

MARKET SCAN

SPECIAL REPORT

THE BUZZ

Takeaways from the
2022 AHA Leadership Summit

Health care leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs and others recently met in San Diego to explore opportunities to leverage their data and insights, address workforce resiliency, venture capital investing, skill sets needed for next-generation leaders and more. **Here's what had attendees buzzing.**



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WORKFORCE: **Solving resiliency and supporting staff during shortages**

To repair and rebuild the nation's health system, health care leaders made it clear that supporting and reinforcing the workforce will be Priority 1. Executives shared strategies and best practices on how they kept teams together and resilient during peak pandemic surges, including:

Identifying support needs early | New Jersey-based Atlantic Health leaders recognized early on the toll that COVID-19 patient surges were having on staff and acted accordingly. Traveling nurses and other support staff were retained even after peak surges to ensure that front-line caregivers could take needed time off, said Nikki Sumpter, chief administrative officer. A campaign encouraged the team to take allotted paid time off to recharge.

Finding flexible staffing solutions | Norton Children's Hospital, Louisville, Kentucky, used student nurses to cover more than 2,000 shifts, and the organization provided greater flexibility to accommodate individual employee needs during the pandemic, said Erik Martin, R.N., vice president of patient care services and chief nursing officer. In addition to meeting the hospital's needs, the move provided enhanced training for the student nurses. Elsewhere, Ochsner Health in New Orleans is launching a pilot program to bring Ukrainian nurses to America, said Warner Thomas, president and CEO. The move will complement the health system's RN recruitment strategy and provide a place for displaced Ukrainian nurses to continue their work. The first eight Ukrainian nurses are expected to arrive in the fall.

Monitoring well-being | Knowing that they needed to watch for signs of stress, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder among staff, Connecticut's Yale New Haven Health System leaders began performing well-being checks with caregivers, explained Michael Ivy, M.D., deputy chief medical officer. Leaders also engaged with the psychiatric department, and Ivy and other executives shared their life experiences with mental wellness to normalize that it's OK to seek help. Staff expressed their appreciation to Ivy for sharing, he said.

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Providing a safe space for sharing feelings | Holding frequent town hall meetings with staff and other efforts encouraged employees to share their thoughts and feelings. Atlantic Health, using a meta-tool that mimicked Facebook, set up a room with a camera where staff not only could share their personal experiences but also how to practice safely. “The tool helped us stay together and built camaraderie,” Sumpter said.

Knowing when to intervene | To better detect when staff members needed help, Norton Children’s Hospital trained and educated two units on how to identify burnout and what to do to intervene. Staff were given compassion pins that could be turned to blue or white. If the color was flipped to blue, it indicated that the person felt fine; white indicated that the person was having difficulty. This helped staff recognize how others were feeling and to know when to offer support or encouragement.

LEADERSHIP: Tomorrow’s execs will need to be radically collaborative

Hospital and health system leaders today have a platform and the influence to ignite transformative change to address the field’s complex challenges. But they won’t be able to do it alone or perhaps even within their existing teams.

Radically collaborative leaders will need to be groomed over the next decade, said Tracy Duberman, founder and president of The Leadership Development Group, New York City. In a panel discussion, Duberman and a former health system CEO, executives from Amazon and Walmart, and a venture capital fund focused on health care outlined the knowledge, skills and experience they believe will be needed among leaders in 2032.

What radically collaborative leaders will be embracing in 2032

Risk | Future leaders need to have a mature view of risk so they can take a disciplined and progressive approach to decision-making to meet community needs, noted Phoebe Yang, general manager of Amazon Web Services. Too often today, she said, we tend to define decisions in binary, life-or-death terms, adding that 90% of health care decisions largely can be undone or rectified if things don’t work out as planned. The biggest risk is doing nothing.

Ubiquitous quality | High performance will be expected across all top measurement areas, including patient experience, quality, accessibility, equity and affordability, said Craig Samitt, M.D., CEO and founder, ITO Advisors, based in Maricopa, Arizona. That will lead to increased expectations on accountability. Several years ago, a study in Minnesota looked at how many health systems could claim they were in the top third of all five of the aforementioned areas, Samitt said, adding that no health systems met the criteria.

Talent development | Success or failure largely will rely on the clinical leadership of providers, said Chinni Pulluru, M.D., senior director of clinical transformation, innovation and operations, Walmart Health. Take the time to identify, develop and support future leaders.

Uncertainty | In an uncertain marketplace and economy, tomorrow’s leaders need to embrace black swan events like the pandemic, noted Stephen Klasko, former president and CEO, Thomas Jefferson University and Jefferson Health, serving the greater Philadelphia area. Most events that change the world couldn’t have been predicted, he said. Open yourself up to new learning opportunities during unforeseen events.



Rick Pollack, president and CEO of the American Hospital Association, addresses the Summit crowd.

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PARTNERSHIPS: **Why data and insights could be your next big opportunity**

Partnerships continue to expand across the field, particularly with mega-disruptors like Amazon, Apple, Google and others teaming with providers, payers and others in the health care ecosystem to scale solutions. But health care providers have plenty of room to grow in leveraging their valuable data and insights and scaling service offerings to the field.

“Data holds the key to our future,” noted Rod Hochman, M.D., president and CEO of Renton, Washington-based Providence and immediate past chair of the AHA Board of Trustees. Hochman and others who have partnered in forming Truveta explained the power of their venture, which now includes more than 20 innovative health systems, including Providence and Henry Ford Health.

The Truveta platform has a simple vision: Save lives through data. It enables researchers to find cures faster, empower every clinician to be an expert and to help families make informed decisions about their care. Truveta’s members provide more than 16% of U.S. patient care from tens of thousands of clinical care sites across 42 states, and provide governance to the company.

CEO Terry Myerson noted the current real-world evidence market is \$5 billion a year.

Truveta’s recently announced [strategic collaboration](#) with Pfizer will give the pharma company an unprecedented data platform to advance its clinical research.

The platform empowers researchers to monitor, query and evaluate health data quickly from more than 50 million de-identified patient records, including a broad range of diversity across the U.S. population. Updated daily, the data were particularly valuable to Pfizer during the testing of COVID-19 vaccines, Myerson noted.

Joy Lewis (left), AHA senior vice president of health equity strategies and executive director of its Institute for Diversity and Health Equity, talks with Maria Velissaris, founding partner of SteelSky Ventures, about achieving health equity through access to capital.





(From left to right) Futurist Ian Morrison discusses transformative collaborations with Joanne Conroy, M.D., president and CEO, Dartmouth Health, Janice Nevin, M.D., president and CEO of ChristianaCare and Nicholas Tejeda, market CEO of The Hospitals of Providence.

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INNOVATION: **Startups offer a look at how care will transform**

Attendees got an inside look at six startups planning to transform care delivery. The companies' solutions ranged from platforms to help increase women's access to reproductive health services to an online service to connect organizations with resources to improve talent-sourcing for underrepresented leaders in health care and life sciences.

A panel of experts reviewed each company's presentation and posed probing questions for them to consider as they build out their plans to address some of the field's most complex challenges.

Learn more about the startups in this recent [Market Scan report](#).

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FINANCE: **Investing to accelerate innovation**

Market forces — from the continuing shift to move more care outside hospital walls to shrinking reimbursement levels to the prolonged challenges from the pandemic — have many provider organizations adjusting their financial investment strategies.

Seeking alternative revenue sources, a growing number of hospitals and health systems have turned to venture investing by taking a stake in innovative companies of all sizes. This can help with diversifying revenue streams while supporting innovation and growth in areas where health care needs it most.

Leaders from CommonSpirit Health in Chicago, Catalyst by Wellstar Health System, a digital health and innovation center in Atlanta, and Advocate Aurora Enterprises in Downers Grove, Illinois, shared priorities for the venture investment arms of their organizations and lessons learned.



4 takeaways for building a venture investing strategy

Start by knowing your goals and identify who will lead your efforts | Dipa Mehta, system vice president, corporate development and ventures, Advocate Aurora Enterprises, suggests that venture investment leaders ask questions like: What are our strategic and financial goals? What strategic insights do we hope to get from this relationship that will help us better understand what's happening in the health care ecosystem? Once goals are established, decide how success will be measured each year.

Be more than an investor | Hospitals and health systems always have had long-term financial strategies that included private investment, public equities, hedge funds, etc. Successful venture investing should have strategic, health care and operational components, said Jaimie Clark, director, innovation and venture strategy at Wellstar Health System, Georgia. To fulfill its vision, Catalyst by Wellstar has built an infrastructure to support and coach its partners.

Carefully define your strategy | CommonSpirit Health's overarching goals for its investment strategies include finding solutions that improve access to care and reduce health disparities in the communities it serves, said Anu Anuradhika, system vice president, strategic partnerships and innovation. Advocate Aurora Enterprises, meanwhile, has a focus on companies that deliver care outside the hospital, said Mehta.

Establish a lasting working relationship before investing | Before becoming an investor in the company, CommonSpirit began work in 2019 with Concert Health, which helps organizations integrate behavioral health clinicians into primary care, pediatrics and women's health care. The company demonstrated its value over more than two years in giving physicians the ability to reach out to the company's behavioral health care specialists at any time. The health system eventually embedded Concert Health within its primary care strategy. In April, CommonSpirit joined Concert Health's \$42 million Series B funding round, which will help the company scale its services nationwide.

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