

Preventive Healthcare

An Interview with Joy Altimare, Chief Revenue Officer, EHE Health

EDITORS' NOTE Prior to joining the healthcare space, Joy Altimare worked with leading agencies such as Ogilvy+Mather, GREY, and Publicis on preeminent brands like L'Oreal, Verizon and Colgate-Palmolive. She then shifted into a role at publishing giant Condé Nast, transferring her skills to the media world.



Joy Altimare

COMPANY BRIEF EHE Health (*ehe.health*) was founded in 1913 as the first healthcare provider emphasizing the power of preventive care. It seeks to give people lifestyle skills geared towards optimal health, performance, productivity and longevity. U.S. President Woodrow Wilson endorsed the company's diet and tens of thousands of preventive exams were conducted as the company began its long history as a leader in the field. EHE Health has been at the forefront of progressive healthcare for more than 100 years and is committed to empowering people with the best tools for their health.

How do you describe EHE Health's culture and how critical is culture to the success of the company?

Culture is tethered to the success and health of a business. At EHE, culture is especially important in this moment in time as we seek to marry traditional healthcare with a more consumer-focused approach. As an

organization, our culture is shaped by our mission and rooted in our values – we want to foster transparency, integrity and compassion. Core to our culture is the expectation that leadership rolls up their sleeves and collaboration is cross-cutting throughout the organization. We want our employees to understand that their contributions and our work matters, because ultimately, we are helping people live longer, healthier lives.

What have been the keys to EHE Health's industry leadership and how do you define the EHE Health difference?

EHE has been around for more than 100 years, before the modern healthcare world we know today even existed. Since the institution of insurance started in this country, we've been in lock step with how employers provide superior healthcare to their employees. The key to our continued leadership is our commitment to always innovate. Prevention is an innovative topic itself, and we are proud to claim that we are the originators and innovators of preventive healthcare. Despite diversifying our product offerings, we haven't wavered from our core value of prevention.

When I think about EHE's difference, it really comes down to the patients. Every patient is unique. Every customer and their employee population are unique. As a leader, that framework has been essential to our

ability to deliver consistent care. We think about patients beyond one clinical encounter and try to surround them with ongoing, consistent avenues and resources for their own health journey. We're thinking about what is enticing them, what's engaging them, what's encouraging them to schedule an exam. Our philosophy is to understand the root cause, not just the symptoms, and come up with a care pathway to set patients up for success.

How did EHE Health adapt its business to address the challenges caused by the pandemic?

EHE met the challenge head on. We were lucky that our CEO, David Levy, is an epidemiologist, so we followed the science and the data. Having a consistent leader who not only was a doctor, but also had done this kind of crisis work before gave us the insight and confidence as an organization to move forward and help our customers do the same.

A great example is our VaxStatus offering. As employees return to work and employers grapple with implementing federal vaccine mandates, we recognized early on that we could be a solution provider. In fact, the challenge to help employers comply, slow the pandemic, and get the country back to business goes to the heart of EHE Health's role as a technology-enhanced preventive care company. We built on our success delivering efficient testing solutions for employers by developing VaxStatus, a single, comprehensive platform to manage both vaccination evidence and testing management.

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I am extremely proud to say I was part of this company during the worst pandemic in modern history. As a mom with a young daughter, I've been proud to tell her that I'm working to help keep people healthy.

Will you provide an overview of EHE Health's services and preventative care product?

EHE Health is a national company dedicated to creating programs that foster preventive health. We work with large, self-insured employers to create an environment and access to preventive health services for their employees. We are dedicated to providing ways in which every American and every employee can know – and understand – a clear and complete picture of their overall health. For example, as we all came to learn, comorbidities make people more susceptible to serious disease if they contract COVID-19. However, many people don't know if they are pre-diabetic or have a high BMI, for example, so they don't know to make better health choices to lower their risk for poor outcomes. Our tools and resources give people the knowledge they need to take action to improve their health.

We also think it's critically important to meet patients where they are. From mental health mentorship to Pulse Virtual, we offer digital options for patients who prefer an at-home experience for their health assessments. The pandemic has also really underscored the importance of having those digital offerings to position people to continue to engage in their health during challenging times.

How critical is it for EHE Health to be patient-centered and what are the keys to driving patient utilization of EHE Health's services?

Being patient-centric is our unique differentiator. Before a patient comes in, we want to learn as much about them as we possibly can. The health assessment is not just a function of the exam – it's essential for us to think about creative ways to ask questions so we can uncover the complete picture of their health. Take, for example, a question about sleep. People are often asked, “How much sleep do you get?” It seems like a straightforward question, but people are not always honest. That's why we position the question as: do you feel rested when you wake up? We're trying to get to the point of if it is restorative rest or not because there's a big difference between

closing your eyes for a few hours and getting a good night's sleep.

Our philosophy is to understand the root cause – not just the symptoms – so we can come up with a personalized care pathway for each patient. This is key to driving not only utilization, but also general patient satisfaction. We are completely invested in understanding what is motivating patient behavior so we can drive a better patient experience and better health outcomes.

Do you feel that there is an effective understanding of the importance of prevention and wellness in addressing a person's health and what more can be done to drive this message?

The healthcare system is cause and effect. There's a problem, here's a solution. So, I think patients understandably get confused when they think about what wellness means and how prevention plays into that. Prevention is all about a regular cadence of inputs so we can see trends and make an educated conclusion about what's going on. It's about understanding baseline indicators, risk factors, family history and environmental factors and then empowering patients to make better decisions now for a healthier future.

One of our key goals is to work with employers to make sure employees know these resources are at their disposal and encourage them to be proactive in using them. We need to drive the message that knowledge is power and if we do this well, together we can create a healthier, happier and more productive workforce.

Will you discuss EHE Health's commitment to building a diverse and inclusive workforce in order to mirror the diversity of its patients and the communities it serves?

EHE is on a mission to eliminate racial disparities in access to high-quality healthcare. We are uniquely positioned to drive this mission forward by setting an example with our employees and clients and embracing this effort into our core vision, mission and values. Our work in this space is critically important. People of color have three times the mortality rate from COVID-19 as their white counterparts. We must acknowledge longstanding systemic conscious and unconscious bias from all constituents in the healthcare delivery system and do our part to address this deeply troubling fact.

EHE is taking this on within our member population. Despite people of color making up 23 percent of our member population, only 6 percent seek services. We know the underlying reasons are complex, and we are on a mission to address these issues with our behavior-centric approach to patient access and care, our dedication to evidence-based care, and our commitment to transparent measurement. Setting our sites on this mission will not only improve our employees' and members' health status but also set an example for the corporate world.

You have been a leader in brand building and marketing throughout your career. How has the role of a brand strategist evolved and what are the keys to driving impact and results in the role?

The role of brand building has shifted to focus more on customer acquisition. Marketers are now looking more closely at the customer journey and the touchpoints along the way that truly change behavior and move them down the funnel from consideration to brand loyalists. It's more strategic and engaging and, ultimately, it has to show return on investment. In today's world, marketers must be data-driven, acquisition-focused decision-makers. It's really quite an exciting time.

Do you feel that there are strong opportunities for women to grow and lead in the industry?

We're at a very unique moment in time, especially for women in the workplace. Looking at the facts, 6 million women left the workforce since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, voluntarily or involuntarily, across industries, categories and levels. Are there strong opportunities for women? It's difficult to say. There are jobs for women no doubt, but women are still lacking the support they need to be successful in those jobs. Most companies are still struggling with maternity leave for women – many new moms still have to take FMLA to bridge the gap of an antiquated maternity leave policy. But, in leveraging the FMLA benefit, we support the concept that women are, in some ways, declared disabled when having a baby.

As a leader, I feel strongly that we need to double down on supporting women in the workforce. It's an urgent crisis, and we need a thoughtful, concerted effort across the board, which will require men to be allies. There's a call to action to everyone, but it can't just be women pushing, we need men pulling too. ●