

PREFACE

In the fall of 2008, the Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA) held its biennial undergraduate workshop in Nashville, Tennessee. Professors were provided opportunities to network, visit with one another, and discuss what they needed to make their courses better. One theme that emerged from the discussions among professors in health administration programs was the need for healthcare marketing texts that fit their courses and their students. The conversations held at that meeting motivated us to write this book.

Specifically, the healthcare marketing conversations centered on a simple, shared theme: Business-focused marketing themes *sometimes* fit healthcare marketing efforts. We all need to know who our target market is, for example. However, when we engaged our healthcare marketing students in community projects (e.g., assisting with the preparation of a marketing plan for a local community healthcare center, helping to design a press release regarding the acquisition of the da Vinci robot at a regional medical center), we were introducing our students to projects that were like business marketing yet different. We realized our need to embrace the fact that the healthcare industry is unique and thus so are its marketing needs.

We created this textbook to focus on the uniqueness of marketing in the healthcare industry, applying general marketing theory and concepts where appropriate and including real case examples of healthcare marketing professionals' experiences. Healthcare professionals understand that healthcare marketing is not general marketing in a different industry that just

happens to be healthcare. As one healthcare marketer from a for-profit hospital stated during a December 2010 interview:

The 4 Ps in marketing—price, place, promotion, and product? They don't fit for us. We [the hospital] are not about price. We do not control price, except perhaps for cosmetic surgeries; place—our hospital is where it is. Need surgery? You come to us, if the physician refers you. We think about the 4 Ps in healthcare marketing as patients, physicians, public, and payers. Healthcare marketing is different than regular marketing, and my people know that.

Additionally, the success of the Gateway series by Health Administration Press attests to a true need for health administration textbooks written for undergraduate students and programs as well as entry-level personnel in hospitals, clinics, healthcare centers, and physician practices.

Moreover, we wanted to create a text that would engage students in the activities and work they will be involved in and responsible for when they become healthcare marketing professionals. To that end, we blend theory and practical applications to keep students interested and the topics relevant. The applied learning experiences in this text, based on real-life healthcare marketing events, are presented in three formats:

1. **Case studies** presented at the beginning of each chapter introduce students to the themes of the discussion that follows.
2. **Exercises** presented at the end of each chapter have students apply concepts they have learned to real-life healthcare marketing situations.
3. **Feature cases** presented at the beginning of each part of the book engage students in an in-depth analysis of issues discussed in the ensuing chapters.

The feature cases are substantial and reflect real-life situations. Some modifications to names, case settings, and numerical values have been made to preserve anonymity and accentuate points of learning. The first case, “Hospital Consolidation,” invites students to consider the dynamic relationship healthcare providers have with their local and regional market and to appreciate the need to balance the interests of the organization and the community when making important decisions that affect the healthcare marketplace. In this case, the participants’ and facilities’ names and various numerical values have been changed.

The second case, “Market Management,” challenges students to analyze and prioritize various kinds of information common to a dynamic and competitive healthcare marketplace for use in an organization’s strategic marketing process. Information from this case is derived from *California Health Care Almanac*, a publication of the California HealthCare

Foundation. Although the information related to the Fresno, California, healthcare market is unchanged, the characters, including their roles and actions, are fictitious.

The third case, “Palomar Heart Hospital,” helps students understand the important relationships between marketing, planning, operations, leadership, teamwork, and conflict management, all of which are essential to effective market and organization management.

The fourth case, “Intermountain Healthcare,” is descriptive rather than decision oriented. It must be analyzed to understand the dynamics of the situation but does not require students to recommend action. This case profiles various elements of a model healthcare organization and invites students to consider a variety of questions and topics addressed in the text. Information for this case was derived from Intermountain Healthcare’s website (www.intermountainhealthcare.org).

The outline of the textbook, the cases, and our proposal of the five Ps for healthcare marketing efforts (patients, physicians, public, payers, and the presence of politics) come from our experiences working in the healthcare field, teaching healthcare marketing in the classroom, and information gleaned from interviews conducted between 2009 and 2012 with a convenience sample ($n = 23$) of healthcare professionals engaged in marketing efforts. The respondents represent various healthcare marketing sites: clinics, for-profit and not-for-profit hospitals, physician practices, a long-term care facility, and an independent marketing/management contractor. They worked in a variety of locations—the Southwest, the Southeast, the Northwest, the Intermountain West, and the Midwest—in both urban and rural settings. They also represent different positions of authority, from administrators in training in a physician clinic to regional directors of large hospitals (employing more than 50,000 people). Evident throughout this book are three themes that emerged from the interviews:

1. A commitment to and enthusiasm about their careers and the certainty that their work matters to the organization as well as to the larger community
2. A shared opinion that healthcare marketing is not general marketing in a different industry that just happens to be healthcare
3. A recommendation for instructors to underscore the importance of the patient, the physician, the payers, the public, and the presence of politics to students interested in healthcare marketing as a career

We hope that this book fills the need for a solid, undergraduate healthcare marketing text. And we hope that it “just fits” the need of our academic teaching colleagues who participated in the discussions held during the AUPHA workshop in 2008 and others who echo the sentiment. To that end, we have created instructor resources for this book. Ancillaries for each chapter include test questions and answers, PowerPoint slides, and sample

answers to the end-of-chapter questions and end-of-chapter exercises. Also provided are teaching notes for the cases. For access to these resources, send an e-mail to hapbooks@ache.org.

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