Mastering healthcare transformation

Our World Hospital Congress experience.

On 10-12 October 2018 the Value Institute for Health and Care was privileged to participate in the 42nd International Hospital Federation (IHF) World Hospital Congress in Brisbane. Our perspective, delivered by Elizabeth Teisberg, launched the World Hospital Congress with the message that the goal of healthcare must be to achieve its medical and humanitarian purpose—helping people with health challenges to achieve capability, comfort, and calm.

Returning healthcare to its purpose is the signature goal of our Institute. We support healthcare transformation that enables better health outcomes for the money spent in order to provide better health for more people. In addition to accelerating clinical transformation, our initiatives include thought leadership on translational research, educational programs, and partnerships.

Leading into the Congress, we facilitated a two-day interactive workshop on implementing value-based health care. More than 65 leaders in dentistry, medicine, surgery, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, insurance, and government attended. Building on the World Hospital Congress’s theme of ‘Evolving health care to meet 21st century demands’, our workshop focused on the actionable steps required to catalyse and accelerate transformation in participants’ organisations.

The Value Institute’s educational programs provide participants with specific tools they need to deliver high-value, relationship-centred healthcare. The programs teach participants to conduct qualitative research to understand individuals’ and families’ needs beyond the clinical setting, design solutions for specific patient segments, create integrated practice units (IPUs) that drive team-learning, and implement payment models that align medical success with financial success.

Participants at the workshop focused on identifying the most relevant outcome measures and using the results of those measures to start the process of care transformation. The general lack of outcome measurement in healthcare is stunning given that improving health outcomes is the purpose of healthcare. Even more stunning, however, is the power of meaningful measurement to drive change. Workshop participants studied multiple organisations using patient outcome measurement to drive care transformation.

Measurement that drives transformation uses the outcomes that matter most to patients, which address increases in capability (the ability to do the things that are important to the individual or family), comfort (reduction in physical and emotional suffering), and calm (relief from the burdens that seeking treatment or waiting for help can foment).
The key questions about health are often lost amid the plethora of required measures and metrics reflecting process compliance, patient satisfaction and hospitality. Refocusing on health requires changing from asking ‘How were we?’ to asking, ‘How are you?’ Of course, healthcare must ensure safety and respect to every patient, but these should be the floor, not the limits of our aspirations.

Measuring outcomes that are meaningful to patients also helps reduce clinician burnout. Aligning measurement with purpose supports professional goals rather than pushing clinicians to work harder and faster. Through development, review, and iteration of outcome measures, teams build a culture of learning and improvement that enables the care team to do usual things exceptionally well.

The goal of our interactive workshops is to empower participants to do something differently when they get back to work. Participants leave with tools and implementation frameworks as well as insights from pioneering healthcare leaders whose work is changing the way healthcare is delivered. Programs include the value-based healthcare overview showcased at the Congress, as well as programs taking a more in-depth look at cost and outcomes measurement, designing services from patients’ perspectives, creating teams that learn and improve together, and growing high-value services.

In Autumn 2019 the Value Institute will begin offering a Master of Science in Health Care Transformation program. A joint degree granted by both Dell Medical School and the McCombs School of Business at The University of Texas at Austin, the program will educate leaders in system transformation that enhances value by achieving better health outcomes. The one-year, part-time program will be delivered for leaders throughout the health sector in a hybrid (in-person and online) cohort format that enables building strong relationships among the students and with faculty.

The Value Institute is formalising the community-building aspect of our mission by establishing a Partnership Program that will enable partners to deliver world-class value-based healthcare education programs at their own location and collaborate with us in research on value-based healthcare implementation.

We want to thank the International Hospital Federation and the Australian Hospital and Healthcare Association for being such gracious hosts; we had a great time connecting with other healthcare leaders who are also working to #TransformHealthCare. You can learn more about our executive education and master’s program at dellmed.utexas.edu/units/value-institute-for-health-and-care.