



## PARTNERSHIP PAYS DIVIDENDS FOR PLAN'S TECHNOLOGY GROWTH AND MEMBER SATISFACTION

We know that improving the member experience is a priority for our health plan partners. HealthSparq can provide both the technology and expertise to guide your members to smart, cost-saving health care choices. Always striving to be a strategic partner, we work to understand our clients' wants and needs and develop creative solutions to help them succeed. Here's one example.

### THE CLIENT

This large health plan serving more than two million members in the Midwest believes everyone deserves affordable and sustainable health insurance options and delivers that by carefully managing costs, providing outstanding customer service and empowering members to stay healthy.

In 2014, the plan implemented the HealthSparq One® platform with its full feature set including doctor and hospital search, member and total cost of care estimation, and quality ratings.

### THE CHALLENGE

According to the plan's transparency manager, the challenge was clear-cut. "The main concern we heard about the HealthSparq portal was that people could not always find what they were looking for in the search bar."

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"Our employer groups asked for improvements, and we are committed to ensuring our customers are getting the best experience possible," she said. "So, we knew it was time to look for a solution."

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## THE SOLUTION

Enhanced search functionality was already on the HealthSparq roadmap, but a collaborative plan emerged after conversations about the gaps this particular plan faced.

“We heard from HealthSparq that they were working on a new feature called ‘guided search,’ and we were intrigued that it could address the concerns we were receiving from employer groups and customers. We approached HealthSparq with the idea to invite three key employer groups to be part of the beta testing for guided search, which they willingly agreed to do,” explained the manager. “They shared feedback on guided search, with the goal of implementing a new and more effective design for their employees and our customers.”

Informed by usability testing with consumers, HealthSparq presented an initial concept for the search functionality. From there, the team set up a new experience where select individuals from pilot employer groups could access the tool and interact with live data.

“Letting individuals from some of our key employer groups be part of the process was the best thing we could have done,” she said. “It’s human nature to feel like your experience is universal, so it was really eye-opening for them to come together in a collaborative process to hear others say, ‘I searched this way and expected this

outcome,’ which was different than their own. It gave people a better understanding of how HealthSparq does its user testing to enhance the technology. It made them appreciate the science behind that process, and they really felt like their input was heard and implemented.”

Each member of the pilot was given a new set of scenarios every week to test the search experience. The goal was to document the steps it took to accomplish each task and give a pass or fail grade. This continuous feedback went on for four weeks, with HealthSparq improving the design at each stage. HealthSparq then took the grades from this weekly qualitative data cycle and tracked analytics behavior to get a comprehensive view of how users were navigating the experience.

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“The HealthSparq team really listened to us, took feedback and implemented it,” she said.

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## THE RESULTS

In 2016, guided search went live for all the plan’s members. Members of the plan’s team said the process and final product have received very positive feedback from the employer groups and customer reviews.

“Our employer groups felt that their voices were heard and are happy that their employees are now finding what they need,” said a vice president.

Mark Menton, HealthSparq CEO, believes a partnership model such as this benefits everyone and enhances HealthSparq’s technology across the board.

“This process informed a new version of Provider Search that all our clients can now share with their members,” said Menton. “It’s invaluable to understand exactly what our clients are trying to accomplish and then work together to get there. It pays dividends for everyone to build from the outside in and invest in a true partnership.”

## ABOUT HEALTHSPARQ

*At HealthSparq, we empower people to make smarter health care choices by partnering with health plans to provide members with cost and quality information about doctors, hospitals and medical services, based on their individual benefits. We put people at the core of everything we do by conducting continuous usability testing, eliciting consumer feedback to enhance product development, hosting industry panels featuring everyday people, and bringing human stories to the forefront through our #WhatTheHealthCare campaign. Using these insights, we create solutions to help people understand and navigate the health care system better than ever before.*

*Growing since our founding in 2008 from our home in Portland, Oregon, we now serve more than 70 health plans and their 72 million members nationwide. Contact us at [HealthSparq.com](http://HealthSparq.com) or tweet us [@HealthSparq](https://twitter.com/HealthSparq).*