

Leadership Profile

Associate Vice President of Provider Relations

RIP  MEDICAL DEBT

New York, New York

Opportunity

RIP Medical Debt seeks an Associate Vice President of Provider Relations (AVP) to manage relationships with RIP's growing number of debt sources. The AVP will join RIP Medical Debt (RIP) at a signal moment in the life of the organization. As of early 2024, the 10th year of its existence, RIP has abolished \$10 billion in debt and received attention from the White House and media across the country. This year, RIP will reveal its new name and will continue to increase the amount of debt it acquires and abolishes with the help of private philanthropy and local government. The advent of government funding has brought welcome publicity to RIP, along with appropriate scrutiny, each of which requires strategic planning and management.

The AVP will take the lead on strategic management and planning related to acquired debt and will be a close associate and right hand to RIP's VP of Provider Relations. Both roles require strong rapport with colleagues in hospitals, health systems and other provider organizations. The new AVP will provide oversight and management of communications and reporting relating to debt acquisition as funds move through the debt pipeline and will ensure that RIP achieves annual goals in terms of overall numbers and geographic distribution. RIP has created this role to further strengthen the infrastructural supports that enable RIP to fulfill its goals and build enduring alliances with funders and healthcare providers who share an interest in addressing the underlying causes of medical debt. Many dynamic variables shape RIP's work, such as where debt will come from, when, and how much? Many of RIP's donors designate that their gifts should be directed to certain specific regions. The AVP will play an essential role in managing knowledge about the progress of funds through the debt pipeline and sharing that knowledge with the COO, VP of Philanthropy, and Government Relations Manager. This will require agility, a strong orientation to detail, and the ability to collaborate effectively with colleagues and external partners.

The Organization

RIP Medical Debt was founded in 2014 by two former debt collections executives, who, over the course of decades in the debt-buying industry, met with thousands of Americans saddled with unpaid and un-payable medical debt and realized they were uniquely qualified to help these people in need. They used their expertise and compassion to create a unique way to relieve medical debt: they would use donations to buy large bundles of medical debt and then relieve that debt with no tax consequences to recipients. From this idea came RIP Medical Debt, a New York based 501(c)(3). The results have been spectacular— more than \$10 billion in medical debts eradicated so far, providing financial relief for over 7 million individuals and families.

Initially, RIP worked with secondary market debt buyers to locate and purchase accounts that met its abolishment criteria. RIP's current strategy aims to acquire debt directly from hospitals, health systems, and physician groups. Since 2016, when John Oliver dedicated an episode of "Last Week Tonight with John Oliver" to the debt buying and collections industry, public awareness of RIP's unique mission and approach has grown dramatically. In 2020 Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott selected RIP to receive a \$50 million unrestricted grant. This has accelerated development and implementation of strategic plans to increase RIP's growth and impact.

RIP's mission is three-fold: to end medical debt, to be a unique solution for patient-centered healthcare providers, and to be a force for systemic change. The organization has grown from 13 full-time employees in 2021 to 29 today. RIP's funding originally came primarily from individuals and faith-based organizations and now extends to larger private donors as well as local governments. RIP has been investing in the infrastructure it requires to scale its debt relief work and is exploring ways to effectively partner with community organizations and policy makers. RIP is governed by a volunteer board of directors who support the mission of ending medical debt.

RIP knows that debt relief alone is not a complete solution, but its unique approach has proven to be effective and efficient at bringing relief to individuals. The sophisticated data analytic tools RIP uses to evaluate and qualify suitable debt reveals significant patterns related to the social, economic, and demographic dimensions of medical debt.

RIP uses the stories of its beneficiaries and the information that emerges from its financial analytics to connect the human dimension of medical debt with higher levels of policy and practice. In addition to highlighting the stories of individuals, RIP strives to create effective feedback loops so that the information and patterns RIP uncovers can serve to draw attention to avoidable issues and motivate change. RIP highlights the stories of its beneficiaries and also sheds light on institutional processes that could be altered with little to no impact on healthcare organizations' bottom lines while having a monumental impact on the financial wellbeing of individuals, many of whom acquired medical debt while acting in good faith. RIP partners with others to advocate for systemic, pragmatic incremental change to reduce harm.

The Position

Reporting to the Vice President of Provider Relations, the AVP will lead, develop, and execute strategies to oversee the "life cycle" of debts acquired and matched to donations received. The AVP will be a strategic thinker, knowledgeable about organizational structures and cultures among healthcare providers, with the skills and temperament to identify techniques and practices to enhance RIP's internal systems. The AVP will join a seasoned team who are adept at "building the airplane while flying it." The Debt Operations team includes a Director of Debt Acquisition and a Director of Military Debt Acquisition and Managers of Debt Operations Administration, Business Processes, who report to the VP, and a Manager of Provider Partnerships who will report to the new AVP. The AVP will collaborate with these colleagues as well as RIP teams dedicated to Public Policy and Program Management, Development, Information Management, Philanthropy, Communications and Marketing. This is a national search; we welcome strong candidates who bring familiarity with and connections to healthcare provider communities beyond the NYC metropolitan area. RIP supports remote work and invites team members to join in-person team meetings and activities several times a year.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the AVP is to ensure that RIP Medical Debt approaches the management of acquired debt in a strategic and effective manner. Management includes developing an effective, transparent, relationship-enhancing approach to sharing knowledge internally and externally. As a new role, created to support the expanding reach of RIP and the volume of debt it abolishes, the AVP will:

- Invent ways to track and communicate data effectively, translating numbers into stories appropriate for various stakeholders to RIP's work
- Collaborate with RIP colleagues to develop systems for reporting data in compliance with the requirements of public sector partners
- Be the point person for managing relationships with an increasingly diversified set of healthcare providers who have given or sold debt to RIP
- Lead the Manager of Provider Partnerships in developing effective ways to interact and influence provider partners, especially those with national reach
- Support the Vice President of Provider Relations
- Share insights from experience in the provider environment
- Collaborate with colleagues in debt acquisition to ensure that medical debt is acquired in alignment with donor desires

The AVP will partner with the Vice President to continue ongoing process improvement efforts such as:

- Develop and implement procedures for collecting and reporting performance data for the debt acquisition and abolishment process.
- Develop and implement corrective action plans when deficiencies are identified in the debt acquisition and abolishment process.
- Stay current with emerging trends in business process improvement methods and information systems technology to support the continuous improvement of debt acquisition and abolishment processes.

The Candidate

The ideal candidate will be drawn to the opportunity to shape the growth trajectory of this unique, mission driven organization. The ideal candidate will combine grounded experience navigating healthcare administrative systems with a capacity to think creatively and innovatively about how RIP's operations can better fulfill its mission. We seek a candidate who is a clear and persuasive communicator and relationship builder and is equally adept at reading pivot tables, gathering information from data management systems, and translating and distributing that data to stakeholders in a timely and strategic manner.

We seek an AVP who will:

- Communicate effectively with institutional/government donors, healthcare providers, and the RIP team
- Foster and uphold an organizational culture of teamwork and collaboration
- Inspire the trust and confidence of RIP's leadership, board, staff, and external partners
- Demonstrate an adaptive work style that is decisive, creative, responsive, and solution-oriented
- Have an intuitive and confident sense of when and how to nudge and encourage healthcare providers to act to achieve shared goals

The ideal candidate will have:

- Exceptional written and verbal communications skills and ability to be a persuasive ambassador and trusted colleague
- A reputation for attention to detail while keeping the big picture in mind
- An interest and record of participation in process improvement
- Passion regarding RIP's mission, integrity, and a sense of humor
- Appropriate educational background and professional experience
- Savvy about provider versus vendor dynamics
- Other desirable skills and experience include SQL and Business Intelligence tools, such as Tableau; experience in the debt purchasing industry; experience working with software development teams; HIPAA compliance training; knowledge of project management methodologies
- The ability to travel from time to time

Critical Success Factors

Among the criteria used to evaluate the success of the AVP in the first 12-18 months are:

- Establishment of strong relationships of trust and collaboration with the Vice President of Provider Relations, colleagues across RIP, and external partners
- Development of direct relationships with existing healthcare providers, and progress in establishing new medical debt pipelines
- Innovative approaches to tracking the life cycle of debt and dollars given for debt abolishment

Compensation and Benefits

- Annual salary \$94,000 - \$135,000 for qualified local candidates (offers to candidates outside of the New York metro area may vary based on the location). Compensation will be commensurate with the background and experience of the selected candidate.
- Hybrid work environment (office work 3 days a week)
- 4 weeks PTO (with additional days granted upon 3rd and 5th anniversaries)
- Fully paid medical, dental, and vision coverage
- Employer-paid life insurance, short-term and long-term disability
- 403(b) retirement plan matching
- Employee Assistance Program

For More Information

We welcome and appreciate referrals. Interested parties should send resume and cover letter to: RIP-AVP-2415@ZurickDavis.com. For additional information, please contact Lida Junghans, PhD (LJunghans@ZurickDavis.com) or 781-305-2947. All contact with our office will remain confidential.

Equal Opportunity Employer Statement

RIP Medical Debt is an equal opportunity employer that is committed to diversity and inclusion in the workplace. We prohibit discrimination and harassment of any kind based on race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, pregnancy, or any other protected characteristic as outlined by federal, state, or local laws.

This policy applies to all employment practices within our organization, including hiring, recruiting, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, leave of absence, compensation, benefits, training, and apprenticeship. RIP Medical Debt makes hiring decisions based solely on qualifications, merit, and business needs at the time.