



## Contact

Shannon Thuren  
Director of Communications, Availity  
904.470.4545  
shannon.thuren@availity.com

## News Release

November 2, 2011

### **Russ Thomas Named Incoming CEO of Availity**

*Will Succeed Julie Klapstein upon Her Retirement*

**JACKSONVILLE, FL** –Availity, one of the nation's leading health information networks, today announced it has named Russ Thomas as its next Chief Executive Officer. Thomas will succeed Julie Klapstein, who was Availity's first employee and has served as its CEO since inception. Following the leadership transition on March 6, 2012, Klapstein will remain on Availity's Board of Managers as vice chair.

"Russ joined us in 2008 as our Chief Operating Officer and has been a critical part of our leadership team through a period of very strong growth," said Klapstein. "I'm thrilled with the Board's decision to name Russ as my successor. Building Availity over the last 10 years has been a tremendous experience and I am delighted to have been part of it."

"I'm honored by the confidence that our Board and Julie have expressed in me," said Russ Thomas, Availity President and COO. "Julie has spent the last decade doing something very unique in our industry – she drew upon the benefit of a 'shared win' among competitors to simplify health care administration. This collaboration greatly accelerated the adoption of electronic health information and enabled health care providers and health plans to focus on what's important: patients, not paperwork. The imprint she's made upon the company is long-lasting, and we're strongly positioned for the future because of it."

Thomas continued, "I'm excited to build upon these accomplishments as Availity's next CEO. With the continued support of our owners, customers, and employees, I know that Availity will achieve its mission of becoming the highest valued health information network in the industry."

Prior to joining Availity, Russ was the Chief Executive Officer of Gold Standard, Inc., an industry leader in drug information databases and clinical knowledge solutions. In his four years as CEO, Russ grew Gold Standard to a national leader in clinical information, serving all sectors of the health care market, before selling the business to Reed Elsevier in 2006.

In addition to his professional responsibilities, Russ is active in industry and philanthropic organizations. He was a founding board member of the Tampa Bay Regional Health Information Organization. He was also a founding board member and past chairman of Hillsborough Kids, Inc., which, in concert with the Florida Department of Children and Families, provides oversight and resources for more than 4,000 disadvantaged children in Hillsborough County, Florida. He is active with United Way of Northeast Florida.

Russ earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Virginia Tech and his Juris Doctorate from the University of

Virginia. He resides in Jacksonville, Florida with his wife Claudia and their two children.

**About Availity, LLC – Patients. Not Paperwork.®**

Availity optimizes information exchange between multiple health care stakeholders through a single, secure network. The Availity® Health Information Network encompasses administrative, financial, and clinical services, supporting both real-time and batch electronic data interchange (EDI) via the web and through business to business (B2B) integration. For more information, including an online demonstration, please visit [www.availity.com](http://www.availity.com) or call 1.800.AVAILITY (282.4548).