



Holly Miller

Chief Revenue Officer
PlayMaker Health

In this Voices interview, Home Health Care News sits down with PlayMaker Health Chief Revenue Officer Holly Miller to learn how the sales and marketing landscape has changed as a result of the pandemic. She also explains how home health marketers and liaisons can leverage data and technology platforms to succeed in the new hybrid sales environment.

Editor's note: This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

PlayMaker Health is a post-acute growth platform serving hundreds of home-based care organizations. To learn how we can help your business, visit us at playmakerhealth.com.

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Q: Home Health Care News:
Let's start at the top. What career experiences do you most draw from in your role today?

Holly Miller: Looking back, I've spent the majority of my career in health care technology. I grew up in my career at HealthStream, where I started in sales, moved into sales leadership and oversaw the launch of HealthStream's post-acute division and health care technology. I learned so much in doing that, in terms of how to build an organization, how to build a sales team and how to enter a new emerging market. HealthStream is where I learned the most in my career — PlayMaker is where I gained the best experience.

I joined PlayMaker as the head of sales about four years ago, but that role quickly expanded. At first, PlayMaker's sales team was operating on the transactional plane selling staff-based technology, but selling health care is different. We shifted our sales model to follow a consultative approach that examines the needs of the client and guides them through the buyer's journey. That was easily the biggest shift in my career.



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Then, if we look back to February of 2020, I assumed the role of Chief Revenue Officer at PlayMaker, taking responsibility for the entire revenue continuum. It has been a great learning experience and we've been successful in aligning the cross-functional teams to support clients through the entire journey.

Q: Home Health Care News:
From a sales and marketing perspective, what are the top two to three changes that you've seen in your career, in terms of how home health and marketing teams are built and structured?

Miller: Home health and hospice marketing teams have historically distanced themselves from sales responsibilities. They were and still are marketers and liaisons, but that has shifted since the start of the pandemic. You're seeing more agencies hire people with sales orientation and focus while continuing to operate with the patient top-of-mind.

The other major change is the demographic shift in our marketing teams. Home health and hospice used to attract experienced people with long-term careers in the industry. Now, a new generation is entering this field. Many new hires are joining home health and hospice agency marketing and sales teams right out of school, with little home health and hospice experience. Again, it goes back to that concept of having more sales-oriented people.

More people who have been raised on technology are entering the industry. Everything they've done has been based on technology, phones, computers, tablets, et cetera. Not only are they open to having that type of technology support them in the professional world, but they expect it. A lot of agencies use it as a recruiting tool to grow their sales and marketing teams with right-fit prospects.

Q: Home Health Care News:
Let's talk about the impact the pandemic made on home health sales and marketing efforts. How has home health CRM commitment and comfort evolved since the start of COVID?

Miller: I think a couple of things happened throughout the pandemic. From an industry perspective, we've always known that home health and hospice, versus post-acute, is the fastest-growing segment in the health care continuum. The pandemic accelerated that awareness and growth by helping more people realize that the safest, most compliant place to receive care if possible, is in the home. As a company that supports home health agencies, we had to shift our mindset as well. We quickly diverted from the current roadmap and put much of our resources into making our platform easier for customers to use. We made adjustments to our CRM platform to enable better tracking of virtual sales calls, and we enhanced functionality to streamline the logging process.

We did a lot of webinars with industry thought leaders and our partners to make sure that people had tips and tricks on how to navigate this virtual world. We also did a lot of training and best practices on how to utilize the system to the best of its ability to do that. What can we do to help with our main thing, our main focus?

Q: Home Health Care News:
What were the biggest adjustments PlayMaker made in 2020 to accommodate the move from in-person sales to a largely virtual sales effort?

Miller: The biggest thing we did was take a deep dive into our data. We realized that these marketers had to have data to understand where to go next. Face-to-face meetings and traditional sales tactics were not an option. They needed the data to understand what's going on in the market and it became an integral part of their process. We also took a lot of steps to enhance the data.

PlayMaker has the most robust data set in the market with Medicare Part A, Medicare Part B and Medicare Advantage. We have operational metrics and KPIs that enable everyone involved in the purchasing process to make informed decisions. Even before the pandemic, we started to see a shift from donuts to data, where sales teams are not just making in-person calls, they're making meaningful calls. Our referral sources' time is precious. Making sure patients get the right care at the right place at the right time, and having data to guide these home health and hospice agency marketers has been critical.

Our biggest commitment was to make sure they had the tools and resources they needed along with the data.



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Q: Home Health Care News:
What changes did PlayMaker make, in terms of its features and functionality for home health sales teams?

Miller: If you look at the growth of Medicare Advantage over the last few years, there will be a time in the near future where it will surpass traditional Medicare, and in some states, we're already seeing that. We made sure that dataset was readily available to all of our customers when they needed it. Then we went out and proactively made sure that they could get their hands on it.

We also enhanced all of our datasets to include all of those revenue and operational metrics from a KPI standpoint, to understand the cost of care and what that looks like across the entire continuum. Then, we spent a lot of time and resources building and synchronizing our mobile and desktop platforms to make sure home health and hospice marketers can work anywhere within the applications.



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We've always had a mobile application, but we've enhanced it over the last 12 months to improve workflows. Little things like being able to click on contact information or automatically log touchpoints seem insignificant, but they make a world of difference. We made reporting and dashboards readily available so managers can gain oversight of their marketers and liaisons. This way, managers can have opportunities and still have the ability to manage them and guide them in a virtual world.

Q: Home Health Care News:
What does the industry look like today from a revenue perspective?

Miller: If you look at the health care continuum, post-acute has been the fastest growing segment for a while. As I mentioned earlier, the pandemic accelerated the awareness and knowledge that the safest place to receive care is in the home. It also drove awareness in hospice and palliative services.

We have an aging population, so there's more awareness of home health and hospice services. Reimbursement and guidelines, however, have shifted. We have Medicare Advantage benefits that are increasing for the segment of the continuum, so it will continue to grow.

Q: Home Health Care News:
What's in store for home health sales and marketing technology next year in 2022?



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Miller: This is where I get really excited. I think we've all been reliant on data for the last few years. When I came into PlayMaker, we had many agencies that were not using claims data at all. That is not the norm anymore. Now, people are familiar with claims data that they want, and if you look at CMS claims data, it's all historical.

I know people want more real-time information and more meaningful data and we can look back historically to see trends and to see where we need to focus. Having that real-time data, whether it's flowing in from the EHRs right into the platform, or we're doing our own analysis on data and putting that in place, predictive analytics and data is where the industry is headed.

With all these various points, whether it's our CMS data with your traditional Medicare claims, or it is the Medicare Advantage data, I believe we have the largest datasets in the industry. We have data from clearing houses, which are across the country, but we also have rep behavior data. How many times does the rep log into a system, or how many times does it take a high-performing rep to convert someone to a referral source? What does your traditional book of business look like for high-performing reps? All of these data points are going to become more meaningful and more critical. If agencies focus on expansion and growth over the next 24 months, meaningful data will be key.

Q: Home Health Care News:
Entering this year, no one knew fully what to expect. What has been the biggest surprise to you in the home-based care industry, and what impact do you think that will have on the industry for the remainder of the year?

Miller: The biggest surprise and sigh of relief was how quickly the industry adapted. It adapted to new virtual workflows, as well as to supporting their referral sources and more importantly, their patients. As I look forward, I think this concept of virtual and remote work is here to stay. We've put out some information on the screen-to-screen salesman. I think that face-to-face interactions are coming back, but there will always be a blended approach of face-to-face and virtual interactions with our patients and our referral sources. I think that's here to stay.

The other thing that I think has been surprising is how quickly the industry was able to develop inside and outside sales team. The inside person focuses on the virtual contacts and the outside person operates strategically and deliberately in that face-to-face contact. I think it is going to be the norm going into 2022 and beyond.