

Rebuilding Health

Hospitals, Health Systems and Public Health
Working for a Better Tomorrow



This book ...

celebrates the remarkable achievements of our nation's hospitals and health systems. Emerging from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, these organizations have led the charge in building healthier communities. They have responded to the crisis and also embraced the opportunity to reimagine health care delivery. Join us as we showcase the work and dedication of these organizations to improving the quality of health care, continuing to make it more seamless, equitable, patient centered and empowering.



UnityPoint-Grinnell Regional Medical Center, Grinnell, Iowa



AdventHealth, Altamonte Springs, Fla.

Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Living Learning Network (LLN) is a virtual AHA community for hospitals, health systems, public health organizations and state hospital associations to discuss, ideate and reimagine health care in response to current needs of the field. Health care leaders participating in the network have access to peer-to-peer sharing with their colleagues as well as insights from respected subject matter experts to discuss real-time challenges, share successful strategies, expand perspectives and problem-solve together.

The AHA LLN is funded by a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (grant number 6NU50CK000477-04-01). The contents of this publication do not necessarily represent the policy or position of the CDC and should not be considered an endorsement by the CDC. Cover Images: Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, Mich.; Meritus Health, Hagerstown, Md.; Grady Health System, Atlanta, Ga.



Dear Members of the AHA Living Learning Network,

What a privilege to contribute to the third installation of this series! The previous books focused on the immediate aftermath of COVID-19, both inside our hospitals and across our communities. Today, we shift our focus to the pandemic's impact on the future of health care, including our workforce, financial stability and the public health of our nation.

I recall the early days of the pandemic when I was serving as the chief medical officer for one of our member health systems. Looking back, those years were some of the most challenging, most difficult and yet most inspiring of my career.

Despite limited resources and evolving clinical knowledge, we formed partnerships across many nontraditional boundaries. Competing health systems became collaborators, and as this collaborative spirit extended nationwide, we were once again reminded that we get better faster when we learn from each other. This simple fact embodies the origin, essence and success of the LLN — embracing it collectively empowers us to accomplish remarkable things.

The full story of these aftershocks remains to be written, as their effects will be felt for a generation or more. However, at this moment, we bear the weight of helping our teams overcome these challenges. In doing so, we embrace the opportunity to reshape health care and envision a future that prioritizes the well-being of the entire community, including ourselves.

I also want to acknowledge the invaluable support and partnership of the CDC throughout this journey. As hospitals and health systems redefine our roles in community and population health, the CDC continues to offer a wealth of opportunities for engagement and learning.

In the ever-evolving landscape of health care, amid exhaustion and countless questions, let us never lose sight of our unwavering shared purpose to build a stronger, healthier future for all. With gratitude for the mountains we've already climbed and the resolve to face whatever comes next with humility and grace, let us continue to inspire and uplift all those under our care.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Chris Derienzo, M.D." in a cursive style.

CHRIS DERIENZO, M.D.

*Senior Vice President and Chief Physician Executive, American Hospital Association
President, AHA's Health Research & Educational Trust*



Dear Allies in Health Care,

I hope this message finds you in good health and high spirits. I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for the incredible work you all have been doing, especially throughout the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic and its immediate aftermath. Your steadfast dedication to patient care has been remarkable.

As I look through this book, I am impressed and inspired by the remarkable adaptability the field has shown in recent years. Although the public health emergency has ended, it presents a challenge and opportunity to integrate the care of COVID-19 patients into our existing systems. By building on our lessons and advancements, we can create a more resilient and effective system.

As we transition away from the pandemic, we must reinvest in patient safety and improve the quality of care. Despite setbacks such as rises in health care-associated infections and antibiotic resistance, let's embrace this moment as a turning point. Together, we can achieve better outcomes in the days ahead.

Patient safety remains a top priority, and we at the CDC are exploring strategies to address challenges from the pandemic. Collaborating with health care organizations through the LLN, we aim to identify success stories and learn from facilities that have effectively maintained high safety outcomes. Through ongoing efforts such as the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) and state-based HAI/AR prevention programs, we are making great strides in monitoring and preventing infections.

The pandemic also showed us the power of data in responding to public health emergencies. Real-time data collection and analysis proved crucial for identifying needs and allocating resources. This highlighted the transformative role of data and will shape our approach to future challenges.

In conclusion, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your outstanding contributions to the health care field. Together, we are building a brighter future, incorporating valuable lessons from this pandemic and working toward safer, more effective patient care. I am honored to be part of this important and impactful journey with you.

With utmost respect and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arjun Srinivasan, M.D." in a cursive style.

ARJUN SRINIVASAN, M.D.

*Deputy Director for Healthcare-Associated Infection Prevention Programs
Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic
Infectious Diseases, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Better Care and Greater Value

Health care providers work to improve patient outcomes and deliver high-quality, affordable care to patients. Through process improvement and innovation, hospitals and health care systems are advancing health for individuals and communities.



We have an open dialogue with our clinical teams, which helps us understand the causes of hospital-onset infections and opportunities to prevent them. This gives front-line staff the confidence to voice their concerns and identify potential problems, which helps mitigate these issues before they result in infections. An infection preventionist is available to answer staff questions as needed."

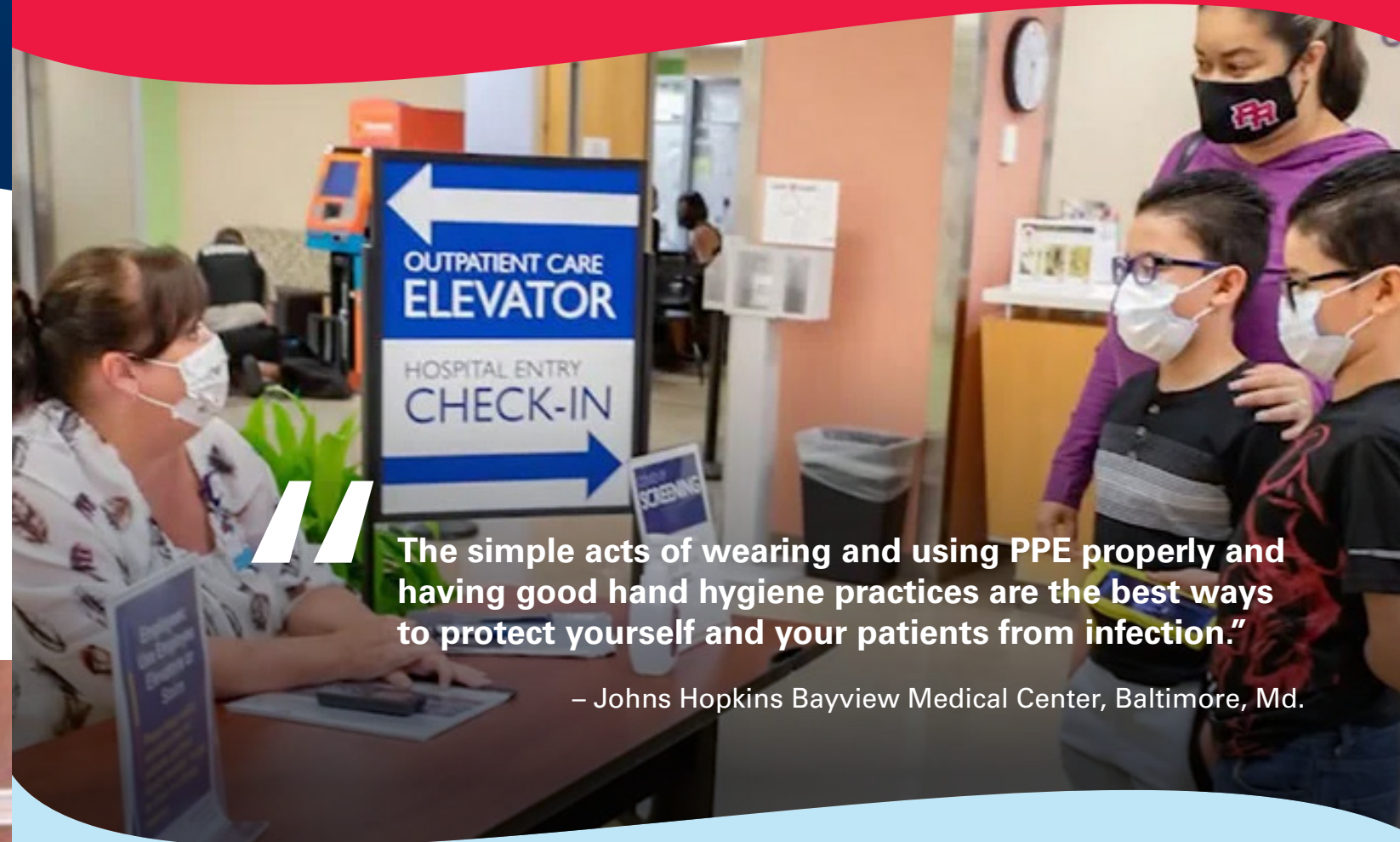
– Mount Sinai Beth Israel, New York, N.Y.



Mount Sinai Beth Israel, New York, N.Y.

Advocate Condell Medical Center focuses on process improvements to address the challenges of health care-associated infections such as CAUTI and CLABSI by eliminating unnecessary variation in patient care, streamlining clinical workflows and ensuring the use of evidence-based best practices.

– Advocate Condell Medical Center, Libertyville, Ill.



The simple acts of wearing and using PPE properly and having good hand hygiene practices are the best ways to protect yourself and your patients from infection."

– Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, Baltimore, Md.

Implementing standardized processes to create consistencies in practice that fit into the current staff workflow can help prevent surgical site infections.



[If what] you are trying to accomplish is too cumbersome or hard to use, staff will not use it or will create work-arounds that fit into their already busy workloads."

– MUSC Health, Charleston, S.C.

Patient Experience

The patient experience is paramount to quality health care, where every interaction, every touchpoint and every decision is thoughtfully crafted to create a seamless, personalized and empowering journey for individuals seeking care. Actively engaging patients, families and family caregivers can help transform health care delivery.

In the doula program at Swedish Hospital, doulas aim to create an empowered, patient-centered experience, informed by Swedish's "culture work" and enhanced through collaborative exercises like emergency simulations. Involving doulas in prenatal and postpartum care provides patients and their families with a supporter who can serve, if needed, as an advocate for the patient in their health care environment.

– Swedish Health Services, Seattle, Wash.

Blanchard Valley Health System, Findlay, Ohio

Darth Vader, Stormtroopers and hospital staff lined the walls to celebrate 13-year-old, devoted Star Wars fan Carlos Garcia. Garcia had just completed a month of lifesaving intensive care treatments for lupus and sepsis and was transitioning out of the pediatric intensive care unit. Supported by his family and dedicated care team, Garcia faced his treatment with a smile and showed remarkable compassion for others. Recognizing his passion for Star Wars, the care team organized a victory walk, where characters from the franchise joined in and presented Garcia and his siblings with their own lightsabers.

– Loma Linda University Children's Hospital, Loma Linda, Calif.

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Community Memorial Health System, Ventura, Calif.

Community Memorial Health System partnered with California State University Channel Islands to create a caregiver navigator program to support and integrate family caregivers as part of the health care team. It provides resources and easy access to programs that ease the burden of caregiving and let caregivers know they are not alone. Through this initiative, the hope is to reduce hospital readmissions while showing positive outcomes for family caregivers.

– Community Memorial Health System, Ventura, Calif.



Saint Francis Hospital is among the few U.S. hospital sites piloting an innovative initiative called TeamBirth. This initiative is designed to impact the whole delivery process and lead to clearer communication between moms and delivery staff, which has led to decreased cesarean sections in low-risk women.

– Saint Francis Hospital, Tulsa, Okla.



We constantly get feedback about how much patients love our mammography team. Our technicians are friendly, personable and always do their best to make patients feel at ease.”

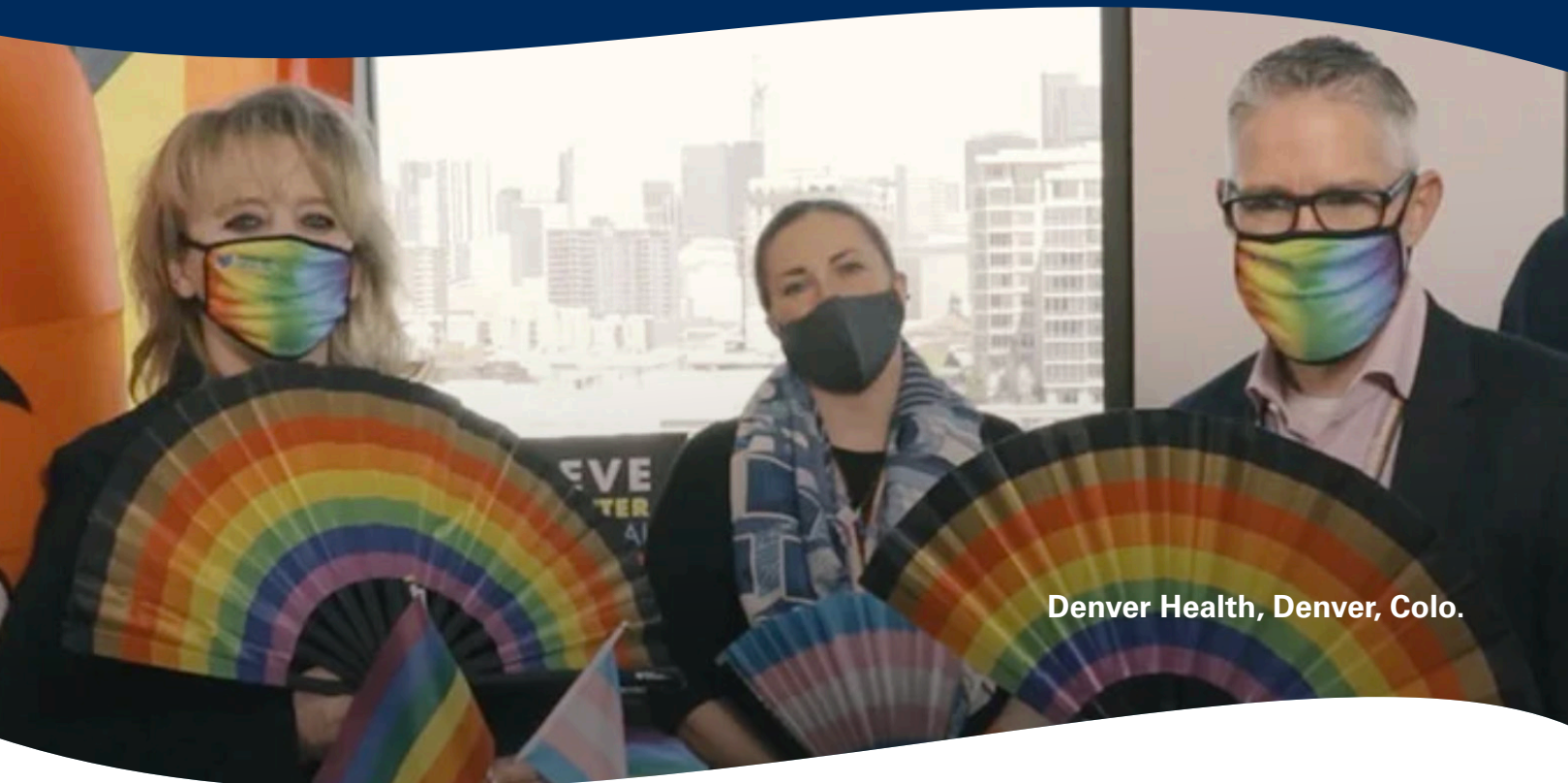
– St. James Parish Hospital, Lutcher, La.



St. James Parish Hospital, Lutcher, La.

Public Trust and Confidence

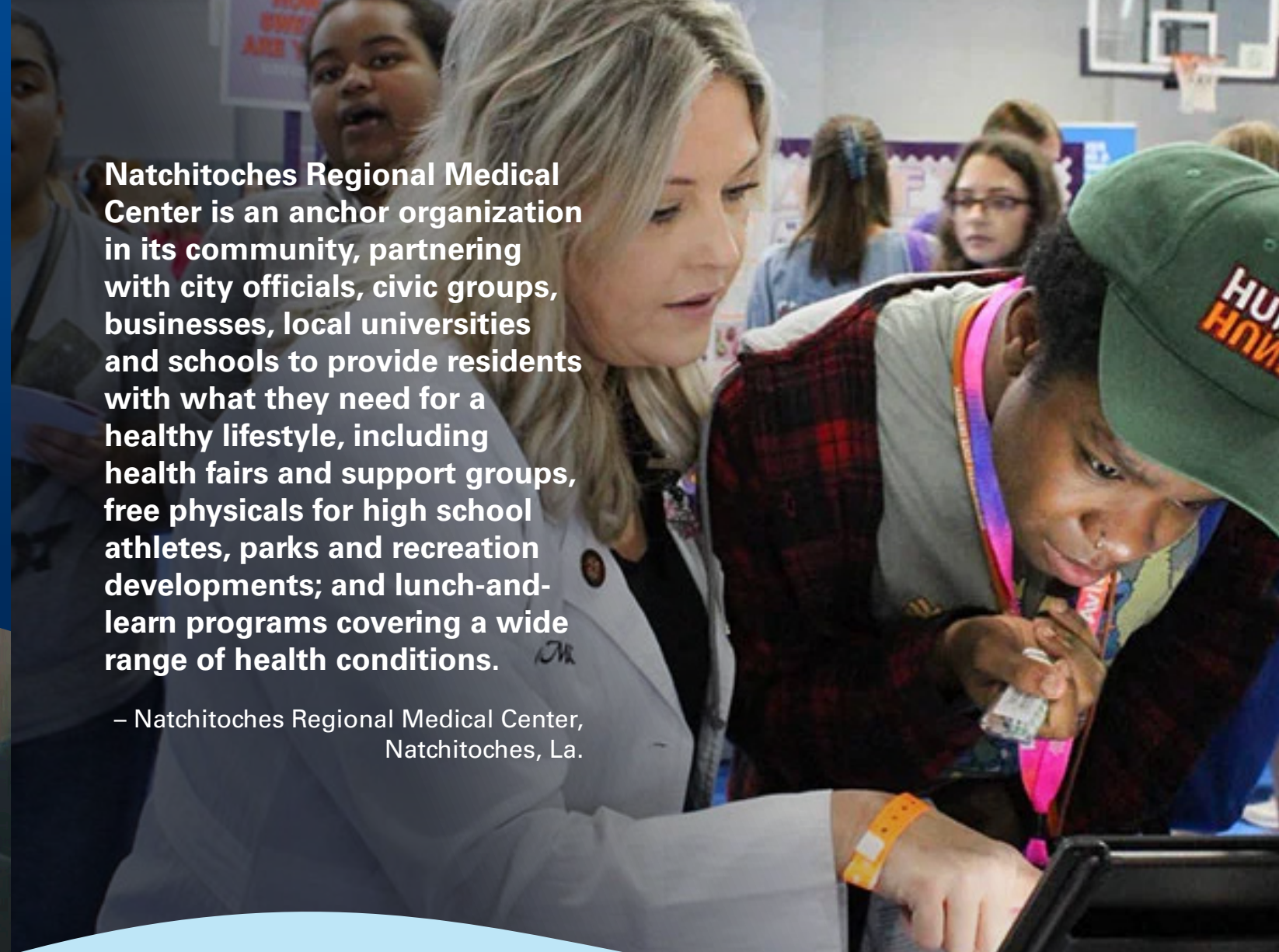
Trust is the foundation of effective patient-provider relationships. By prioritizing open communication and improving access to quality care for all, we can strengthen public trust and confidence in hospitals, ensuring better health outcomes and increasing hospital-community engagement.



Denver Health, Denver, Colo.

Denver Health has long supported LGBTQ+ patients by providing them with a safe place to go to get their health care. Through a wide range of LGBTQ+ health services, the hospital makes sure that every LGBTQ+ person is met with open, welcoming, safe and affirming care from a team of LGBTQ+ friendly doctors and staff.

– Denver Health, Denver, Colo.



Natchitoches Regional Medical Center is an anchor organization in its community, partnering with city officials, civic groups, businesses, local universities and schools to provide residents with what they need for a healthy lifestyle, including health fairs and support groups, free physicals for high school athletes, parks and recreation developments; and lunch-and-learn programs covering a wide range of health conditions.

– Natchitoches Regional Medical Center, Natchitoches, La.



When people come to the hospital, it's typically an emergency, and any idea about planning what's going to happen next is very challenging when you're working in a place where it's all about that crisis. So meeting with people in a space where they are living their day, are most comfortable and feel most safe, are able to have a conversation with a health care professional whom they trust — it can be, and it is, very impactful."

Alongside several key community partners, Baystate Franklin Medical Center recently established its mobile, home-based treatment service to help build a "bridge" to addiction services for its rural community.

– Baystate Franklin Medical Center, Greenfield, Mass.

Workforce

To deliver quality and compassionate health care, a diverse, skilled workforce is essential. Investing in workforce development, addressing shortages and promoting job satisfaction help ensure a sustainable and resilient system that meets the evolving needs of individuals and communities.



AtlantiCare, Egg Harbor Township, N.J.



Our commitment to caring extends beyond medical treatment. Providing opportunities for high school and other students to learn about and embark on health care careers is one of the many ways we build healthy communities and enhance the diversity of our team. We're dedicated to helping passionate, knowledgeable individuals grow personally and professionally at all stages of their careers."

– AtlantiCare, Egg Harbor Township, N.J.

Teen Experience and Leadership Program (TELP) is a groundbreaking initiative aimed at fostering community partnerships and offering teenagers unique opportunities to delve into the world of health care. TELP provides an immersive experience, granting participants exposure to various health occupations and equipping them with essential leadership skills. By nurturing this pipeline, the program aims to bolster the workforce while empowering employees to serve as role models and deepen their community engagement.

– Grady Health System, Atlanta, Ga.

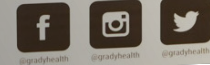


WHERE EQUITY MATTERS



FIND A LOCATION NEAR YOU

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL



We hear feedback, we engage and we start making changes immediately. We've created a culture where staff feel that if they raise an issue, something's going to be done about it."

– Bristol Health, Bristol, Conn.



Giving of oneself day in and day out can lead to compassion fatigue. Our goal is to use proven methods to help meet those feelings where they start, giving employees a safe, open space to address their needs in multiple formats. We believe this contributes to better teamwork, better job satisfaction and, most importantly, the best possible healing environment for our patients."

– SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Operational Excellence

By streamlining workflow, empowering care teams and enhancing care coordination, operational excellence improves care delivery, enhances the patient experience and maximizes the value of health care services. It drives continuous improvement and innovation.



Luminis Health, Annapolis, Md.



Arkansas Children's Hospital, Little Rock, Ark.



We can now transition the Test & Treat Corps emergency operations, knowing that we have built a stronger, more responsive public health care system that can provide the appropriate level of services to our communities and seamlessly preserve access to the COVID-19 testing, vaccination and treatment New Yorkers may need for as long as we need it."

– NYC Health + Hospitals, New York, N.Y.



Meritus Health, Hagerstown, Md.

Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center and Twin Cities Community Hospital are leveraging artificial intelligence to detect strokes by using an app called Viz.ai to read patients' CT scan results to identify symptoms within minutes. This new process can read the scan, search for signs of a stroke and notify all participating medical professionals via cell phone within minutes. A physician then reviews the scan to confirm the sign of a stroke, such as a blood clot, and proceeds with treatment. Scan images may be viewed on desktop computers and other devices that are connected to the platform.

– Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center, San Luis Obispo, Calif., and Twin Cities Community Hospital, Templeton, Calif.

Yale New Haven Hospital launched a Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) in which medical teams — including psychiatrists, nurse practitioners, advanced practice registered nurses, clinical nurse specialists and psychiatric social workers — collaborate to identify and address patients' behavioral health needs early in their care journey. Then, behavioral health specialists from the BIT liaison with patients and their medical teams to provide behavioral health interventions. As a result of these efforts, patients seen by the BIT had reduced lengths of stay and incurred fewer costs, and staff anecdotally reported a boost in their own job satisfaction.

– Yale New Haven Hospital, New Haven, Conn.

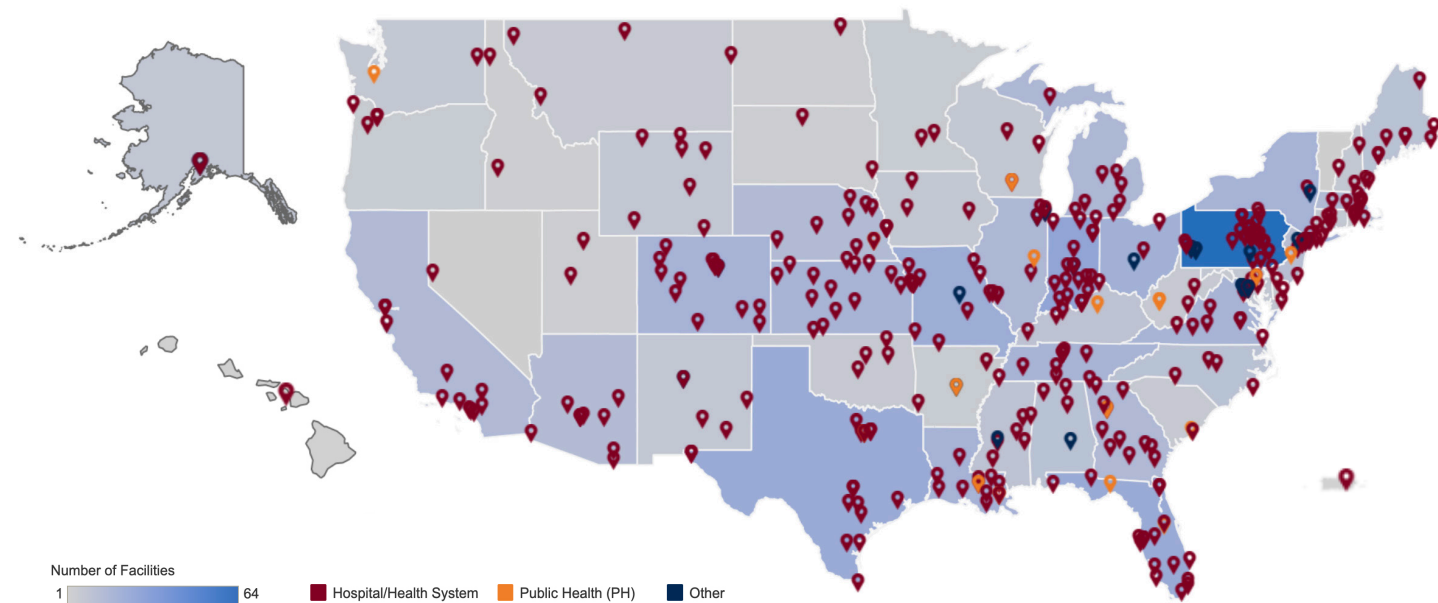


Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center, San Luis Obispo, Calif., and Twin Cities Community Hospital, Templeton, Calif.

About LLN Living Learning Network

The American Hospital Association's [Living Learning Network](#) provides a platform for health care and public health organizations to collaborate, learn and share best practices. The LLN promotes knowledge exchange, fostering innovation and driving improvement across a wide range of areas, such as patient safety, quality improvement and operational efficiency. By leveraging collective expertise and experiences, the LLN empowers organizations to achieve higher standards, optimize outcomes and deliver exceptional health care services. Additionally, its partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention further enhances the LLN's effectiveness in addressing public health challenges and implementing evidence-based practices, ultimately benefiting patients, their families and communities.

The LLN set out to engage health care professionals from across the United States to authentically represent health care consumers from all walks of life. The only way to emerge stronger from the COVID-19 pandemic is through a national dialogue with diverse representation, open communication and accountability.



M. MICHELLE HOOD

*Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
American Hospital Association*



The LLN unleashes the opportunity for health care professionals to connect with each other in real time. From innovative procedures being created on the front lines all the way up to health policy changes occurring at the macro level, this cross-disciplinary network has proved that we can quickly and expertly adapt to new and challenging circumstances when we work together and trust each other."



DENISE CARDO, M.D.

Director of the Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



People often ask me what my concerns are — what keeps me awake in the middle of the night. My answer is the same now as it was before the pandemic: the things that we don't know and taking things for granted. The LLN addresses these concerns by reimagining how we hear from the field and considering the best way to facilitate change. It is not just the knowledge the LLN represents that is so valuable — it is the creation of the system for shared learning that truly is noteworthy."



McDonough District Hospital, Macomb, Ill.



Please visit AHA Living Learning Network to learn more.