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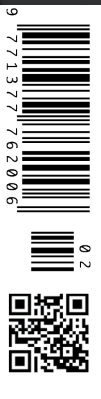
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What Is Big *Intelligently Efficient* Opportunity that is Key to Unlock Better Outcomes and Experience of Care?

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The coronavirus pandemic has shone a light on the dedication of our global health systems. It has also helped inspire new thinking on how to address the key challenges that have been facing healthcare for many years. Empowering a new climate of quality care that is guided by insight to benefit both providers and patients, will create a system as healthy as those it cares for. A renewed focus on global collaboration and the exchange of ideas and technologies will bring about further healthcare efficiency reform. For this to happen, every institution and market has a voice and a part to play – are you ready to drive the change?

Intelligent Efficiency is Improving Every Component of the Care System

The biggest conversation today to enable healthcare institutions to thrive tomorrow is ‘intelligent efficiency’. This new narrative has been ignited by decades of efficiency and productivity discussion that is approached from a linear, calculated standpoint. It had traditionally taken a value-in/value-out perspective and a focus on how each element contributed to a specific definition of worth.

Now, healthcare leaders are being encouraged to view efficiency as a process that improves every component of the care system and uplifts every individual who interacts with that system. This is efficiency for all, where a universal concept is creatively integrated into the DNA of an operation and underpinned by data and analytics. The overall result is that time is gained across the healthcare spectrum to add value not only to the obvious metrics but also behind the scenes.

For some institutions ‘intelligent efficiency’ is becoming a reality as they strive for a state in which quality care flows seamlessly and efficiently for providers and patients, guided by relevant insights.

The lessons it can teach us all will be incredibly valuable for the progression of all healthcare collaboration across national and international geographic borders and across radiology, cardiology or oncology specialities where we are all delicately chained together in a global healthcare industry.

Integration of Technology, Data and the Human

The first core principle of intelligent efficiency is when technology, data and operations work together seamlessly to create a self-reinforcing cycle that improves the lives of everyone that touches it. This ethos prizes the smart integration of all elements that sees technologies rolled out as part of an efficiency mosaic where benefits cascade throughout the hospital or clinic.

An example of this can be found at Nuremberg Hospital in Germany when it was experiencing increasing pressure from payors to speed up reporting times for cardiology diagnostic procedures. To resolve the issue, it conducted a full workflow analysis and connected all diagnostic modalities to a single cardiology information system that could generate a report to be made available to all relevant care providers. It involved integration of a new technology solution plus extensive training and education for hospital teams.

The results delivered positive returns on the efforts of a combined tech, data and human approach. Time to complete cardiology cath lab reports [decreased by 60%](#) and quality control compliance increased to 100%. The improved efficiency structure speaks to every element of the healthcare organisation and delivered not only time savings but also greater profitability.

Being Consumer- and Provider-Centric in Efficiency

The next key element vital to intelligent efficiency is recognising that every endeavour must simultaneously consider

the needs of both patients and providers. This is being consumer-centric and provider-centric.

To thrive in the new normal of global healthcare means embracing the changing expectations of patients to create a seamless experience. A move towards the consumerisation of medicine and instant access to web or mobile app-based information means that patients now demand the same type of service and convenience they gain in other aspects of their lives. Indeed, data suggests that in 2019 patient satisfaction in the UK National Health Service (NHS) fell to [its lowest level](#) in a decade.

On the provider side, [2019 studies](#) showing physician burnout at over 40% should now be amplified following two waves of coronavirus pandemic shattering workforces throughout 2020. So, the application of efficiency-led innovation should also take into account the needs of the physician, nurse or technologist they serve.

An example is the USA's Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) adoption of a real-time care system to paint a comprehensive picture of patient status and prioritise attention on the most critical cases. This addressed major issues of multiple stakeholders, in contrast to a haphazard or staged ad hoc approach. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic it helped the hospital operate more efficiently by enabling specialists in a central location to provide clinical support to bedside teams caring for patients in multiple Intensive Care Units (ICUs).

The system at OHSU improved all efficiencies in care delivery by allowing critical care experts to remotely oversee patients' vital clinical data and best practice standards in near real time. It allowed for better visibility into ICU bed access for those in need of intensive care, better data collection and monitoring for individual patients. This, in turn, delivered greater satisfac-

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Healthcare workforce morale and satisfaction will be encouraged by improved patient satisfaction and their physical resourcing assisted by a helping technological hand.

A great example of this is at the century-old American Hospital in Istanbul, Turkey. The cardiology department revamped its IT systems to automate the cath lab and echo workflow. It eliminated the need for manual entry of some patient information, worksheets and transcription, which reduced the turnaround times for anxious patients. But even more importantly, it was able to virtually eliminate error-prone manual processes. This illustrated an improvement in system and process for the patient at the same time as lifting the spirits of the team working in the department daily.

Holistic Efficiency in Contrast to Ad Hoc, Quick Wins

The third principle of intelligent efficiency is about taking a comprehensive approach to tackling the major issues facing healthcare by involving all relevant stakeholders at the same time. The theory behind this is that an ad hoc approach often solves one problem but can create others. In other words, avoid dipping your toes in the water of innovation in an attempt to ripple the waters of efficiency, but do jump in with a splash.

tion for providers who found it easier to fulfil the delivery of high-quality patient care, and a more efficient distribution of hospital beds across the system.

A Shared Global Health Experience

Whilst there may be many different health systems around the world with differing structures, cultures and at different stages of technological evolution, the one thing they have all had in common this year is a shared infectious disease emergency. The pandemic is still delivering millions of tragic outcomes; however, it has also opened the door to new thinking and a willingness to be intelligently guided by data, experience and clinical best practices that together will pave the efficient path to a future of outcome-driven patient care.

Our intertwined experience this year has cast new light on the big conversations about efficiency. It will continue to fuel dialogue on the benefits of sharing all experience bringing intelligently efficient solutions to unlock better outcomes and experience of care. ■