

STUDER GROUP LAUNCHES A GROUNDBREAKING STUDY EXAMINING COMPLEX ISSUES FACING WOMEN IN HEALTHCARE

Study Commences in Conjunction with Women's History Month in March

GULF BREEZE, Fla. (February 27, 2008) – Studer Group, a preeminent outcomes firm assisting healthcare organizations to attain and sustain high performance results, announced today the launch of a groundbreaking study regarding work/life balance among women employed within the healthcare industry. This will be the most comprehensive and significant study ever conducted to better understand the unique and delicate issues of professional/personal balance facing the 10.7 million women who work in healthcare and, in turn, to recommend solutions to their employers that are relevant to this complex industry. The women's work/life balance study is being rolled out in conjunction with Women's History Month in March and public results are anticipated by late 2008.

"At Abbott, we recognize the need for our employees to integrate their work and personal lives in a way that is both successful and fulfilling," said Sue Widner, vice president of Abbott. "The study will fully examine practical strategies and solutions that women can better embrace in managing this integration."

The two-fold goal of the study is to determine actions that employers in the healthcare industry – hospitals, medical groups and healthcare organizations – can take to retain and attract female workers. Studer Group is confident that the study results will help organizations modify ways they conduct business so their systems can be adapted with practical solutions to accommodate their female workforce. Additionally, these strategies will assist women employed in healthcare to achieve a stronger balance between home and work, to relieve their stress load and to enhance their quality of life. Ultimately, improved patient care will be a direct outcome. In summary, the study's results will greatly impact the healthcare organizations and the women they employ.

"Given the multitude of unique pressures faced on a daily basis by women in healthcare, understanding the issues of work/life balance for this segment of the workforce is long overdue," said Irene Thompson, president and CEO of The University HealthSystem Consortium. "As a former CEO of a leading academic medical center and now as the CEO of an alliance serving AMCs, I know first hand the challenges of retaining and attracting women at all levels to maintain a high-performing organization. This important study by the Studer Group will help employers face these challenges and uncover innovative solutions that improve work/life balance and create an environment that supports women in healthcare."

Survey questions address issues that women in healthcare face. A sampling of survey questions include issues pertaining to the combined effect of home and work on employees' emotional health; the role a supervisor plays in maintaining a positive work environment; and the relevance of personal time to job satisfaction.

Women now comprise more than half of the American workforce (U.S. Department of Labor, 2005). Fifty-nine percent of women 16 or older participated in the labor force of 2005, which amounted to 69.3 million women. Within this group, 10.7 million are employed in the healthcare industry. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005)

The extent of the problem of conflict between work and family domains is difficult to estimate due to limitations in the existing research. However, a recent nationwide study of over 1,200 U.S. nurses found that 92 percent reported experiencing some degree of work/family conflict, with 50 percent reporting occurrence on a weekly basis (Grzywacz et al, 2006). Negative effects on individuals include emotional distress and depression, family disruption and poor physical health. Substandard outcomes in the workplace include decreased job satisfaction, poor job performance and increased burnout.

"With ever-increasing demands on both personal and professional lives, it is no surprise that issues of work/family balance have become significant concerns," said Quint Studer, founder and CEO of Studer Group. "At Studer Group, we recognize the importance of understanding more fully how healthcare organizations can be better equipped to create harmony, satisfaction and a sense of personal well-being among women employed in their care. For the most part, women shoulder tremendous responsibilities, at work and at home, and we want to uncover opportunities that employers can execute for greater retention of female employees through an enhanced work environment which, ultimately, produces improved patient care."

To participate in the study, visit www.studergroup.com/womensstudy.

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About Studer Group

Studer Group is an outcomes firm that implements evidence-based leadership systems that help hundreds of healthcare organizations attain and sustain outstanding results. Studer Group is devoted to teaching evidence-based tools and tactics that healthcare organizations can immediately use to create and sustain outcomes in clinical, operational and service excellence. www.studergroup.com

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