

A recipe for success

Mixing up categories in a fresh way leads to value for a hospital aggregation group while stirring a partnership with the supplier.

As Director of Member Business Ventures for MNS Supply Chain Network, Sharrell Alexander is committed to getting the best prices on the best products for their members. The **aptitude** contracting platform is one of the resources she leverages to streamline their purchase planning and to ensure they are achieving best-in-market-pricing. Mary Etta Gale, MNS' dedicated **aptitude** consultant, works with Sharrell to identify and execute cost initiatives that benefit the network. Recently, Sharrell and Mary Etta came together when a unique opportunity for value surfaced.

"I approached Sharrell with an opportunity for the group and while we agreed it would take some effort, she was very receptive to the idea," said Mary Etta. "We talked through a few possible scenarios and she ran with it."

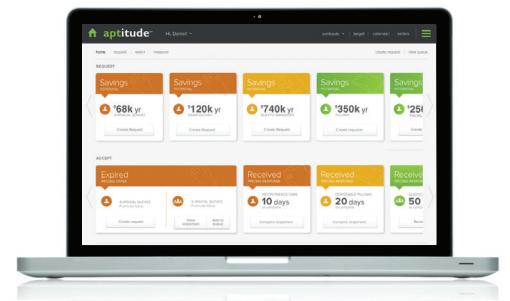
"Mary Etta and I work closely together because she offers a neutral perspective and great insight. She's up-to-date on market trends and shares successes she has seen with other providers," said Sharrell. "I probably wouldn't have considered working on these categories through **aptitude** if she had not suggested we take a look at the potential."

Creative contracting

The flexibility of the **aptitude** market allows aggregation groups to create custom contracts based on the unique needs of their members. Sharrell worked with Mary Etta to determine which categories could be creatively grouped together to deliver the most value to both MNS and the supplier.

MNS Supply Chain, LLC

The MNS Network is a strategic alliance that creates concrete avenues for economies of scale and derives significant supply chain savings. A shared commitment to volume aggregated contracting strategies drives value for all the organizations, their patients and communities.



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Sharrell Alexander
Director of Member Business Ventures
MNS Supply Chain Network

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Mary Etta Gale
aptitude consultant

“This initiative required discussion among members and work on the front-end to get everyone on the same page. That’s where Sharrell really shined – facilitating communication and compromise.”

Gaining Consensus

Moving market share would be critical to achieving savings for the group –and converting products and gaining clinician buy in *prior* to submitting the Request for Proposal (RFP) to the vendor was an important step in this negotiation. Sharrell requested information in advance so they could conduct a strategic review and have preliminary cross-reference conversations with the supplier and members together. This allowed her to flush out any objections and present a unified front.

“Our MNS process really contributed to the success. Doing the work on the front-end from a clinical acceptability standpoint allowed us to know in advance what we could and could not do,” continued Sharrell.

Building the relationship

In the past, some facilities struggled to monitor their compliance goals with this industry-leading supplier and Sharrell needed to establish a foundation of trust in this negotiation and earn the right to improved pricing. Armed with data and purchase plan details from **aptitude**

analytics, she was able to share information with the supplier that generated confidence in the group.

“The transparency and dedication to success on both sides was remarkable. The supplier was very clear in their expectations, and the network was upfront about their needs as well,” stated Mary Etta. “Sharrell really helped them work together to find a mutually beneficial contract that resulted in value across the board.”

The supplier wanted more than a verbal commitment, so Sharrell provided visibility into the conversion plan created by each member to reassure the supplier that they could follow through on their commitment. And because of the market environment that is facilitated by **aptitude**, the supplier has additional peace of mind with access to measurement reports to monitor performance going forward.

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About aptitude

Launched as a contracting market in 2013, **aptitude** reduces the cost of healthcare and accelerates strategic supply chain partnerships by allowing providers and suppliers to explore opportunities, streamline execution and improve performance.

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Category	Initial Market Share	Final Market Share
Dialysis & Apheresis	56%	90%
Vascular Access Ports and tunneled CVC	76%	90%
Port Access Needles	83%	90%

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