

Celebrating Tu Meke, as Folks Say in New Zealand

February 8, 2013

My letter this week celebrates both the work of the KP International team and all of the people in our care sites and our KP system support teams who have given us the results that we get to share with the world.



George C. Halvorson, Chairman and CEO
Kaiser Foundation Hospitals and Kaiser Foundation Health Plan

Dear KP Colleagues,

We literally draw an audience of nations from A to Z.

Several A's in fact.

One Z.

Over the past couple of years, we had visitors from 30 different countries come to our Kaiser Permanente International learning programs. We have folks from Aruba, Australia, Austria, and Zimbabwe. They came to spend time with us, to learn about what we do, and to learn why we do it.

KP International draws government leaders and policymakers, health care professionals and executives, researchers, professors and other kinds of researchers, health care IT leaders, health care economists, analysts, writers, and a few journalists who come to hear our messages and our insights.

We've made presentations to more than 200 groups over the past couple of years.

Most of the visitors come to us in Northern California. Some of the longer programs include visits to our medical centers as well as our Garfield Innovation Center. The Garfield Center is gaining a worldwide reputation as a center for innovation in care delivery.

A growing number of the meetings and sessions were held at our Center for Total Health in Washington, D.C. — very near the U.S. Capitol rotunda.

If you ever get to Washington, D.C., stop at the center. The Walking Wall has an 80-foot long video display that teaches people the benefits of walking.

The center also has displays of our most current technology. We have an exam room set up with Kaiser Permanente HealthConnect® functionality where we can do a demo of actual EMR use for visitors.

The center is located adjacent to our downtown D.C. mega care clinic — our D.C. hub — so we sometimes take people who come to the center for meetings on tours of our actual clinic.

I have heard a dozen people who have gone on these tours tell me it is the most impressive care site they have ever seen in our nation's capital.

We have had over 100 meetings in the center since we opened it slightly over a year ago.

Last week, we hosted the annual Employers' Summit on Health Care Cost and Solutions for the National Business Group on Health (NBGH) in our D.C. center. That was an excellent meeting. Leaders and executives from several of our biggest employer customers who attended the meeting went on a tour of the actual care site as well.

A month earlier, we hosted a meeting for the heads of major labor unions in America at that same site. The response from that group was pretty much the same as the NBGH visitors. We have a very impressive care site and a lovely center, and when people see it, they have a clearer sense of who we are and what we do.

I mention our new D.C. center in this letter because we now use that center as an alternative site for running our KP International teaching sessions.

So people from around the world now have a couple of site choices. They can attend KP International programs in two of the best cities on the planet — San Francisco and Washington, D.C. The people who come to hear us also have the benefit of being in a great place when the learning happens.

The trainings get very solid reviews. One visitor from New Zealand suggested we rename the KP care model “Tu Meke” — translated from Maori as “awesome.”

“Tu Meke” actually does roll off the tongue very nicely — but my own sense is that we should probably stick with Kaiser Permanente and Thrive as our organizational name and theme.

We don't just do our teaching in our care sites.

We also send people to other countries to do some teaching. KP has been on dozens of agendas in other countries — including HIMSS International and the Global Health Policy Forum — to present our thoughts and achievements. Our speakers and coaches didn't travel from A to Z, but they did travel from B to U, with speakers going to Brazil to talk about integrated care and measuring quality, as well as going to the United Kingdom, where we worked with various care sites and also worked with a British think tank to help them think about the KP model.

We even had a KP visit to 10 Downing Street in London, as a thank you for the work our IT people did in helping people at the health care summit in London understand the various sites of care that will be the future of care delivery.

A link to the PDF of the [paper is here](#).

We also helped another island nation last year — sending onsite expert advice to Japan to help the Japanese government think through how they might rebuild their health care infrastructure that was destroyed by the tsunami.

So KP International continues to do its work of helping to share KP insights and learnings with the world.

My letter this week celebrates both the work of the [KP International](#) team and all of the people in our care sites and our KP system support teams who have given us the results that we get to share with the world.

They wouldn't be studying us if they didn't know that we have a lot to offer and a lot to share.

So well done everyone.

Tu Meke.

Be well.

George