

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana's Allison Young: Transformation of U.S. Healthcare Demands Leadership

While politicians and jurists debated the merits of the Affordable Care Act for the past three years, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana steadily continued the transformation process it began in 2003. Under the leadership of Allison Young, Blue Cross has been exploring and implementing innovations to improve service to 1.4 million members.

"The need to rethink and reshape our healthcare delivery system is not in question, because too many people cannot afford access to high-quality care," explains Young, who serves as the insurer's Senior Vice President of Benefits Administration. "Our industry must shift its focus from being primarily a business-to-business concern. Instead, payors will be dealing more with the individual consumer. We think it's going to be a positive change, but it can't happen without courageous leadership."

As a local mutual company, owned by its members, Blue Cross has a business imperative to make quality healthcare affordable. Without waiting for a legislative mandate to bring about needed change, the state's largest health insurer has already launched a number of initiatives envisioned through various Pillars of Transformation within the company. Young is leading two of the Pillar groups: Customer Engagement and Operational Excellence.

"Educating our members, or customers, to become fully engaged in their own healthcare decisions is critical," explains Young. "As a part of the Blue value proposition, we encourage members to adopt healthy lifestyles and give them information about reasonable cost-effective options like the appropriate use of generic drugs. Our 'medical home' concept centers services on the patients' own personal needs, and specially trained nurses are available to make sure they get the right level of care. Even the call centers are designed to create personal relationships with patients."

Transparency is a key component of customer engagement. Blue Cross is working to make it simple for patients to select hospitals and physicians based on the quality of care, costs, and even intangibles such as language barriers.

Young initiated a Six Sigma project to improve operational excellence. A challenging project, Six Sigma allows Blue Cross to establish measurable, attainable goals for identifying and removing the causes of errors.

"The transformation process is exhaustive," says Young. "We enthusiastically demonstrate *No Regrets Leadership* to honor our commitment to this community."



Senior Vice President of Benefits Administration Allison Young directly manages four vice presidents and nine directors, overseeing nearly half of Blue Cross's nearly 2,000 employees. Her staff is responsible for claims, the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program, BlueCard® Inter-Plan Claims, customer service, membership and billing, coordination of benefits and adjustments and recovery.



Louisiana

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association and incorporated as Louisiana Health Service & Indemnity Company.

www.bcbsla.com