

IMPORTANT EXPANSION

Healthmap's Success in Implementing Kidney Population Health Management Program in Puerto Rico

Founded in 2013 with a mission to improve care and lower costs for people living with kidney disease, Healthmap Solutions (Healthmap) is an NCQA-accredited, industry-leading Kidney Population Health Management company, trusted to manage over 160,000 kidney members across the United States. Healthmap has broadened its geographical coverage significantly in recent years, with a notable expansion into the Puerto Rico market beginning in January 2024.

In addition to the advanced data analytics and proprietary technology that makes Healthmap's Kidney Health Management (KHM) program unique, the program also offers members and their providers access to Healthmap's multidisciplinary Regional Clinical Team, consisting of registered nurses, social workers, pharmacists, behavioral specialists, and registered dietitians. A key function of this team involves helping members overcome social barriers to care. To do this effectively, Healthmap must understand the unique challenges in members' communities and be familiar with the resources that are available in each local market. Naturally, when implementing Healthmap's KHM program in Puerto Rico, setting up a local office and hiring a new team of on-island clinical and corporate associates was imperative. Adopting a regional operations model and integrating into the local community and culture has helped Healthmap earn the trust of providers and members on the island, demonstrating the importance of local presence and its impact on provider and patient engagement.

Healthmap's success in Puerto Rico serves as an important case study of best practices when implementing a healthcare program in a new geographical region. Tailoring solutions to meet the population's needs, establishing a local presence, and building relationships through consistent communications are at the forefront of this achievement and should be key components in any healthcare program expansion. For a deeper dive into the tactics that have led to a successful implementation in Puerto Rico, we turned to **Eric Reimer**, Healthmap's CEO, and **Nelson Perez Surillo, JD**, Healthmap's Vice President of Regional Operations in Puerto Rico.

When Healthmap was given an opportunity to partner with a prominent health plan in Puerto Rico to improve outcomes and lower costs for their members with kidney disease, Healthmap's leadership team was eager to make a difference for this

population. CEO Eric Reimer recalled, “We were excited to make a material positive impact on so many people in Puerto Rico, and we knew that we needed to hire local experts and clinicians who understand the population’s unique needs to be successful. Having a local presence in all regions where our providers and members reside has been an important aspect of Healthmap’s success from the very beginning. We have taken the same approach in the other 43 states where we operate, so our strategy in Puerto Rico was no different.”

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Mr. Reimer continued, “In addition to hiring a workforce of frontline associates to work directly with providers and members in each region, we’ve also onboarded a stellar leadership team to manage all operations in Puerto Rico. Leaders like Nelson Perez Surillo are familiar with the unique needs of the local healthcare landscape, and we’ve trusted them to lead the Puerto Rico team to determine the best levers to pull to maximize clinical outcomes and cost savings. We’ve given the team the tools they need to implement our KHM program effectively, as ultimately, they know the market the best, and we’re letting them take the reins and adjust our offering as appropriate to fit this new market and culture.”

Nelson Perez Surillo, an experienced healthcare leader, was one of Healthmap’s first hires in Puerto Rico. As Vice President of Regional Operations, Mr. Perez Surillo is responsible for managing Healthmap’s clinical and operational functions across the island. To prepare for the program’s launch in Puerto Rico, Mr. Perez Surillo was tasked with hiring a team of experts to interface directly with members and providers. When asked what expertise and qualifications were most important in his search, he replied, “We needed nurses with healthcare management experience, specifically in the population health and managed care fields. Working with health plans and managing Medicare Advantage populations requires an in-depth knowledge of the policies and procedures surrounding the health insurance industry, so this was important when building our team.”

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Mr. Perez Surillo also stressed the importance of hiring professionals who were familiar with the healthcare industry in Puerto Rico. “Every region has nuances, whether you’re in Puerto Rico, Texas, or New York. Healthmap believes that healthcare should be local, so we made sure our new team reflected that.”

Knowing that each region within Puerto Rico has its own unique identity and characteristics, it was important for Healthmap to have team members across the island, not just in the major metropolitan areas. Mr. Reimer explained, “The Clinical Care Managers in each region are responsible for meeting with the providers and members in their area, which allows for speedier resolution of members’ issues, more care gap closures, more positive interventions, and a greater impact on health outcomes for the population.”

In addition to improving outcomes for kidney patients and lowering costs for health plans, Healthmap’s KHM program helps healthcare professionals stay up to date on their patients outside of their regularly scheduled office visits, which is a key benefit for Puerto Rico’s busy healthcare professionals. Mr. Reimer continued, “We know that providers in Puerto Rico have significant workloads, so our goal is to augment their ability to provide exceptional care and greater access to clinical programs without interrupting their workflow. Outside of the Healthmap program, there wasn’t another offering on the island, at this scale, that was designed specifically for kidney disease and related comorbidities. We’re able to immerse ourselves into each provider’s practice and help them achieve their goals, and that approach is truly unique to Healthmap.”

Within the first few months of working on the island, Healthmap’s teams had already achieved impressive engagement with physicians and their patients. Mr. Perez Surillo explained that this success is largely attributed to his team’s relationship-oriented approach to engagement. “Relationships are very important here in Puerto Rico, so it has been critical for us to communicate directly and consistently with the providers and members on the island,” he said. “Many of the leaders on my team were already acquainted with key players in the local healthcare market, which helped us earn their trust when presenting a new program and company to them.”

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Mr. Perez Surillo also utilized a “top-down” strategy when meeting with new stakeholders. “First, our team established relationships with our health plan client, then met with the Independent Physician Associations (IPAs) in their network. Once we had their buy-in, we started communicating with the primary care providers and specialists within those provider groups. By the time we started meeting with members, their providers were already on board and could help us communicate the benefits of our program. Building relationships and earning the trust of all stakeholders was a key theme throughout the entire implementation process.”

Both Mr. Reimer and Mr. Perez Surillo expressed that Healthmap’s achievements on the island thus far bode well for the organization’s future growth in Puerto Rico and beyond. Mr. Reimer concluded, “The Healthmap team is eager to expand to other

regions beyond Puerto Rico, as well. Currently we are contracted to manage a sizable population of kidney members on the island, approximately 20,000, so serving this population extremely well will demonstrate our ability to scale our program and make notable impacts. My hope is that our success in Puerto Rico will demonstrate to the industry that Healthmap is willing to go the extra mile to meet the needs of our clients, providers, and members. We would love to continue expanding in Puerto Rico and beyond, potentially serving other island regions or Spanish-speaking populations. We are proud of our successes so far and are confident that the best is yet to come.”



Eric Reimer
Chief Executive Officer and Co-Chairman of the Board,
Healthmap Solutions

Eric has over 30 years of healthcare services experience and leadership, focused on growing payer service and provider companies. He serves as a director of Imagine360 and CardioOne and is the Co-Chairman of the Board of Healthmap Solutions. Prior to joining Healthmap, Eric was an operating partner at private equity firm Water Street, served as Chairman of Unified Women's Care, OBHospitalist Group, and ELAP Services, served as Chief Executive Officer of CareCentrix, and held various executive leadership roles at Magellan Health Services. Eric received his bachelor's degree from Washington University and a master's in Business Administration from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.



Nelson Perez Surillo, JD
Vice President, Regional Operations - Puerto Rico,
Healthmap Solutions

Nelson has extensive experience in the healthcare services industry in Puerto Rico. He previously held roles in the fields of legal contracting, compliance, and provider relations, including positions at MSO of Puerto Rico, MMM Holdings, and Medical Card Systems. Nelson studied Business Administration and Finance at Villanova University and earned his Jurisdiction Doctorate from the School of Law at Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico.



Better kidney health management starts with Healthmap Solutions.

Contact us at **1-877-546-7004** or at
Sales@HealthmapSolutions.com to learn more.
