

# women'sheartadvantage®

## Covenant HealthCare, Saginaw, Michigan

*Case Study: Affinity Program Pays Off*

### The Setting

Covenant HealthCare is one of the largest, most comprehensive health care facilities north of metro Detroit. Its 700-bed medical center and more than 20 inpatient and outpatient facilities serve a diverse population spanning 15 counties in east-central Michigan.

### The Challenge

An initial baseline consumer survey performed in August 2004 revealed that nearly half of all local residents (46%) had one or two risk factors for heart disease. A market survey revealed that while they were the second local choice in preference for residents for cardiac care, their numbers were steadily rising while their primary competitor's market share was shrinking at roughly the same rate during that same period. Covenant saw an opportunity to capture the market. The hospital identified four main goals – to increase consumer awareness of the nature and risks of heart disease in women, increase brand awareness of and preference for Covenant Center for the Heart, engage local physicians and improve clinical outcomes.

### The Solution

Covenant chose to use **Women's HeartAdvantage®** and create an affinity program, "not just a campaign," according to Kevin Birchmeier, Cardiovascular Services Director, to develop strong relationships with their target audience. The system launched the program in February 2005 inviting women to join the free program and in turn receive a free heart health awareness kit, a personal welcome call from the Covenant Center for the Heart, a quarterly newsletter and 1 free heart health screening every year. Members also were invited to exclusive quarterly events and programs and received a free fast food guide and heart health cookbook. The launch included a major media blitz, community events, an internal "mini-campaign" for staff and volunteers, and educational visits to all local primary care physicians and cardiologists to engage them in the program. Their multi-pronged media approach included billboards; television, radio and print ads; women-oriented events; trade shows with face-to-face registration and direct mail.

### The Results

Covenant reaped significant, almost immediate results. Within the first 3 months of launching the **Women's HeartAdvantage** affinity program 1,061 women became members. Of those, more than half (595) became Covenant patients. Affinity members who were existing Covenant patients accounted for a 54% increase in encounters, 66% increase in revenue, 64% in profit and 16% increase in revenue per patient within the first 9 months of the program. Overall the hospital realized more than \$437,00 in net revenue gains and, with offsetting campaign costs, achieved a very positive \$5.38 ROI (\$5.38 in revenue for every \$1 spent on the campaign). To date, the affinity program boasts over 10,000 members.

In addition to exceeding initial membership and revenue projections, Women's HeartAdvantage helped the hospital connect directly with their targeted demographic (51% of members were in the targeted demographic). The campaign also helped Covenant realize significant, positive increases in heart disease risk awareness (up 8%), brand awareness and consumer preference for Covenant as a cardiac care provider (up 6%). "Our Women's HeartAdvantage affinity program has not only strengthened our brand, but it has helped us save lives in our community," said Birchmeier.