



VIEW*S* & VISIONS

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Putting the Customer First

James Fawcett, President
Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield West Virginia

James Fawcett was appointed President of Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield West Virginia in October 2016. He is responsible for all market functions for West Virginia's largest commercial health insurance carrier, which serves more than 275,000 members and 3,500 clients through the company's health care benefits business. With offices in Parkersburg, Charleston and Wheeling, it employs nearly 700 people.

Fawcett has been with Highmark for more than 29 years. Prior to becoming president, he served in a number of leadership roles where he was responsible for the Medicaid markets in Highmark's Delaware and West Virginia health markets, sales and client management for Highmark's Pennsylvania individual and group health markets, and provider contracting and network management for Highmark's core markets in Pennsylvania, Delaware and West Virginia.

He serves on the board of directors for the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, the Parkersburg-Wood County Area Development Authority and West Virginia Family Health.

Fawcett holds a bachelor's degree from Indiana University. He was a commissioned officer in the United States Air Force, and is a graduate of Leadership Pittsburgh's Class XXII.

Health care faces new challenges every day that require deep insights, constant innovation and new solutions. In this rapidly changing and complex landscape, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield West Virginia is on a journey to get health care right for its customers. We are doing this by putting ourselves in our customers' shoes and making decisions from their vantage point.

Our customers expect higher quality, greater transparency, simplicity, technological innovations, improved accessibility, affordability and better outcomes and experiences. While these expectations are not unique to West Virginians, our state's geography, economy, health care provider assets and other challenges are likely to drive some unique solutions. Highmark understands and appreciates the



value of different perspectives and strives to partner with West Virginia health care providers, educational systems, employers, consumers, regulators, elected officials and others to develop, pilot and implement changes to help us meet these challenges.

Aside from being West Virginia's largest commercial insurer – which is important, as volume is a key factor in leading change – we benefit from being a part of the Highmark Health enterprise. Highmark Health is the second-largest integrated health care delivery and financing network in the nation with Blue



Highmark West Virginia's office, located in Parkersburg, West Virginia

Cross Blue Shield plans in West Virginia, Delaware and Pennsylvania. We also provide dental insurance, vision care and stop-loss insurance products through a national network of diversified businesses to meet the many needs of our employer customers for their employees here in West Virginia, as well as across the country. Additionally, we work together with the 38 independent Blue Cross Blue Shield plans that cover all 50 states and U.S. territories to ensure our customers have coverage anywhere in the United States. Leveraging the best ideas from across the country with our large local presence positions us well to drive change in West Virginia.

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Making It Easier for Members to Stay on Top of Their Health

There has been a shift in how consumers shop for health care. Rather than being passive about their health care experience, many consumers now expect to have access to information about cost, quality, patient experience, patient safety and other factors. Highmark is providing health tools that empower our members to take active roles to improve their health. Tools that let customers comparison-shop for health care services and provide access to a 24/7 registered nurse hotline, telemedicine capabilities and mobile health clinics are just a few examples of the ways we are making it easier for members to get engaged in their own health care decisions.

Collaborating with Physicians for Improved Health Outcomes

As an industry, we must move away from pay-for-volume (i.e., how many patients are seen) to pay-for-value (i.e., how patients are doing). True Performance is

our new primary care physician population health program that moves us in this direction by reimbursing for outcomes. At the heart of this strategy is technology that provides greater information to the primary care practice – identifying patient gaps in care, risk stratification and other important information on the patient’s health care experience.

Partnering with the Community to Combat the Opioid Crisis

West Virginia has been hard hit by the opioid crisis, which is why we are partnering with providers, state officials and other community stakeholders on several initiatives to combat this crisis. This includes information-sharing with primary care physicians, pharmacy and patient safety initiatives, member complex care management and public education. For instance, a pilot program launched last year by Highmark West Virginia is using claims data to help doctors understand the totality of their patient’s opioid and medication use in order to reduce doctor-shopping by members.

Looking Inward to Retain, Attract and Develop Our Employees for A New Future

We must empower our 700-plus employees to make the changes necessary to improve the overall experiences of our customers. To do this, we are implementing best practice standards, such as continual workforce education, using the “Rooney Rule” in manager hiring and maintaining a robust supplier diversity program. Highmark also sponsors seven internal, employee-led business resource groups that leverage the unique perspectives of our employees to advance our workplace, marketplace and community capabilities. Personally, I have taken leadership roles with our business resource groups focusing on LGBTQ and military veterans’ needs and opportunities. Our goal is to leverage our diverse employee perspectives and experiences to

empower Highmark to impact the health care experience for all of our customers.

Staying Focused to Bring Positive Change to West Virginia Health Care

In a complex and ever-changing environment, I am confident that Highmark West Virginia’s local presence, corporate expertise and access to Blue Cross Blue Shield plans across the country best position us to partner and collaborate with West Virginia employers, consumers, health care providers and others to bring meaningful and positive change to health care in West Virginia. How do we stay focused? The answer to that question is clear: we will continue to place our customers at the center of everything we do. ▽