

## Press Release



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## NeuStrategy, SpineMark Partner to Conduct Nation's First Spine COE<sup>®</sup> Survey

*Survey Important Step in Identifying Core Components of Spine Care Centers of Excellence*

**Chicago, Ill. and San Diego, Calif. (March 3, 2008)** – NeuStrategy, Inc. and SpineMark Corporation have joined forces to conduct the nation's first comprehensive survey of medical and surgical spine programs. The results will provide an accounting of spine centers across the nation and uncover spine care program trends.

Titled the Spine COE<sup>®</sup> (Centers of Excellence) Survey, the study will track the types of spine conditions treated by dedicated spine programs and measure critical infrastructure requirements, including staffing, training, technology, facilities, surgical capabilities and community education campaigns. Each participating center will receive a customized report card that will help them understand how their services compare to others across the country.

"Spine injuries continue to be one of the leading reasons people seek out a physician's care," said Marcy T. Rogers, M.Ed., president and CEO of SpineMark. "We believe this survey is an important step in defining the core components that comprise pre-eminent spine centers of excellence relative to their services, infrastructure, ancillary programs and research activities."

Co-sponsored by NeuStrategy, a healthcare think tank focused on neuroscience, oncology and orthopedic COE development, and SpineMark, a spine care services organization that partners with hospitals and physicians to develop spine centers, survey results will be published through an executive white paper and customized report cards for participating centers.

"Spine programs across the country need practical, easy-to-use information to measure progress and identify opportunities to continuously improve clinical services, business operations and financial success," said Theodore Michalke, managing partner and cofounder of NeuStrategy. "Accurate, relevant benchmark data are a critical component of efforts to improve the quality of care provided and enhance performance."

### About the Survey

The Spine COE Survey will evaluate four key components as the basis for defining and measuring spine program infrastructure. Each component will be analyzed and compared against aggregate national benchmarks to identify strengths in an objective manner and help set the course for further development of spine care centers.

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The four key COE components are:

- Programs - Inventories clinical and research programs and sub-specialization to measure the depth and breadth of a facility's services, including use of standards of care to ensure best practice.
- Staff - Reviews physician, nursing, allied professional and administrative coverage, capabilities and training specific to spinal care.
- Facility & Technology - Assesses technology and facility real estate, including dedicated or designated patient- and physician-friendly facilities, diagnostic imaging and state-of-the-art procedural and surgical capabilities.
- Business - Underscores the importance of governance, financial support and marketing, including systematic operational effectiveness, physician and administrative leadership, communication, marketing and community education.

The spine COE research is based upon the NeuStrategy COE Staging Plan™, a proprietary tool developed to help hospitals measure and strategically plan program growth and achieve excellence in any stage of spine program evolution.

### **About NeuStrategy, Inc.**

NeuStrategy, Inc. provides a broad spectrum of strategic, financial and operational support to health systems, physician practices and industry vendors focused on neuroscience, orthopedic and oncology services. The company focus is on products, services and partnerships that deliver the intelligence and resources needed to succeed in today's complex healthcare environment.

Rooted in a legacy of specialized healthcare industry expertise, NeuStrategy principals and its team of advisory consultants have completed more than 150 customized neuroscience and related orthopedic and oncology healthcare engagements for academic and community health systems across the country. For more information visit [www.neustrategy.com](http://www.neustrategy.com).

### **About SpineMark**

SpineMark Corporation is an innovative service organization dedicated to transforming the delivery of spine care. The company partners with hospitals and physicians across the United States and abroad to develop and operate comprehensive, evidence-based spine centers of excellence. By building a global network of spine centers, spine research organizations and state-of-the-art medical conference facilities, SpineMark is improving the overall quality of life of patients afflicted with spine disorders and injuries.

Driven by the specialized experience and expertise of its leadership team and medical advisory board, SpineMark's goal is to create a global network, based on clinically validated best practices for spine care that streamline diagnosis and treatment, simplify referrals and accelerate the recovery process. Find more information on [www.spinemark.com](http://www.spinemark.com).

"COE" is a registered trademark of NeuStrategy, Inc.

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