



## The 5 Acute Care Questions You Can't Answer . . . Yet!

By Susan Saldibar

How much referral business are you getting from hospitals and other acute care providers? Possibly not as much as you have in the past. You are probably already experiencing the repercussions of a changing service delivery and reimbursement model. So the landscape is changing as payers continue to incentivize providers with more potential patients and residents, but through narrower networks.

What all this means is that post-acute care providers need to get even smarter about how they compete. And, without a high degree of visibility, that's not easy!

I spoke with Cathy Berry, Senior Marketing & Creative Director at [Aegis Therapies](#) (a Senior Housing Forum partner) recently. Aegis saw a lot of this coming. And they have been steadily building a massive database, leveraging off their access to multiple industry and government related data repositories. From that database, they created a sophisticated program, called Aegis Market Mover, which digs its fingers into your market to answer the questions plaguing skilled nursing, assisted living, home health and others on the growing list of post-acute care providers.

### **Aegis Market Mover**

So, if the field is narrowing and there are more providers than ever, what exactly do you need to know? After wading through an abundance of information from Aegis, here are five (of many!) questions that the program helps providers answer:

1. Based on the number of hospitals in my area and the number of discharges going to my care setting, how much market share does my facility currently hold?
2. What DRGs (diagnostic related group) are being discharged from my targeted hospitals? How can my facility find ways to accept more patients with these DRGs?
3. Does the hospital I am targeting have an issue with readmissions for the specific DRG that my facility excels at treating? How can we leverage our strengths to better meet their needs?
4. In terms of readmissions, how does my facility compare to my competitors and to other post-acute care settings in my market?
5. Are most of the discharges from the hospitals I'm targeting going to my facility or to my competitors? If so, why isn't the hospital discharging to my facility?

This is just a tiny sampling. The Market Mover program answers many more questions, such as comparing 5-star quality ratings and assistance with identifying which home health agencies may be an ideal collaborator by analyzing home health quality scores and measures. The list goes on and on.

And they don't stop there. They work with their clients to create a strategic growth plan for targeting the local referral sources and demonstrating areas of opportunity. And they will even provide marketing materials to help providers get in front of the target hospitals and demonstrate the key benefits to working with them.

## **Data With Power**

My guess is that it would take months, if not years, to accumulate and sort through this depth of data, let alone put it to use in a meaningful way. One can only imagine the time and money it would cost to even begin an undertaking of that magnitude.

At the end of the day, according to Cathy, what you can do with this data is tell your story in a way that is persuasive to acute care providers. "Basically, we are helping providers create a story for their markets. We do a deep dive of the data within a given radius of their facility and give them a moving snapshot of what's happening at any given moment," says Cathy. "The ultimate goal is for post-acute care providers to be able to say to hospitals, 'Hey, we're doing really well on this DRG. Here is why you should be sending patients to us!'"



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