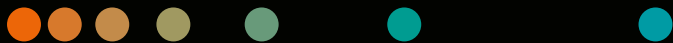


Executive Summit 2018

Delivering high-value care: A few insights from leading experts





Peter Pisters, President of the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, speaking about his institution's quest to eliminate cancer

Three leaders in the healthcare industry described how they transformed their organizations to encourage the delivery of high-value care. The formula for change involves expanding precision medicine, improving the patient experience, and digitalizing healthcare to support these efforts.

Text: Bill Hinchberger

Bold leadership is essential to transforming the healthcare industry to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Several speakers echoed this sentiment during the Siemens Healthineers Executive Summit, which brought together over 100 leaders of the global healthcare community in Frankfurt, Germany.

The final session of the day-long series of panels addressed this issue explicitly, as three top executives described the process of change at their respective organizations.

Cleveland Clinic: From doctor-centric to patient-centric

Toby Cosgrove, Executive Advisor and former CEO and President of the Cleveland Clinic, told the story of how he led the transformation of that institution to make it more patient-friendly,

while at the same time improving efficiency. Cosgrove talked about taking people out of their specialist silos to form multidisciplinary teams to meet the needs of patients, to make a “change from doctor-centric to patient-centric.”

After a career of working to save lives, Cosgrove had a couple of epiphanies that led him to a realization: “I spent my life in the pursuit of technical excellence so people wouldn’t die on the operating table. I didn’t spend much time looking after patients as whole individuals.”

As a result, he embarked on a quest for change.

First, the Cleveland Clinic abandoned the traditional hospital structure, with a medical department that supervises specialties such as cardiology, and a surgical department that oversees operations. It was replaced by entities called institutes



Toby Cosgrove, Executive Advisor and former CEO and President of the Cleveland Clinic, talking to panel moderator Ghada Trotabas about the importance of the patient experience

that feature multidisciplinary teams treating all conditions related to a particular organ system. In the heart and circulatory systems institute, cardiologists and surgeons treat patients together.

Next, attention shifted to the patient experience. This included changing the design of everything from the rooms to the gowns that patients wear when undergoing procedures. The processing of requests for appointments was revised to facilitate same-day examinations when needed. "Everything came from the patient experience," Cosgrove noted.

To generate support for the overhaul, Cosgrove relied on collecting and disseminating data, including patient satisfaction results and mortality rates. Among other things, this helped get doctors on board. "Physicians respond to data," he said. Since the data are made public, peer pressure encourages doctors to find ways to improve.

The list of changes goes on, and includes decentralization of care and succession planning for leadership positions. Initiatives extended to relatively minor things that drew lots of attention, such as a ban on smoking and the removal

of a McDonald's fast food outlet from the premises. "When we started, people thought it would be the flavor of the day, that if they ignored it, it would go away," But attitudes have changed: "Nobody says we should go back."

University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center: From individuals to teams

Peter Pisters, President of the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, described how his institution has also adopted team-based clinical care and extended this to team-based research in its efforts to deliver better care to patients and discover better treatments for cancer. Clinical and research activities have been integrated, for example. It represents a shift "from the individual athlete model to the team model," he said.

Care centers are organized around the needs of patients so that delivery is made in a way that is convenient and comfortable for them, "instead of having patients ping-pong" between places designed around traditional medical categories. "We put the patient in the center of what we do," he said.

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Toby Cosgrove, Executive Advisor and former CEO and President of the Cleveland Clinic

While focused exclusively on cancer, the MD Anderson Cancer Center is a multifaceted institution. Nevertheless, its work is organized around a set of clear principles that Pisters outlined in a simple slide during his presentation:

- Our singular focus: *Making Cancer History*[®]
- Our organizing principle: Serve the patient
- Our culture: Interprofessional and team-based
- Our strategy: Research-driven patient care
- Our mission areas: Care, Research, Prevention, Education

The center extends its collaborative approach beyond its walls. It maintains networks of affiliated institutions both nationally and internationally, and forges partnerships with disease-based foundations and donors, industry, and federal agencies in the United States.

Siemens Healthineers: From technology products to customer solutions

Bernd Montag, CEO of Siemens Healthineers, closed out the session by describing how his company is changing to meet the emerging needs of the early 21st century. "The world has changed a lot in the last 20 years," he said. In the 1990s, companies such as Siemens Healthineers aimed to keep radiologists happy. Now the goal is "to deliver high-value care with efficiency at a low cost." Customer relations have changed because officials and executives, maybe someone in India's health ministry or Toby Cosgrove, are working a level or two above the radiologist to ensure the efficiency of the entire operation.

Montag suggested that it might be easier for his company to change its culture than it is for healthcare providers, where physicians are defined by their specialties. Yet many challenges seem similar. "We need to work more in teams

and not be so techno-centric, to work more closely with the customer," he said. "You talk about moving from a physician-centric to a patient-centric culture. We talk about moving from techno-centric to customer-centric." Montag also finds parallels in the shift from fee-for-service healthcare to capitation.

Siemens Healthineers used to earn its living by delivering good machines. Now it is signing multi-year contracts designed around outcomes and efficiency. "When we were a product company, we talked about our great products," he said. "When we have to solve problems, we need to listen to our customers." ●

Conclusion

The changes in all three organizations were rooted in a new-found focus on patients and customers. Teamwork is replacing individual efforts as the best way to improve efficiency and outcomes.

Takeaways

- The main driver of change is a shift from a doctor-centric to a patient-centric culture.
- The model of the individual athlete needs to be replaced by that of the team.
- To provide the right solutions, healthcare providers and companies must listen to their patients and customers.

Bill Hinchberger is a Paris-based independent journalist.

Speakers

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- Peter Pisters, MD, MHCM, President, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas, United States

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