

# Specialty Innovation Summit Highlights

## Quality Improvement and Patient Safety (Chapel Hill, N.C.)



The American Hospital Association (AHA) convened hospital and health system leaders for a day of collaborative design focused on advancing quality and patient safety. Using a human-centered approach, participants co-designed solutions and opportunities for action.

This one-page brief highlights the collective insights and priority areas identified by participants, offering actionable strategies to support hospitals and health systems in their quality improvement and patient safety initiatives.

### Practical Takeaways

#### 1 Embed patient and community input into quality and patient safety operations.

- Identify and cultivate opportunities for community organizations to engage directly with hospitals – co-developing solutions that reflect patient priorities from the ground up.
- Partner with educational institutions to build a pipeline of students equipped with the knowledge and skills to contribute to quality and patient safety operations.
- Build workgroups across disciplines and departments that draw on a range of perspectives to sustain a culture of continuous learning and improvement.
- Utilize the data from community health needs assessments to gain insight into lived experiences of patients and families.

#### 2 Build a transparent, accountable and trustworthy governance structure.

- Establish a clear organizational mission and vision to guide policies of development, leadership accountability and incentive structures aligned with high-quality care.
- Allocate dedicated resources to support ongoing board education on evolving quality, patient safety and community health standards to ensure governance and leadership remain informed and accountable.
- Promote transparency in board selection criteria to strengthen trust among internal and external stakeholders and ensure leadership reflects the communities served.

#### 3 Prioritize the continuous identification and implementation of strategies to improve health outcomes.

- Standardize data collection practices and metrics to examine patient experiences and outcomes across hospitals and health systems within a region.
- Invest in training and operational resources to ensure patients' needs are met — such as developing tailored support resources for patients with low health literacy.
- Collaborate with state hospital associations to advocate for policies that strengthen data-driven approaches to improving patient outcomes.

### Call to Action:

- **Consider:** What mechanisms are in place to surface structural barriers that prevent our staff from raising concerns about quality improvement efforts?
- **Engage:** How can we create structured opportunities for staff across departments to share what they are learning and translate those insights into meaningful changes in decision-making?
- **Integrate:** How can quality measures and data-sharing practices be aligned across departments to reinforce accountability and drive consistent improvement in health outcomes?