

# Healthcare Tech

HEALTHCARE TECHNOLOGY KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

## OUTLOOK

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**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
**EDITION**

# *StrategyGen*

IMPROVING THE  
HEALTH OF  
HEALTHCARE

Marsha Proctor Killen,  
President and Co-Founder,  
Health Policy Attorney



# *StrategyGen*

## IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF HEALTHCARE

By Alex D'souza

**M**arsha Proctor Killen is a health policy and regulatory attorney with over 25 years of experience. In 2009, she co-founded StrategyGen, with the vision of improving the health of healthcare. Marsha has provided strategic and day-to-day leadership, guiding StrategyGen as it grew from a small consulting firm to become a successful federal contractor. StrategyGen provides regulatory and health policy technical assistance to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as well as the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

StrategyGen works directly with hundreds of hospitals and health systems across the U.S. to develop clinical quality improvement plans, identify evidence-based measures and metrics, and demonstrate improvements in patient safety

and population healthcare outcome measures. StrategyGen provides tailored education and training modules that include both quality improvement and data collection best practices.

Marsha and co-founder Rob Haley, PhD, MBA, MSA, worked together for a decade when they decided to join forces in 2009 and incorporate StrategyGen. "Since our inception, StrategyGen has focused on collaboration with our clients and has earned the reputation as a trusted teaming partner," says Marsha Proctor Killen, StrategyGen's President. "The support we've received from our local SBA office and federal agency small business specialists has been integral to our success."

"We wanted StrategyGen to be a federal contractor from the start, no small goal. As a woman-owned small business, we applied for admission to the Small Business

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Administration's (SBA's) 8(a) Business Development program in 2010 and were admitted three long years later. The 8(a) program opens doors to federal contracting not generally available to small businesses so we stayed committed to gaining admission to the program," says Marsha, StrategyGen's President. Marsha says that Rob would often remind her, "If it were easy, everyone would do it."

StrategyGen frequently collaborates with teaming partners for 8(a) and other small business federal contracts that are otherwise out of reach for our subcontractors.



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StrategyGen's first 8(a) prime contract award was from HUD in 2015 with additional awards from CMS beginning in 2017.

## A Unique Stakeholder Engagement Delivery Model

StrategyGen's proficiency hinges on its comprehensive stakeholder engagement delivery model to meet defined client needs. StrategyGen's model is unique because it incorporates a process that engages hospitals from the C-Suite to the point of care to ensure commitment to change. The company is focused on collaboration with stakeholders and teaming partners for high-quality deliverables and outcomes at a competitive price. As a result, this engagement model emphasizes four core aspects of delivering services:

- **Communicate:** Facilitate leadership team engagement to exchange knowledge, align strategies, and make recommendations. Also, keep them informed about outcomes, issues, and lessons learned.
- **Coordinate:** Support leadership communication of 'new' strategies for organizational alignment.
- **Collaborate:** Establish standard metrics and measurements to drive outcomes and alignment across organizations.
- **Consult:** Implement continuous quality improvement and best practices to drive the process.

To ensure that StrategyGen meets the specific requirements, the team engages in frequent brainstorming and follow-up discussions about its research, ideas, strategies, planning, customer challenges, and innovative solutions.

"We won one of our first regulatory contracts with CMS with the promise of close collaboration—conducting new research for updating the physician fee schedule. We pride ourselves on being excellent teaming partners for our clients and our peers and focus on providing the best solution to the problem at hand, even if that means we bring in additional partners to help us and our clients be successful," adds Marsha. Serving such niche markets, StrategyGen's proven, high-quality healthcare policy and regulatory technical assistance to payers and providers is a winning differentiator.

## The Healthcare Crisis

StrategyGen's mission is to redefine healthcare through quality-driven cost improvements and positive health outcomes. StrategyGen is dedicated to solving some of the most complex and present-day challenges pertaining to public health. For starters, while the healthcare industry and regulatory environment are subject to disruptive and dynamic

change, federal agencies, private payers, health systems, and large employers are turning to StrategyGen to understand the potential impacts and issues better. StrategyGen's health and regulatory experience is especially important in an age of unique and complex uncertainties, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Marsha underscores that the current virus has just exacerbated the healthcare industry's challenges over the last 12 months. COVID is stressing all public health systems. Hospitals struggle with their doctors, nurses, and other clinicians being overworked, exhausted, and becoming ill. They are taking the necessary downtime to recover from the last wave of patients or preparing for the next wave of COVID patients. "Even hospitals that are not in health systems nor overwhelmed by COVID patients had halted most elective procedures. Moreover, millions of Americans have become more concerned about engaging with clinicians at the point of care. As a result, instances of heart attacks and strokes have drastically increased over the last few months—highlighting yet another crisis for population health," stresses Marsha.

These catastrophic challenges have collectively started hemorrhaging revenue out of the U.S. healthcare system. In addition to all of these challenges, hospitals, health systems, and physicians will continue to lose revenue due to an increasing uninsured population. Marsha informs that millions of lost jobs will create millions of more uninsured Americans. With COBRA payments and purchasing insurance on the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace out of reach for many people without jobs, there will be an increasing number of uninsured people in our communities. Repealing the Affordable Care Act would impact not only the millions of Americans who purchase private insurance through the healthcare marketplace today but also the increasing number of us who will need that option in 2021. Even with the ACA, many people will remain uninsured. "We anticipate that 2021 will be a year of national debate around Medicare, Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (a/k/a/ ObamaCare). The unpredictable economy and jobless rate will fuel these debates much like the recession did in 2009. There will be an ongoing national debate from Congress to the White House, across corporate America, and of course in the media. The outcome of the election will impact the potential solutions," she adds.

## Providing Solutions to Complex Challenges

While the COVID situation has recently emerged as a challenge in and of itself, the industry is also coping with long-standing issues like the opioid crisis and the rising number of opioid deaths. The healthcare industry is facing unprecedented financial pressures. It is time to assess the impact and act.

This is where StrategyGen is moving the needle. Orchestrating all its heroic efforts, StrategyGen supports and guides clients in the challenging and dynamic healthcare environment with quality improvement and regulatory contracts, grants to fight opioids, and help for at-risk populations like native Americans. To meet the health and safety needs of new customer markets, StrategyGen provides public health consulting services that cover health policy and regulatory technical assistance (assisting regulators in clarifying and healthcare providers in implementing), healthcare quality improvement, (specialty in patient safety planning, dissemination of evidence-based best practices) and market research and data analytics (to help understand specific aspects of the stressed public health systems, consumer needs, best practices).

Focused on changing priorities, budgets, and timeframes for federal customers, StrategyGen specializes in planning, training, defining, and tracking healthcare outcome measures under quality improvement plans—for both near-term and long-term needs. "We are healthcare regulatory experts and have supported multiple federal policymakers develop proposed federal regulations with data, researched materials, and written analysis. StrategyGen has the expertise to support healthcare providers and payers through our proven quality improvement planning and dissemination of evidence-based best practices through training and other communications as we learn more about COVID-19 over the coming year. We will take our safety expertise to non-healthcare settings using similar employee and customer safety quality improvement planning, training and tracking COVID measures," explains Marsha.

To begin with, StrategyGen navigates its clients through the complex public health labyrinth to identify and understand potential issues under new and anticipated regulations, market trends, and state and federal law. In doing so, the StrategyGen team conducts ongoing regulatory research and literature reviews, monitors agency budgets

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and forecasts, and stays on top of new studies, trends, and other issues. The company provides clients with secondary market research, literature reviews, environmental scans, proposed and final rule regulatory review. The senior subject matter experts at StrategyGen, comprising of PhDs in biostatistics and healthcare administration, MDs, RNs, health policy and regulatory attorneys, researchers, and analysts, synthesize the research to answer client questions and inform primary research topics. The research and data analytics services involve working with call centers and other teaming partners to develop interview questions. The survey data is then analyzed, and the quantitative results are synthesized with other subject matter expertise to deliver actionable recommendations to clients. “We have delivered large research reports to healthcare providers as well as public and private payers that withstand public scrutiny and C-suite concerns,” adds Marsha.

### The Proof is in the Pudding

A decade into its inception, StrategyGen has scripted several success stories for its clients that stand testimony to its value to the entire healthcare community. The company’s past performances include working directly with a large and national cohort of hospitals on specific quality improvement measures for patient safety and other measurable healthcare outcomes. StrategyGen’s team was nationally recognized for achieving a 10 percent reduction in readmissions, a 20 percent reduction in Surgical Site Infections (SSIs), Airway Safety, and reducing the incidence of *C. difficile*, Central Line-Associated Bloodstream Infection (CLABSI) rates, Standardized Infection Rates (SIRs), opioid-related events, and Venous Thromboembolism (VTE).

The fact that StrategyGen continues to work with its earliest clients and teaming partners speaks volumes about its determination to build long-lasting and strong relationships. In the past, the company has also contributed to HUD’s success with its grant model support and technical assistance, grant data collection and analysis, and more. It also has delivered grant evaluation, performance, monitoring, reporting, and support services (IDIQ 2015 – 2020).

Apart from the federal sector and healthcare industry clients, StrategyGen also caters to the private, non-healthcare businesses that may be interested in employee and customer safety plans, training, and providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). StrategyGen has engaged senior healthcare leadership while providing technical assistance to implement new policies under emerging Federal and State healthcare regulations, including healthcare quality improvement and healthcare data analytics, for many private sector customers.

Besides consulting, StrategyGen also intends to assist public and private employers in obtaining the PPE they need for their employees and customers. The company is currently

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with a United States PPE manufacturer (teaming partner) to provide PPE products to the government through the Federal General Services Administration (GSA) and would like to be able to offer these products to its consulting clients.

### A Favorable Future Awaits StrategyGen

Moving ahead in these challenging times, StrategyGen is determined to empower its clients to forge head-on into the current disruptive healthcare environment. With a strong and differentiated value proposition in place, StrategyGen has aggressive plans to meet the increasing need for planning and training around worksite safety and the PPE products to keep our communities safe. It also looks forward to leveraging patient safety quality improvement planning to deliver employee and customer safety quality improvement plans. “We are leveraging our unique healthcare quality improvement planning and training in hospitals to other employers and organizations to research industry and regional safety best practices and provide tailored customer and employee safety quality improvement plans,” states Marsha.

StrategyGen will also provide management and employee training to help identify and implement emerging best practices and disseminate those through updated training as safety concerns change over the next year.

In conclusion, StrategyGen, with its plethora of services, is poised to make significant strides in the public health realm, keeping quality improvement and patient safety as the top-most priority. **HT**

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NOVEMBER - 2020

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## StrategyGen



*The annual listing of 10 companies that are the forefront of providing Public Health consulting services and impacting the industry*