The Arriving Future

PROCEEDINGS FROM NCHL’S 2018 HUMAN CAPITAL INVESTMENT CONFERENCE & LEADERSHIP AWARD DINNER
CHALLENGING HEALTHCARE TO FIND SIMPLICITY IN THE COMPLEXITY

Robert Lang, PhD, used the 500-year-old art form of origami as a metaphor to challenge healthcare leaders to cultivate new thinking by breaking complex problems into simple parts as a means of finding solutions.

“The importance of folding patterns can be seen in instances when something needs to be small for its journey, but needs to be made big and flat at its destination, like a stent,” he said.

“The lesson is to be open to connections and ideas across disciplines. Origami shows us how to connect complexity to simplicity. It can lead to solutions, it can increase the store of human knowledge or it can save a life.”

“When math came to origami it provided a bridge from simple to complex. It is a study of patterns and relationships; it is a way to tame complexity.”

— Robert Lang, PhD

CULTURE MAY PROVIDE GREATEST OBSTACLE TO HEALTHCARE INTERNET ERA

If healthcare is going to become value-based, it will require access to data, sophisticated technology systems and visionaries who can see how to connect everything, said Aneesh Chopra.

“As new data sharing technologies move forward, healthcare leaders will need the right team to make the best use of the open data infrastructure that is changing everything around us every day.”

Cultural behavior, such as convincing people to share data, may be the greatest challenge.

“The magic that allows us to share sensitive information is an application program interface (API). It is a valet key for sensitive data that you dispense to applications you trust. This is having the most transformative effect on the nation’s healthcare system.”

“I am confident change is coming. We will build this new economy, which will be like a health information fiduciary. It will require people, training, and culture to bring it to life.”

— Aneesh Chopra
Employee burnout is a common theme in healthcare. “The way we work isn’t working and that is true across all sectors of business,” said Raj Sisodia, PhD.

“Your supervisor is more important to your health than your primary care physician. Done right, businesses can alleviate suffering. Business is about taking care of each other’s needs.”

To prove his point, he cited CEOs — awed by the stoicism of their employees — who are creating solutions to help improve their employees’ lives.

“When business takes care of its people, the people will take care of the business.”

Donna Hicks, PhD, agreed.

“At the core, what people want is to be treated with dignity,” she said. “People are saying treat us as if we matter and we have worth. That is our highest common denominator.”

Indignity is an epidemic. A violation of someone’s dignity appears in the brain in the same place as a physical wound.

The difference is that with a physical injury, people rush to take care of you, but when dignity is violated, you usually sit alone.

“If it’s true that the brain doesn’t know the difference between a dignity violation and a physical wound, then dignity violations are worse. Physical violations don’t get demeaned. Dignity violations do,” she explained.

**JOHN BLUFORD UNDERScores NEED FOR INTEGRITY**

John Bluford III reminded healthcare leaders of the unequivocal role of integrity in their work. “Change won’t come just from the latest technology. Soft skills are essential skills,” he added, “especially at a time when healthcare organizations must transform if they are going to improve. If you want to change the dance, change the music.”
Healthcare leadership may be as taxing as rocket science given the increasing complexity that is roiling the field, pushing leaders to be ready for change. Providence St. Joseph Health began that change a few years ago when its focus moved from inside the hospital to the community.

“Now our mission is about the health of the community,” said Rodney Hochman, MD. “Our focus is on the social determinants of health. If we can’t get engaged with the community, we can’t change the bar on the health of the community.”

“But, some things don’t change,” said Debra Canales. “Our commitment is to our core, rooted in values of compassion, respect and integrity. Those things are unchanged.”

Catherine Jacobson extolled the virtues of hiring employees who haven’t previously worked in healthcare. “Outsiders ask different questions about patients and consumers and how we make decisions. It’s bringing new thinking to our business and it’s impacting all leaders.”

“But,” added Eric Humphrey, “we have also made a conscious effort to hire from our communities. The result is that we will get input from all kinds of people that will help us develop a diverse workforce.”

“While the need to change may be many years down the road, now is the time start. We don’t have a burning platform to change now, but we know by 2025 we won’t be doing things the same way.”

— Eric Humphrey
RESILIENCY AS A CORNERSTONE TO HEALTHCARE TRANSFORMATION

Healthcare organizations are drawing on resiliency as they remake themselves so they can thrive and serve their communities amid rapid industry changes.

Resiliency helped Mission Health successfully transition from a hospital-centric approach to one that is ambulatory and population-based, said Ronald Paulus, MD.

“Our new culture is focused on quality and continuous improvement, and risk taking. Our future is serving our community; that is our culture.”

Mark Ganz described how resiliency helped Cambia Health Solutions transform over the last 15 years.

“We were risk averse; in fact, the prevalent view was to avoid risk. Today, we have learned to embrace risk and we have learned how to mitigate it.”

Mr. Ganz underscored the importance of a diverse board for healthcare organizations. “You need to understand who you serve and then build a board that reflects your community.”

“Today, we have learned to embrace risk and we have learned how to mitigate it.”
— Mark Ganz

BOLD ORGANIZATIONS TALK ABOUT THE JOURNEY OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Healthcare leaders who are moving their organizations forward are also always moving themselves forward. They are unabashedly continuous learners who are committed to helping others — and, importantly, themselves — grow, improve and develop.

“Leadership development is a journey,” Jeanne Armentrout said. “I am pushing myself into places where I am not comfortable, but where I can help others. When they see me continuing to develop, then I hope they see they can continue to grow as well.”

Edgar Curtis sees feedback as critical to an effective performance appraisal and, he makes a point of sharing his leadership plan with his team. “I put it out there so they can see what I am working on.”

Mr. Curtis also gave a shout-out to NCHL’s Health Leadership Competency Model, calling it “everything in our organization. We love this model.” Each year, Memorial Health System leaders incorporate two or three competencies into their individual plans and then focus on a couple of competencies as an organization.

“Importantly,” he said, “Memorial Health System ties its course catalog back to these competencies.”

Both Memorial Health System and Carillion Clinic underscored the importance of their administrative fellowship programs as a source of new talent and as a way of bringing new thinking into their organizations.
HOW ATRIUM HEALTH IS ACHIEVING SUCCESS

Last year, Atrium Health shifted its learning structure by consolidating its focus on the skills and behaviors required by teammates and leaders to achieve goals in four key areas: quality and safety, patient experience, teammate engagement, and efficiency and throughput.

Success is the measurement, said Mara Burdick. “These changes have resulted in a 400% decrease in the variability of the education of our teammates, while patient experience scores are exceeding goals. Employees appreciate that we have shifted our focus from our mission to how we achieve our mission.”

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS FLOURISHING AT CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL LOS ANGELES

A key driver for success of CHLA’s Administrative Fellowship Program is executive sponsorship. Specifically, CHLA’s CEO, Paul Viviano, has been a strong advocate for administrative Fellows over the course of his career. In fact, dozens of fellows that he has mentored have since gone on to become CEOs at other organizations. A further driver of success for the program at CHLA, according to Mamoon Syed, is giving Fellows access to a wide range of experiences. “We create a culture of learning,” he said.

Continuous learning is central to the onboarding program for new leaders as well, said Yaw Frimpong. “We also have support for existing leaders so they know what the new leaders are learning.”

THE GEEKS COME TO CARILION CLINIC

Carilion Clinic has brought in the geeks — people with expertise in data analytics who can link people to outcomes, said Douglas Crowder. In healthcare, there is a growing imperative for workforce intelligence and making fast-based people decisions. “We have senior leadership who see value in this work so we can make decisions based on facts.”
NORTHWELL USE SIMULATION TO ENHANCE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Northwell Health is pushing leadership development to a new level by using its 22 simulation centers to take its high potential administrative leaders through complex, real-life scenarios, giving them the opportunity to enhance their learning as they practice their leadership skills, said Patti Adelman.

A key element of the development program is a leadership application project, “which is where the rubber meets the road, as individuals apply the material they have learned in class to their ongoing work.”

RUSH MOVES DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INTO THE COMMUNITY

When Rush University Medical Center learned that Chicagoans who live downtown have an average life expectancy of 85 years, versus 69 years for those who live three subway stops to the west, the healthcare organization expanded its commitment to diversity and inclusion to encompass the whole community.

“In 2016 we changed our mission to improve the health of individuals in our diverse communities by focusing on social determinants,” said Darlene Hightower. Key initiatives are to: hire locally and develop talent, utilize local labor, buy and source locally, invest locally, and volunteer in local neighborhoods.

COACHING TAKES CENTER STAGE AT CLEVELAND CLINIC

“Our managers have had to change to become great coaches. Sometimes they have to be a performance coach where something happens in the moment, other times they have to be a development coach talking about career moves,” said Gina Cronin.

Developing a coaching culture is geared at creating an environment where respectful conversations can happen at the moment of impact. In an era of telephones and screens where conversation has become a lost cart, Cleveland Clinic is working with its leaders to bring it back.
More than 250 healthcare leaders from around the country came together at NCHL’s annual Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award dinner to recognize two outstanding individuals who have worked tirelessly over their careers to improve healthcare.

Peter Butler was presented with the NCHL Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to NCHL’s success.

He shared three lessons from his career. “Embrace health management and leadership as a worthy and unique profession on its own. Be a teacher. And, invest time in developing your values. You will energize yourself and the teams that you lead.”

Nancy Howell Agee, RN, 2018 recipient of the Gail L. Warden Leadership Excellence Award, stressed that “leaders need to set high standards for your team and make sure they know you believe in them.” She outlined her guiding principles of putting the interest of others at the center of decision-making, mentoring, and insuring the presence of diverse points of view.