

ACCESSIBILITY

2008 Apex Award Winner



Core Business
HOSPITALITY

Headquarters
ORLANDO, FLA.

Number of Employees
5,000

JUDGES' COMMENTS

"Access to care for this population is an enormous obstacle, and Rosen Hotels has cleared this very effectively."

"Results and measurable outcomes speak for themselves – growth of health care costs remained flat for over five years! A terrific example of improving accessibility!"

In 1990, Harris Rosen, president and COO of Rosen Hotels & Resorts, met with his company's now-former health insurer and asked a simple question: "Why are our premiums doubling when we had very few claims in 1989?" The answer disturbed him. The other companies the firm had insured in its hospitality group had performed poorly, and Rosen Hotels needed to help make up for this.

"I said, 'How unfair is that?'" Rosen recalled. "And then I told him that we'd find a better way to manage our employees' medical costs while providing them with better care."

Rosen's solution was a first in the hospitality industry. After a year of planning and a switch to UnitedHealthcare, he converted former finance department space into a clinic, hired a doctor – who then hired her own staff – and opened the Rosen Medical Center. All company employees and their families would receive primary and preventive care there – for free.

As Rosen Hotels grew, the medical center expanded. Today, it has two full-time primary care physicians, two nurse practitioners, a full-time social worker, a part-time podiatrist and a part-time dietitian. It offers a number of services, including lab, X-ray, electrocardiograms, disease management, workers compensation and smoking cessation.



A team of registered nurses is available around the clock, 365 days a year to take health care calls.

"Our doctors see an average of 21 patients a day – much lower than the average – and they're able to take time to get to know our employees," Rosen added. "This is particularly important, because many of our employees have never seen a doctor before. In addition, our doctors can see employees with health emergencies on the same day, rather than the usual five- to eight-day wait, so employees can get healthier faster."

The medical center is both physically – and financially – accessible. It is located within 10 minutes of each hotel location. Employees without transportation can use the hotel's taxi service to get to their appointments at no cost. Employees also can receive care during working hours and still be paid for this time. There is a \$5 copay for primary care; and no cost for pediatric care, smoking cessation, and all diagnostic testing (such as MRIs). Visiting a specialist is a \$15 copay. In addition, the center

provides free access to more than 50 of the most common prescription medications, with other drugs available at low copays.

"Accessibility means truly serving our employee population," explained Kenneth Aldridge, director of health services. "We offer translators, as 40 percent of our employees are French Creoles and another 30 percent speak Spanish as their first language. We actually fill employees' pill boxes to ensure those who can't read English are taking the correct dosages. This also allows us to make sure they take their medications and refill them as needed."

The annual cost of this program is roughly what Rosen Hotels was paying in 1990 – then for lower levels of coverage and fewer employees. The company has avoided the 10 percent to 17 percent average annual escalation in health care costs. Its successful program has caught the attention of other employers wishing to cut their health care costs while increasing benefits to employees. As a result, Rosen Hotels created a clinic consulting branch within ProVInsure, its risk management consulting company.

"Each month I have lunch meetings with employees," Rosen said, "and someone always mentions how the medical center has helped him or her or a family member solve a health problem or prevent one from getting worse. I think this program proves you can do what's right for employees while still saving money." ■