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Judith C. Pelham

provider network with our own product, so we needed other insurers. However, they were offended by the fact that we were also competitors." Explained Walker, when you become a player in the insurance market, "insurance companies with whom you have provider contracts want you to fail and will try anything they can to move business from you." Other problems include deciding where profits will be recorded and the fact that information systems and data are "never good enough," added Pelham.

Employers, too, are



Henry G. Walker

adding pressure on insurers. Pelham drew on her experience with Ford Motor Company and General Motors to describe what employers are looking for: "Price, price, price, quality, and data—and only recently have they added the last two." The economic boom

of the late 1990s has supported employees in their demands for greater choice and increased services, and large employers now demand accountability and measurements from plans. Ford and General Motors have amassed huge amounts of information on health plans, which they pass along to their employees, and Pelham foresees increasing demand for demonstrably high-quality, cost-effective plans.

Concilia Moran Award Goes to Sr. Mary Roch Rocklage



Sr. Mary Roch Rocklage, RSM

Photo by John LaFata

Throughout her remarkable and distinguished career, Sr. Mary Roch Rocklage, RSM, the recipient of the 1999 Sr. Mary Concilia Moran, RSM, Award, has strengthened the Catholic health ministry by embracing and facilitating change. The award honors the commitment and visionary leadership of an outstanding member of the Catholic health ministry.

At the time of the award presentation, Sr. Rocklage was the president and CEO of the Sisters of Mercy Health System—St. Louis (SMHS), a system that owes its beginnings to her efforts to formally bring together all the healthcare facilities sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy—St. Louis. On July 1, 1999, Sr. Rocklage became board chair of SMHS. Her ability to help healthcare leaders and religious congregational leaders understand and articulate their common mission resulted in the creation of SMHS in 1986.

Sr. Rocklage leads a health system that today spans eight states, embraces diverse cultures, and serves needs in urban and rural areas. It consists of 23 acute care hospitals, a psychiatric hospital, more than 700 physicians at more than 180 sites, 58 freestanding outpatient facilities, a managed care corporation, and health and human service ministries. The system has more than 28,000 employees and 5,000 medical staff members.

In the early 1990s, Sr. Rocklage again was a force for change when she pioneered the system's move into healthcare financing. Mercy Health Plans, formed in 1994, currently operates in Missouri and Texas and provides coverage for more than 120,000 people. Under her leadership, the system welcomed its first non-Catholic members—a Presbyterian hospital and an Episcopal hospital. Sr. Rocklage's vision, extending beyond inpatient acute care to healthier communities and health education, has led to the establishment of numerous clinics and outreach services, including clinics in Belize.

Sr. Rocklage's efforts to bring about systemic change to benefit the poor and underserved have led to her service on the governing boards of numerous hospitals and health and education organizations. She also serves on the Domestic Policy Committee of the U.S. Catholic Conference, the American College of Healthcare Executives, the Forum of Women Healthcare Leaders, and the Forum of Healthcare Planning.