



**American Hospital  
Association**

**Leadership Toolkit for Redefining the H:  
Engaging Trustees and Communities**

AHA Annual Meeting

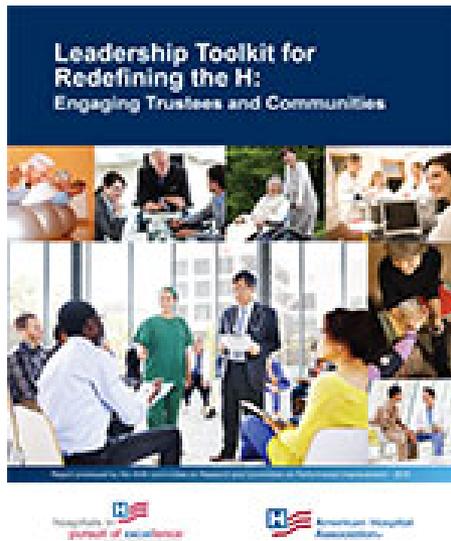
*May 2015*

# Engaging Trustees and Communities

The 2014 Committee on Research and the 2014 Committee on Performance Improvement embarked on an effort to better understand where hospitals, trustees and communities are in their journeys of transformation. The committees spent the past year looking into:

- Trustee engagement — how it relates to redefining the “H”
- Community engagement — how hospitals can engage with community stakeholders to have conversations about the changing health care landscape

This report includes community engagement and governance strategies for hospital leaders.



# Redefining the “H”

The AHA believes that changes in the health care field as significant as those likely to occur in the coming decade need to be planned for, not only within the hospital, but also with strong input and engagement from trustees and the community.

With delivery and payment reform, it is becoming clear that hospitals must adapt to survive. The AHA has identified five possible paths for transformation that are not mutually exclusive:

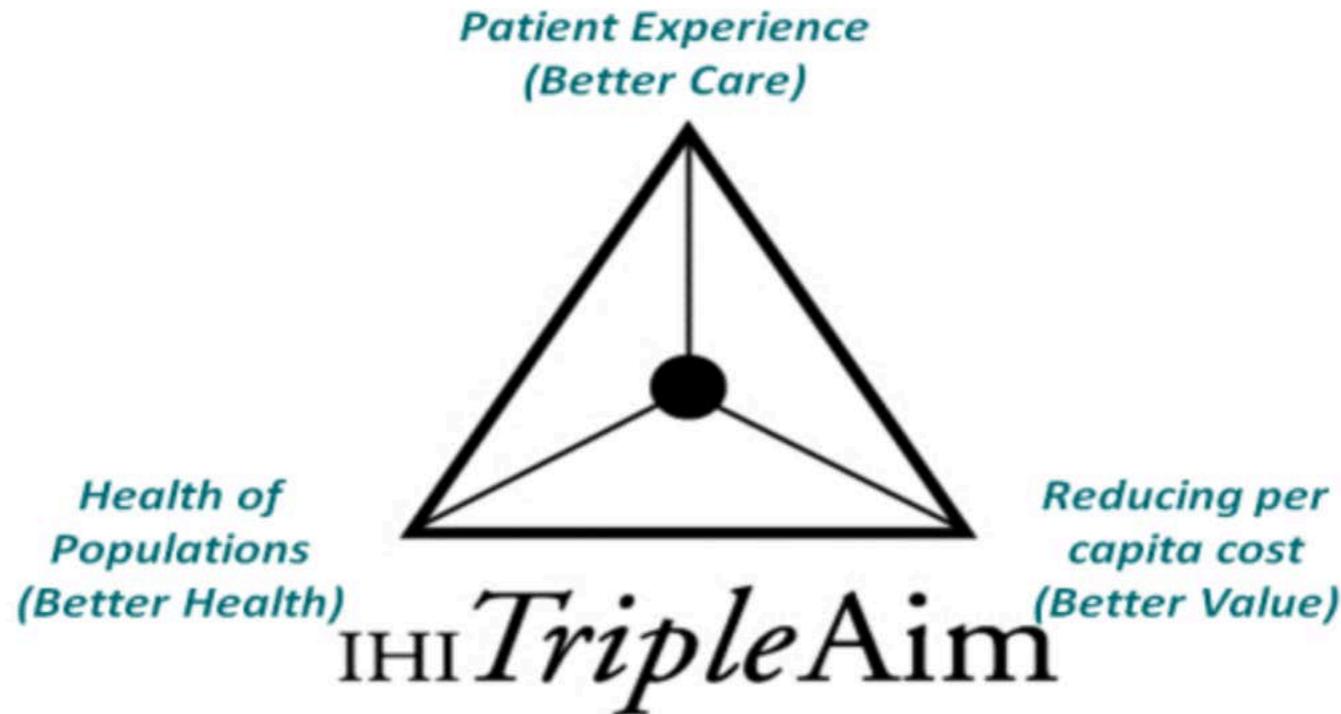
- **Specializing** to become a high-performing specialty provider, such as a children’s hospital or rehabilitation center;
- **Partnering** through a strategic alliance, merger or acquisition for greater horizontal or vertical reach, efficiency and access to resources;
- **Redefining** to a different delivery system that is either oriented toward more ambulatory or more toward long-term care;
- **Experimenting** with new payment and delivery models, such as bundled payment, accountable care organizations (ACOs), clinically integrated networks or medical homes; or
- **Integrating** by developing a health insurance function or services across the continuum in areas such as behavioral health, home health, post-acute, long-term care, ambulatory, etc.



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# *The Triple Aim*

As hospitals work to redefine the “H” and achieve the Triple Aim on behalf of patients and communities, they must actively engage trustees and communities now in the changes that will inevitably come.



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# Engaging Communities

As transformation evolves, hospital leaders and boards must lead the way in forging community collaborations that:

- Appropriately allocate resources and define a shared responsibility for improving community health
- Bring insight, perspective and support from the community into the hospital board room as leaders consider paths for transformation
- Enter into strategic partnerships for improving community health and health outcomes



# *Trustee Engagement*

**The process of redefining the “H” will require leaders to adopt new structures to effectively govern increasingly complex organizations. To strengthen the health care system, boards must understand community needs and health status as well as:**

- Become knowledgeable of changing business models
- Be representative of the community and possess needed skills and competencies
- Willingly and regularly engage with community stakeholders
- Consider a local board structure when feasible
- Address several possible business models to achieve and sustain goals.



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# Common Themes

**Collaboration Is Key** – No one hospital or health system has to be all things to all patients.

**Transformation Will Be Local**  
– Policy changes are needed but change must start locally

**Care Might Look Different** – As the health care system transforms, communities may see changes in the number of inpatient beds, where care is provided, and the type of services offered.



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# Recommendations

While each community event had its own unique characteristics, the recommendations below were drawn collectively from all of the Community Conversations.

**Engage in Broad-Based Dialogue**

**Policy Changes Must Support Collaboration**

**Frequent and Ongoing Communication Is needed**

**Use the Community Health Needs Assessment as a Tool**

**A Holistic Approach to Health Care Is Needed**



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# *Putting it All Together*

**As this report emphasizes, the future of health care is changing rapidly but, at best, uncertain. However, by strengthening leadership and governance practices and engaging with diverse community partners, hospitals are, more likely to be successful in achieving better health and health outcomes at an affordable cost.**



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# ***Issues to Consider in a Rapidly Changing Environment***

**Managing variation in the pace of change**

**Adapting to new payment and delivery system models with little experience and knowledge about intended and unintended consequences**

**Confronting the challenge of disruptive innovators that offer convenience and reduced complexity for the consumer**

**Managing new and sometimes difficult partnerships where cultures clash and missions do not align**

**Ensuring sustainability in an evolving business model**

**Assembling and developing the right talent in the hospital and in the community**

**Ensuring diversity of age, gender, race and ethnicity that reflects the community, at all levels of the organization from the board to management to frontline staff**

**Developing a deep understanding of the community's level of health and wellness, their burden of disease and their needs to achieve the health status they deserve**