

# women'sheartadvantage®

## Billings Clinic (Billings, Montana)

*Case Study: Solidifying Market Share in Competitive Marketplace*

### The Setting and Challenge

Organized as a medical foundation, Billings Clinic is a 180 multi-specialty physician group practice and 272-bed tertiary-level hospital serving a 300-mile radius, four-state area, which consists of central and eastern Montana, northern Wyoming, western North Dakota and western South Dakota. Billings is in a competitive cardiovascular market, with a tough competitor (in Top 100 for cardiac care in the region) located just two blocks away. In addition, Billings' regional market is very competitive with 86 outreach clinics in 30 markets. The leadership team at Billings was looking for new strategies and resources to increase cardiovascular service line market share, increase brand equity and help the organization carry out its mission to improve the health of residents in its service area through compassionate patient-focused care, education and research.

### The Solution

Billings chose Women's HeartAdvantage because "it gives us the opportunity for our physician leadership, quality resources, clinical staff and marketing departments on community health improvement," said Kristianne Wilson, Billings' vice president of strategic development. The Billings team liked that the program was sustainable, "not just a one-time, one-shot campaign" and that it emphasized physicians' buy-in.

Leslie Blair, Billings champion for the program, said Women's HeartAdvantage differentiated the hospital in the community because the program specifically targeted one disease and one demographic - women's heart disease. She also said the program was easy to implement because it provided both an overall strategy and customizable tools that were easy to implement locally. "This program has been incredible. We see Women's HeartAdvantage as our most successful marketing and clinical initiative," Blair said. "The program is cost effective and so well structured. It's been fabulous."

### The Results

It didn't take long for Billings to see the benefits of Women's HeartAdvantage. After launching the program with a press conference, billboards, newspaper and electronic advertising (TV, radio, internet), patient information in physicians' offices, more than...

- 500 women attended the hospital's Heart Month Education Program
- 1,700 women signed up for free heart assessments (provided free of charge and valued at \$18 each, for a community benefit of more than \$36,000)
- 1,000 people called the hospital's hotline within the first two weeks post-launch
- an average of 150 women attended the hospital's "Lunch and Learn" events



In all, more than 3,000 free heart-health screenings were conducted, and emergency department visits rose an astounding 23 percent for women within one year. In addition Billings realized a 62 percent

increase in cardiology patients within 5 months following kickoff. Billings' cardiac services inpatient market share steadily rose over the first 24 months following launch of Women's HeartAdvantage, from a little over 50 percent to nearly 55 percent.

Blair said one of the keys to making Women's HeartAdvantage successful was getting buy in from physicians early. Billings's marketing department met with physicians from OB-GYN, internal medicine and the emergency department to discuss the program. Equally important was getting the support from nurses and educating them about Women's HeartAdvantage. "Nurses were an important component of Women's HeartAdvantage, because they usually see the patients first and for the longest period of time," she said.

Blair said one of the best benefits from the program has been the conversations that have occurred among the hospital's staff and the unexpected relationships that have been formed. Billings also established published guidelines on the treatment of heart disease and the risk factors, which was distributed to all of its physicians, regional physicians and referring physicians. Many Women's HeartAdvantage participants even began asking for the guidelines.

***"My husband and I want to thank you for the free heart health assessments we received. We're ranchers and can't afford insurance. Even though we're relatively young, we found out that we're both at risk for heart disease. My cholesterol was sky high and my husband was told he had high blood pressure. Since the advice we received, we've both been exercising and eating better. We just visited our local doctor and got checked out and found that both of us are back in the normal range. Thank you for opening our eyes to preventing heart disease! We're forever grateful."***

- Billings Clinic Women's HeartAdvantage patient

"We now have cardiologists working with OB-GYN and primary care physicians about a female patient's cholesterol level, blood pressure, body mass index and smoking habits," she said. "The Women's HeartAdvantage information we have provided them has been very well received."