

- The Vantage Healthcare Owner Hospitals:**
- Armstrong County Memorial Hospital**
Kittanning
- Corry Memorial Hospital (CMH)**
Corry
- DuBois Regional Medical Center**
DuBois
- Kane Community Hospital (KCH)**
Kane
- Meadville Medical Center (MMC)**
Meadville
- Millcreek Community Hospital (MCH)**
Erie
- Saint Vincent Health System (SVHS)**
Erie
- The Ellwood City Hospital (TECH)**
Ellwood City
- Titusville Area Hospital (TAH)**
Titusville
- UPMC Horizon**
Greenville/Farrell
- UPMC Northwest**
Seneca
- Warren General Hospital (WGH)**
Warren



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July, August,
September 2005

Washington DC: Mid-Year Healthcare Meetings Premier Advocacy hosts June 2005 Federal Affairs Network (FAN) Meeting

Margaret Reagan, Premier Corporate Vice President for Advocacy, kicked off the meeting with an update on developments within the alliance. She discussed Advocacy's recent efforts to compel the FDA to expand its 2002 bar code regulation to include medical devices, an initiative identified as a top priority by Premier's CEO Quality Committee. Premier supports regulation or legislation to require standardized bar code labeling on all appropriate hospital-administered/implemented medical devices and implantables.

Margaret further outlined actions Premier has taken to advance the bar code issue before Congress, including educating all health legislative assistants during Capitol Hill visits and working with the office of Rep. Pete Sessions (R-TX) to circulate a "Dear Colleague" letter. The lawmakers argue that device bar coding is the "commonsense next step in [our] shared goal of improving quality, cost effectiveness and supply chain efficiency." Hospital groups in Washington sent a similar letter to the FDA.

The Healthcare Group Purchasing Industry Initiative (HGPII) was the next topic on the agenda. The HGPII, spearheaded by Premier and other leading Group Purchasing Organizations (GPO), is designed to promote and monitor best ethical and business practices in purchasing for hospitals and other health providers. The goal of the Initiative, set for a formal launch in early July, is to assure ongoing adherence to published ethical and business practices through a self-regulation model.

Concluding her update, Margaret unveiled a new enhancement to Advocacy's "Not-for-profit hospital and health system Web toolkit". Premier has constructed an interactive U.S. map that highlights existing state laws (through 2004) governing not-for-profit hospitals' community benefit and charity care requirements. Advocacy staff will update the map as new laws are passed. Margaret encouraged attendees to check out the new resource and offer feedback on how we can make it, or any of our other Web resources, more useful.



Margaret Reagan and Herb Kuhn,
Director, Center for Medicare
Management Centers for Medicare and
Medicaid Services, Department of Health
and Human Services

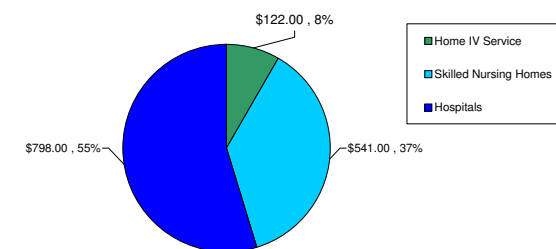
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) update

Herb Kuhn summarized CMS priorities for Medicare, noting that while Parts A and D are growing, neither one has reached Part B's virtual doubling. Moving to a model in which benefits and reimbursement focus on prevention is key to ensure Medicare's growth is sustainable. Herb also called on hospitals to help enroll seniors in the new Medicare prescription drug benefit, remarking that one-on-one counseling will be critical to the success of the program.

Quality and pay-for-performance, he said, are at the forefront of the agency's agenda. He relayed the enthusiasm throughout the department for not only *Hospital Compare*, but for the CMS/Premier Hospital Quality Incentive (HQI) demonstration project, in particular. Emphasis in the future, he said, will be on physician pay-for-performance programs and fixing the SGR payment system.

In closing, Herb commented on several key hospital issues in which the agency was interested in feedback from Premier owner hospitals. He reminded the group that the 60-day deadline for submitting comments on the Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility (IRF) "75% rule" was fast approaching. He also noted that the inpatient PPS and skilled nursing facility (SNF) rules were open and urged hospitals to submit comments as soon as possible. Finally, Herb addressed limited-service physician-owned specialty hospitals, reiterating that CMS would not be approving any new applications for at least six months to allow for possible changes in the

Medicaid Payments for IV Services



Source: Dalovisio, K., et al, "Financial Impact of a Home Intravenous Antibiotic Program on a Medicare Managed Care program", *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, 2000

Cover Story continued on page 3

Quarterly

The Vantage® Point

What's News



Dr. Jansen

FAMILY PHYSICIAN JOINS UPMC NORTHWEST MEDICAL STAFF

Board certified family practitioner, Bruce Jansen, MD, is the newest member of the UPMC Northwest medical staff. Dr. Jansen practices with board certified family practitioner, R. Donald McAfee, MD, and their practice is known as Franklin Community Health Care Associates.

Dr. Jansen has come here from University Park, where he practiced for six years with University Health Services of Penn State University, including three years as a university physician and the past three years as clinical director of general medicine. While at Penn State, he also was a clinical assistant professor of medicine with Hershey College of Medicine.



Dr. Gelb, D.O. and Dr. Ferretti D.O., F.A.C.O.I.

LECOM Students and President Receive Honors at the 97th Annual Clinical Assembly of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association.

King of Prussia, PA The Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association (POMA) honored the President of Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine for his outstanding career and commitment to medical education. John M. Ferretti, D.O., F.A.C.O.I. received the Distinguished Physician Award at POMA's 97th Annual Clinical Assembly at the Valley Forge Convention Center on May 13.

POMA Past President Ernest R. Gelb, D.O. made the presentation during the medical association's annual meeting. Dr. Gelb recognized Dr. Ferretti for his years of service to POMA, his career in internal medicine, as an administrator and medical education director at Millcreek Community Hospital, and as a founder of LECOM.



UPMC Northwest

UPMC Northwest's Continuing Medical Education (CME) Program has earned reaccreditation from the Pennsylvania Medical Society.

Accreditation is evidence that UPMC Northwest is providing high-quality educational programs for physicians and other health care professionals, according to Peter Bendt, MD, chairman of the hospital's CME Committee. The Society's Commission on Continuing Medical Education granted the reaccreditation after evaluating the hospital's CME program earlier this year.

The goal of UPMC Northwest's CME Committee is to present programs tailored to the hospital staff's needs and to improve quality of care. In keeping with this objective, the committee regularly hosts local and national speakers who present programs on a variety of topics.

Among the hospital's CME programs are half-day seminars every year including its Professor's Day, Infectious Diseases and Cancer Awareness Week symposiums.

The reaccreditation will extend through February 2008

The LECOM Independent Study Pathway Class of 2005 Leads the Way

Erie, PA June 2005— The Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine reached another milestone when the first class of students in Independent Study Pathway (ISP) graduated in June. Ten students completed the innovative curriculum designed for self-starters who can handle medical training without the regimentation of classroom lectures.

Classmates, Stella Kalantzis, Carrie Lotenero and Emily Lombard are leading the way for the fledgling doctors from the ISP program. They all believe they made a good choice with independent study and look forward to bright futures as Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine using the knowledge skills they've learned at LECOM.

LECOM first offered the ISP pathway to newly admitted students in the fall of 2001. "This was very positive, challenging more-so, because it was a new program and experience for me," said Kalantzis.



The Vantage® Forum

where owner hospitals highlight their services

WARREN GENERAL HOSPITAL Introduces Promising Cesium-131 Isotope for Treating Prostate Cancer



WARREN, Pennsylvania—A breakthrough treatment for prostate cancer is now available for patients in the region at Warren General Hospital, representing the first major advancement in low dose radiation (LDR) seed brachytherapy in more than 18 years.

The first procedure using the Cesium-131 isotope will be performed Tuesday (June 28) by Dr. LeRoy Korb, the first doctor to use the new isotope when it was introduced at the University of Washington Medical Center last October. Warren General Hospital is the first medical facility in the Northeast to offer the treatment.

"We believe Cesium-131 to be a very effective option for men choosing brachytherapy to treat their prostate cancer," said Dr. Korb. "In short, we expect it to kill the cancerous cells more rapidly, with a shorter duration of side-effects. Ideally, this will allow patients to return to a normal lifestyle as quickly as possible."

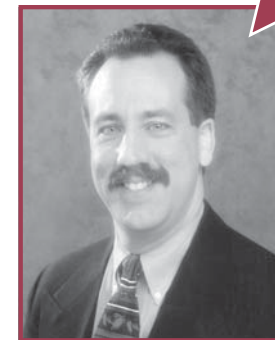
The Cesium-131 seed by IsoRay Medical combines the beneficial characteristics of a short half-life with a high energy to penetrate the cancer cells while delivering significantly less total radiation to the patient, giving it significant clinical advantages over Iodine-125 and Palladium-103, the brachytherapy isotopes commonly used in LDR cancer treatment today.

"The new Cesium-131 seed has a significantly higher initial dose rate than iodine. This allows for the delivery of more radiation in a shorter period of time to maximize its effectiveness and minimize the duration of side effects," Dr. Korb said. "The treatment is over in one-sixth the time of iodine-with radiation leaving the body 500 days faster."

Medicare and Medicaid have established a specific reimbursement code for Cesium-131, and most insurance companies also cover low-dose (LDR) seed brachytherapy.

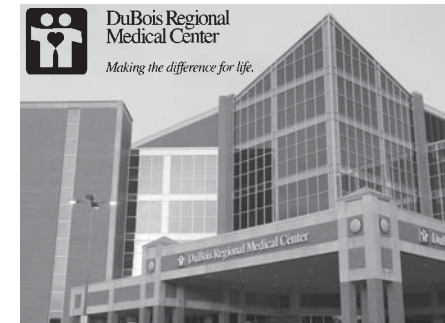
The Cesium-131 seed is not yet widely available to physicians and patients. Production will increase this year as IsoRay Medical expands its production at new facilities in the coming months.

"We fully expect our Cesium-131 seed to become a leading worldwide treatment therapy for prostate cancer and other malignancies," said IsoRay Medical Chairman and CEO, Roger Girard. He said that IsoRay Medical intends to first market its seed for prostate cancer patients, although the treatment holds promise for other types of cancer, including breast, brain, liver, head and neck cancers, and other malignant disease.



Dr. LeRoy Korb

DuBois Regional Medical Center has, once again, been recognized as one of the top 100 hospitals in the nation.



Solucient, an Illinois-based healthcare information firm, placed DRMC on its list of the 100 Top Hospitals: Benchmarks for Success - 2004. DRMC also made this list in 2003, 2001 and 1993.

The award recognizes hospitals that demonstrate superior clinical, operational and financial performance.

Hospitals are placed in categories according to bed size, teaching status and residency program involvement. DRMC is one of just 20 medium community hospitals in the United States to make the list.

Only seven Pennsylvania hospitals in all categories were chosen among the 100 Top Hospitals from among thousands in the country.

"We are thrilled to once again be selected as one of the 100 Top Hospitals in the nation, and to be recognized for our mission to provide high quality, advanced healthcare services to the region. Prestigious designations such as this would not be possible without the commitment and talents our physicians, nurses, clinicians, support staff and volunteers bring to DuBois Regional Medical Center," said Raymond A. Graeca, president.

Solucient said the 100 Top Hospitals have improved overall hospital performance at a significantly faster rate than their peers.

Among the study's key findings:

- The 100 Top Hospitals treated sicker patients with fewer staff, yet had better patient outcomes.
- Salary and benefits were \$1,900 per year higher per full-time staff member than at peer hospitals.
- On average, benchmark hospitals released their patients nearly half a day earlier than peer hospitals.

Solucient estimates that if all acute care hospitals performed at the same level as the nation's benchmark hospitals, as many as 66,342 more Medicare patients could survive and an additional 66,506 patient stays could be complication-free each year — at an estimated annual savings of \$6.2 billion.

Graeca said DRMC continues to grow despite the ongoing challenges facing healthcare providers, such as the medical liability crisis in Pennsylvania and flat or negative reimbursement trends.

DuBois Regional Medical Center also received recognition for its status as one of the states top employers. DRMC ranked No. 6 in the state as one of the 100 Best Places to Work. The Best Places to Work program is a public/private partnership of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Team Pennsylvania Foundation, Kuntz Leshner LLP, Central Penn Business Journal, The Great Place to Work Institute and the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry.

Story continued on pg. 5



Feature Company of the Quarter -

Vantage® Mammography Seminar

Filling the Void for Radiology Technician Accreditation

By: Tom Surman

This May 4th and 5th marked the 13th Annual Vantage® Mammography Seminar, a yearly event sponsored by the Vantage Healthcare Network, Inc.®, through its Mobile Services Division. This two day seminar is a result of preparation made by the Radiological Task Force and is registered through The American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT).

Regional radiology staff members from Vantage® owner hospitals and as well as non-owner hospitals attended these informative sessions to gain continuing education credits from The American Society of Radiological Technologists (ASRT). Due to the seminar's success and growth each year, Vantage® plans on taking its expertise on the road and will offer these Mammography Seminars across the region.

The agenda for these daily seminars feature key physicians and speakers, along with vendors who share information and demonstrate the latest technology and advances in mammography computer aided detection procedures, such as PET/CT and medical nutrition therapy for cancer treatment.

When interviewed at these events, the attendees, along with the vendors in attendance, stated that the Vantage® Mammography Seminars are the most informative, best attended, and least expensive of all continued education credit seminars.

The program is directed by Bill Henwood, Senior Vice President of Vantage® Mobile Services, who stated "We cover a variety of topics endemic to the field: Breast CA Risk Factors/Prevention, Computer Aided Detection: Advancing Image Interpretation, Advances in Breast Biopsy, covering a host of additional and germane topics and secessions." Shelly Burchard, Mammography Seminar Coordinator stated "The on-going success of this Mam-mography Seminar is largely due in part to the efforts of the Radio-logical Task Force and the vendors who co-sponsor these events. Vantage® is already working on next year's seminar as well as planning the first regional seminar in Philadelphia."

If you would like Vantage® to coordinate a seminar for your hospital, or if you would like more information about the Vantage® Mammography Seminars, please contact Shelly Burchard: shellyb@vantagehealthcare.com or 800-715-1214.

For additional information on the Vantage® Holding Company, LLC and the Vantage® Family of Companies, please visit our website: www.vantagehealthcare.com or contact Tom Surman: tomsurman@vantagehealthcare.com



Shelly Burchard Seminar Moderator and Coordinator, Dr. Denise Johnson, speaker "Breast Cancer Risk Factors and Prevention."



Bob Scott, PA Bureau of Radiation Protection, Debi Gurtner, UPMC Horizon, Tom Demianczyk, AGFA Corp., Glenn Riley, UPMC Horizon.



A supportive Vendor, Herta Klamman from Plus CAD addressed "Mammography Computer Aided Detection."

Doctor of the Month



New Cardiology Head at MMC. Brian Kazienko, M.D., ...

Dr. Kazienko earned his medical degree from West Virginia University School of Medicine, Morgantown, West Virginia. He completed an internal medicine residency at Riverside Methodist Hospital, Columbus, Ohio, and fellowship training in cardiology at Allegheny General Hospital, Pittsburgh. Dr. Kazienko is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.

Brian is a board certified cardiologist with fellowship training, has opened Cardiology Consultants of Meadville and has joined Meadville Medical Center's Medical Staff. The office is located at 765 Liberty Street, Meadville. Dr. Kazienko can be reached at: 814/373-2310.



Cover Story continued

payment reimbursement system—a de facto extension of the MMA moratorium on such facilities, which ended June 8.

Medicaid outlook: Senate Finance Committee

With cuts to Medicaid at the forefront of hospital issues, Rodney Whitlock, Senate Finance Committee, Majority staff, began fielding questions about how the panel might find \$10 billion in savings as prescribed by the budget resolution passed this spring. He said that any savings should be shared with states as a general principle, with flexibility as the primary objective. Through drug price negotiation, the curtailment of asset transfers and states' use of intergovernmental transfers (IGTs), and the elimination of fraud, waste and abuse, Rodney said significant Medicaid savings could be reached.

Alice Weiss, Rodney's counterpart for Finance Democrats, cautioned that closing asset transfer loopholes might hurt our most vulnerable citizens. Responding to his call for state flexibility, Alice relayed concern that the governors could relegate to "optional coverage" status some of the nation's most needy populations. She said that block grants would give states a "blank check" with no accountability. Questions from the audience focused on the pending Medicaid Commission. With the panel's report due Sept. 1 and budget reconciliation instructions mandated by Sept. 16, both felt the commission's recommendations would be difficult to incorporate.

Please read the Vantage® Medicaid/ Home Infusion position story on the proposed Pennsylvania Medicaid legislation on Page 5.



Rodney Whitlock, Majority staff
Alice Weiss, Minority staff

Pride in the Vantage® Culture:

One of the building blocks in the Vantage® infrastructure is education and training. This quarter Vantage® conducted a two part Professional Development Training Session for Managers and Supervisors that focused on a number of objectives;

- To create an understanding for the strengths & weaknesses of each member of the Leadership Team
- To develop an appreciation for the differences in others
- To create strategies for more effective personal communication
- To build an environment of trust and mutual respect for colleagues
- To develop solid skills for the effective resolution of conflict and disagreement
- To objectively assess the communication efforts within the organization and develop strategies to improve it.



This secession was conducted by Tom Benson, Director of Training for J. L. Nick & Associates, Inc. a professional, full-service Human Resource consulting firm established in 1988. www.jlnick.com. The training secessions organized and provided by Vantage's® HR Department, headed by Joy Jordan, never deviated from reinforcing the five principal building blocks in Vantage® Pride:

Creativity – Relating to, or characterized by imagination; having a lively imagination in looking at ways to improve the organization. An employee who creatively makes suggestions and recommendations promoting the growth of our company.

Customer Service – Pride in contributing to the welfare of others while performing a service. The success of every organization depends directly upon how its customers, clients, and patients are treated, Listening carefully to the needs and complaints, taking charge in providing a solution, and doing so with a positive attitude.

Flexibility – Characterized by a ready capability to adapt to new, different, or changing requirements. A flexible employee is one who helps with a rush order late Friday afternoon and still finds ways to finish his /her own work, even if it means staying late.

Mutual Respect – Someone who is respectful and treats everyone the same, from subordinates to the CEO. They consistently have a positive and non self-serving attitude. Mutual Respect indicates sensitivity and a helpful attitude toward fellow employees.

Truth – Sincerity in action and character; fairness and straightforwardness of conduct. An honest, fair, and truthful employee is a company's most important asset. Mistakes are made, however truth speaks its loudest when you can admit an error, solve the problem and move on. These abilities make an employee a leader, trustworthy, and reliable.

These core values have been pivotal in the success Vantage® has experienced over the past twenty one years. This consistency should prove paramount in the companies expansion into new markets.





JOINT BOARD EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

Vantage® recently hosted its 12th annual Joint Board Education Conference at the Golf and Ski resort, Peek'n Peak, located in Western New York State. This year's two day event began with a warm welcome and opening comments from the Vantage® Healthcare Network Chairman, and CEO of Warren General Hospital, John Papalia.

JBEC invited attendees enjoyed an insightful group of speakers beginning with David Zach, one of America's elite futurists. Mr. Zach gave a futuristic tour of technology and a compelling presentation about: Playing with fads, working with trends and living by principals.

The following day began with William O. Cleverly, Ph.D. Dr. Cleverly is the author of 43 books dealing with the application and use of financial management principles and data in healthcare organizations. He was followed by Julia D. Corelli, a partner with the Pepper Hamilton, LLC law firm, and healthcare legal expert. Julia discussed "Top Issues for the Bottom Line: Techniques for Keeping Hospital-Physician Relationships Profitable." This year's closing speaker and special guest was Ron Young. You may remember Ron was a POW during Operation Iraqi Freedom. He is also a CNN Special Contributor. This gifted and courageous war hero who was held captive for 22 days in Iraq delivered a riveting account of courage, love of life and country.

Plans are already on the drawing boards for next year's JBEC meeting.

For information on this coming year's JBEC event contact Karen Weber - karenw@vantagehealthcare.com.



Futurist David Zach with Vantage® Chairman and WGH President/CEO John Papalia



Chuck Potter, Dr. Guanzon, Dr. Beh, with Tony DeFail President/CEO MMC



UPMC Northwest President/CEO Neil Todhunter with Speaker Ron Young



Speaker Dr. William O. Cleverly with MMC President/CEO Tony DeFail



Julia Corelli, Partner Pepper Hamilton, LLC with Tony Nasralla President/CEO TAH



Henry Ward CFO Westfield Memorial Hospital, Karen Weber Vantage® Assistant to the CEO and JBEC Coordinator, Speaker Ron Young and WGH Director of Communications Karen Combs.



Dr. Walter Beh, Pepper Hamilton and LLC event sponsor Chuck Potter



Members of Vantage® Executive Staff, CFO Mike Moshbacher with Dean Werner Sr. VP Group Purchasing



Titusville Area Hospital President/CEO Tony Nasralla, Nancy Worden, Hospital Board; Dr. Byron Donovan, Donna Popieski, TAH Foundation Board; and Randy Lindauer, VP Operations



Kane Hospital's: Ron Mattis, PhD., Bill Karney (Secretary of the Board), Don Payne, President and J. Gary Rhodes CEO.

Vantage® POISED FOR THE FUTURE



Medicaid Reform

Vantage® Takes Action to Ensure Continued Medicaid Funding for Home Infusion Patients

Proposed State Budget Cuts Would Have Devastating Impact for Both Patients and Providers

by John Fries

By the end of June the Pennsylvania State House is planning to pass a balanced budget for next year. House members have copies of the proposed budget draft that's been submitted by Governor Ed Rendell. As recently as last week, they unanimously voted against it.

That vote was a sensible move. In the governor's proposed budget, the State, under its Medicaid program, would provide equal reimbursement for drugs for retail pharmacies, skilled nursing facilities and home infusion services. For Rendell, it's an effective way to cut spending. For providers like Vantage® Home Infusion Therapy Services as well as the 150-plus homebound Medicaid patients served by Vantage® the cuts would be devastating.

Vantage® Home Infusion Therapy Services purchases drugs from a third-party supplier, like hospitals, nursing homes and retail pharmacies, however, that's where the similarities end. Vantage® patients include people with advanced therapeutic needs such as cancer and cancer-related pain, gastrointestinal diseases, congestive heart failure, immune disorders and more. Therefore the drugs need to be in a form that can be administered by needle or via a port in the patient's body. Off-the-shelf medications cannot be used.

Under Rendell's current budget proposal, a relatively small company like Vantage®, which is group-owned by a network of hospitals in northwestern Pennsylvania, would have to pay the same amount for drugs as large pharmacy chains, hospitals and nursing homes that have greater purchasing power. The story continues to develop. Just last week, The National Governors Association submitted its own proposals designed to help Congress reduce Medicaid spending. Many of the groups' suggestions will likely find support among lawmakers. They include giving States the authority to set premiums, deductibles and co-payments for Medicaid participants.

Vantage® continues to work with State representatives in the hopes of establishing meaningful Medicaid coverage for home infusion patients. The alternatives are costly, and should the governor's proposed cuts be passed, they will have a devastating impact on patients, hospitals and other health care delivery systems.

Given the strong case for home infusion therapy, you might be surprised to learn that the proposed budget would make it very difficult for home infusion providers to continue their service to Pennsylvania Medicaid recipients. Hunter states, "we are currently meeting with our state representatives and urging them to consider revising the Medicaid benefit regarding home infusion services. Doing that might increase the cost in the short term, but they would be decreased globally in the long term."



"Our staff of pharmacy technicians compound all the drugs we administer in a sterilized Class 10,000 clean room," says Mary Jo Hunter, Vice President of Vantage® Home Infusion Services. "Not only is home infusion therapy a more comfortable, effective way to receive necessary drugs, it costs significantly less to provide the service at home than in a health care facility."

DuBois Regional Medical Center continued

Susan Grady, DRMC Vice President of Human Resources, accepted the award during a ceremony held Nov. 30 at Hershey Lodge and Convention Center.

This is the third consecutive year DRMC has been named one of the 100 Best Places to Work in PA. DRMC was named in the large category (more than 250 employees). DRMC currently employs 1,440.

In 2002, DRMC was ranked 47th on the list; last year, it ranked 37th. This year's ranking in the top 10 is a substantial increase, one that DRMC representatives are proud to have achieved.

"We were thrilled to have made such a tremendous stride in the ranking. DRMC placed higher than many urban and larger companies and hospitals. We are proud to share this prestigious honor with the DRMC staff and the communities we serve," said Grady.

Graeca lauded DRMC's employees for their contributions to this award. "Through the staff's dedication, skills and talent as well as its commitment to DRMC's core values and its mission, we have made great strides in better serving our customers and our community. Everyone at DRMC provides one another with the support and encouragement needed in the fast-paced environment of health care," he said.

Grady added that providing a positive work environment ultimately improves patient care for many reasons, among them consistency of care. Minimal employee turnover contributes to consistency.

The award program was designed to honor the best places of employment in Pennsylvania, benefiting the state's economy, its workforce and businesses.

Hundreds of companies were entered into the two-part process of determining the 100 Best Places to Work. Candidates for the award must undergo a thorough evaluation process, which includes an evaluation of workplace practice summaries. This evaluation comprises 25 percent of the company's total score.

The GPTWI also conducts employee surveys. The survey results comprise 75 percent of a company's total score.



Mary Joe Hunter, Pharm D Vice President, Vantage® Home Infusion Services