



Da: January 29, 2016
To: Independent Physicians and Practice Leadership
Fr: Dr. Khan Nedd, Answer Health CEO
Re: **Year-End Update on Answer Health**

2015 was a landmark year for the two largest Independent Physician Organizations in West Michigan and the providers they represent. Based on 18 months of engagement and thoughtful planning, physician leaders at West Michigan Physicians Network (WMPN) and Physicians' Organization of Western Michigan (POWM) formed a new, joint venture, a Clinically Integrated Organization (CIO) – Answer Health.

Answer Health (AH) was created by independent physicians for independent physicians. It aligns the strategic direction and investment priorities of the two POs, and sets the stage for further organizational integration, all in support of independent providers. This alignment has never been more important given the pressures facing independent practices, including shifting reimbursement and increasing competition from health systems.

As a CIO, Answer Health is designed from the ground up to enhance quality of care and the health of our community, while reducing costs and increasing patient and provider satisfaction. AH will support independent practices in their pursuit of this “quadruple aim” by:

- Investing in infrastructure and processes that increase communication, integration, and accountability across practices;
- Committing to utilize accepted, evidence-based care standards and best practices;
- Partnering with patients, payers, providers, and community organizations to manage health and promote a uniform, exceptional care experience;
- Delivering market-leading performance on clinical, cost, and experience measures; and
- Creating reimbursement mechanisms that reflect the value we create together.

In addition to creating a new model of care, AH will pursue a range of services, business partnerships, and ownership opportunities to enhance the operational and financial health of independent practices.

In the last half of 2015, AH made significant progress toward achieving these goals. Under the guidance of the Answer Health Board of Managers, AH physician leadership has: created policies and procedures to guide execution of the business plan; developed criteria for provider participation; defined over 100 core and specialty-specific clinical measures; launched cross-specialty work groups to define and distribute clinical protocols; identified clinical technology standards; expanded clinical data registry and

HIE partnerships; and held preliminary meetings with potential payer and business partners. This progress would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of many physicians who have been engaged with AH thus far.

With much of the groundwork well underway, we view 2016 as the start of a vital opportunity to bring new thinking and a new approach to the delivery of health care in West Michigan. We will continue to pursue our payer partnership strategy, expand our population health management capabilities, including both care coordination and analytics, integrate clinical IT systems, and develop meaningful clinical and business partnerships. While this is occurring on behalf of Answer Health, leadership of the two POs will continue to work toward a merger of their organizations.

We are looking for independent physicians to join us in making this vision a reality. This month, we are formally launching the physician sign-up process for Answer Health. We recognize and thank the significant number of primary care and specialty providers who already have signed their AH Participation Agreements.

We will be reaching out to your practice shortly to discuss this opportunity, answer your questions, and seek your participation. This process will include subsequent town hall meetings with independent providers across the region and individual meetings with practice leaders. If you or your partners would like to schedule a meeting with Answer Health, please contact our offices at 616-552-1483 or at info@answerhealth.com.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James J. DeLoach". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "D".