to care.
- 5 Ensuring tactics match your culture.**
Experience proves "scorched-Earth" campaigns fail. Frame your issues with high-road, patient-focused messages that – while assertive – match your organization's positive culture.
- 6 Jumping in immediately.**
While it's ideal to plan early, know that Jarrard experts can jump in even when providers are on the cusp of an out-of-network situation.



Payer-Provider Negotiations over Two States

CHALLENGE: A massive national not-for-profit provider needed to negotiate with a mega-payer across multiple states involving dozens of plans with different termination dates. In one region, the contract affected the provider's own employee benefit plan.

SOLUTION: We assembled a multi-disciplinary campaign team to develop strategic relationships with employers and brokers. The campaign team leveraged strong calls to action that caused the payer to be inundated with phone calls and other outreach from patients and physicians, increasing pressure.

RESULT: The provider signed a contract for one state before expiration and reached an agreement for the second state (with retroactive coverage) shortly after termination. All stakeholders were informed throughout. Patients continued to engage with their providers even during the brief out-of-network period.



Strategically Going Out-of-Network in Key Market

CHALLENGE: A national health services provider was seeking its first rate increase in more than a decade. In one key market, the provider needed to engage in payer negotiations without alienating patients or disrupting partner businesses.

SOLUTION: Our communications plan anticipated potential outcomes and framed the issue on the provider's terms. We created an informational website, and trained a clinician to be the organization's "face and voice" during negotiations.

RESULT: The provider was able to make the strategic decision to remain out of network with no loss of patient volume and minimal backlash or negative coverage.



Reaching Payer Deal Before Tight Deadline

CHALLENGE: A major regional health system faced a public negotiation with their largest commercial payer. The payer embarked on a public campaign to paint the provider as expensive and not value-focused. At the same time, local elected leaders questioned the need for not-for-profit status.

SOLUTION: We launched a targeted campaign to large insurance brokers and employers, creating a groundswell of support. We also positioned the organization as solutions-oriented in media engagement and shifted the spotlight onto the payer's record profits.

RESULT: A new contract was signed with no out-of-network period and without any disruptions in care for patients. Additionally, the system was correctly positioned as solutions-oriented and patient-focused within its community.



Community Hospital Success with Largest Commercial Payer

CHALLENGE: A successful community hospital serving a large geographic area needed to renegotiate its contract with the state's largest commercial payer. In a David vs. Goliath matchup, the hospital pursued a new, fair contract with rate increases to put them in line with industry norms.

SOLUTION: We launched a public goodwill campaign to build reputational equity ahead of the public dispute, activating the board and physicians as advocates. Leadership regularly updated employees and patients about quality care during the transition.

RESULT: The hospital signed a new, five-year contract, increased public awareness of the essential care provided by the facility and maintained patient volumes during a brief out-of-network period.



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Jarrard is a division of Chartis, one of the nation's leading healthcare advisory firms. The Chartis Managed Care Strategy team offers deep expertise in reimbursement rate benchmarking, portfolio assessments and network optimization to help amplify your managed care team's strategic approach.