



# How to use the 2025 Environmental Scan

The 2025 Environmental Scan can help hospitals and other stakeholders strategize and think about key issues with staff, leaders and boards. Here are some ways you can use the Environmental Scan to plan for today and tomorrow.

Scan the QR code to download the Environmental Scan or visit [aha.org/environmentalscan](https://aha.org/environmentalscan).



## Increase engagement with key stakeholders and the community

- **Spark discussion:** Share with your board and staff at meetings and retreats. Ask: What two or three pieces of information in the Environmental Scan most concern or surprise you? What are the implications for our patients, community and organization? If you were reinventing the health care system from scratch, what kind of system would you create to respond to these issues?
- **Tell your story:** Use the information to tell your story to the community you serve. Identify vehicles for these communications, such as presentations, reports, relevant websites, op-eds and material you share with legislators and funders.

## Leadership Discussion Guide: Probing questions to inform your strategy

- **Review your business model:** Reexamine the value proposition you offer to your community. Do you need to adjust it based on the changing environment and market trends? How are you incorporating consumer-centric strategies into your plans? Are you evaluating alternative sites of care beyond the hospital, including telehealth? Are you reassessing your approach to value-based care? How can you improve your operational structure?
- **Workforce:** How can you support the health and well-being of your workforce through resources, education and structural changes? What short-term and long-term strategies can address both clinical and non-clinical workforce capacity? What care models and technology can help to redesign care delivery to support the workforce? What new leadership skills are needed?
- **Use data and technology:** Are you using data to inform your decision-making? How can technology improve operations, clinical outcomes, workforce satisfaction and the patient experience? What new opportunities and risks do AI-enabled systems present? What new tech-focused competencies do your leaders and teams need? What cybersecurity precautions do you need to institute or strengthen?
- **Communication:** How are you communicating your plans with staff, patients and the community? Determine your key messages and a multichannel communication strategy for your stakeholders. Share challenges, success stories and positive outcomes.
- **Envision an optimal future:** Think about the larger societal inequities, health care disparities and cultural shifts that the pandemic has brought into focus. What role can your organization play to implement solutions that can make a genuine difference? What community partnerships can you explore or expand?
- **Examine innovation efforts:** Talk with your chief innovation officer and chief financial officer about the implications for your investment in innovation and the prioritization of innovation projects. Consider building a sustainable, agile innovation infrastructure that's well-supported by budget, talent and processes.
- **Continue scanning:** The AHA provides regular market intelligence updates through the weekly [Market Scan e-newsletter](#) and a daily roundup of news and resources through [AHA Today](#). Additionally, explore key issues through the Society for Health Care Strategy & Market Development's [Futurescan](#).

# Unlocking the power of data

The 2025 Environmental Scan offers a rich array of insights to support hospitals and health systems in evaluating the current landscape and envisioning future paths forward. This resource can inspire meaningful conversations with your teams, boards and communities about your organization's priorities and goals. One key insight that resonated with me illustrates the expansive nature of data.

- The average hospital produces roughly 50 petabytes of data every year, which is more than twice the amount of data housed in the Library of Congress.\*

Hospitals and health systems have a unique responsibility and opportunity when it comes to data. We are not only the creators but also the aggregators of vast amounts of information. By embracing a comprehensive data strategy, hospitals and health systems can harness that information to drive innovation. This not only improves the patient experience and outcomes but also helps to reduce costs — creating greater value for the communities we serve. Data-driven health care organizations are better equipped to anticipate and meet the evolving needs of patients and adapt to market trends.

How can hospitals and health systems approach the overwhelming amount of data they produce? The AHA created a blueprint to help members develop data strategies through the Market Insights report [Leveraging Data for Health Care Innovation](#). This resource can help to:

- Identify sources of health care data.
- Increase awareness of health data challenges.
- Transform into a data-driven organization with people, processes and technology.
- Prioritize data capabilities and evaluate data projects.

- Invest in technology and tools that can integrate different data sets, enable users to find what they are looking for quickly and present data to facilitate action.
- Refine or develop a comprehensive data strategy to create more value for patients and communities.



**MICHELLE HOOD**

EXECUTIVE VICE  
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF  
OPERATING OFFICER,  
AMERICAN HOSPITAL  
ASSOCIATION

Given the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), integrating a comprehensive AI road map into your data strategy is advised. There are four broad areas of AI use within health care: administrative, financial, operational and clinical. The AHA is helping members to navigate the complexities of AI through resources like the Market Insights report [AI's Impact on Health Care](#), the podcast [ChatGPT: Is it Practical for Health Care Data Analytics?](#) and the latest developments through the [Market Scan weekly newsletter](#).

We're also expanding our knowledge base through our partnership with AVIA, an organization that helps organizations digitally transform to improve patient outcomes, streamline processes and reduce costs. AVIA and its members, some of the most innovative health systems in the U.S., have organized the [AVIA Generative AI Strategic Collaborative in which AHA participates](#). Through this collaborative we are seeking to scale best practices and accelerate innovation.

By adopting a comprehensive data strategy — and incorporating AI tools where appropriate — we can transform the way we deliver care, improve patient outcomes and create lasting value for the communities we serve. The AHA remains committed to supporting our members on this journey. Together, we can build a data-driven health care ecosystem that is more efficient, equitable and innovative.

\*Pant, Rabin et al. "A unified data model improves care and service for patients, providers and payers," Becker's Hospital Review, Nov. 2, 2023