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At the Crossroads - The Future of Healthcare



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Any healthcare leader surveying the healthcare situation in Europe today would have the same observation; the demands on the sustainability of healthcare systems across the continent are weighing heavy on hospital finances, personnel resources and ultimately on the wellbeing of patients. With improving patient outcomes the first and foremost objective, a hospital's financial performance and reputation also hang in the balance as leaders attempt to navigate a healthcare landscape that is swiftly changing as we look toward the future.

It is no mystery why healthcare finds itself at these critical crossroads. Life expectancy is on the rise and, simultaneously, so are chronic and complex conditions that require increasingly personalised treatment for best outcomes. The voice of the patient is also central to the healthcare debate as those receiving care become more knowledgeable about their rights and the types of care available to them and their loved ones.

At the same time, it could be argued that healthcare is experiencing one of its most exciting phases. Rapid technological advances in diagnostics, treatments and workflow procedures are transforming the healthcare terrain before our eyes. Who could have thought only few years ago that the digital world would impact so deeply on the hospital environment, improving practice, bringing together professionals from all specialties and connecting patients with carers creating a transparency that could only be imagined a short time ago.

However, advances bring with them responsibility. It is our duty as healthcare professionals to steer the ship on the right course so that we take advantage of all that new developments can offer and guide our practice toward optimum healthcare that we can sustain. Indeed, this theme of sustainability and the need to collectively advance innovative approaches for improvement and expansion of healthcare services globally, will inform the 26th EAHM Congress in October, details of which are in this issue of HealthManagement.org.

As our International community becomes ever more interconnected, we need to build on those relationships continuing to forge an alliance of healthcare professionals and decision makers across international and state borders. Through such expert collaboration and shared learning we can articulate the required competencies to contribute to a sustainable health care system and convince our politicians and stakeholders, that public financing of healthcare is not purely a question of cost, but an undeniable investment in the future welfare of people.

The changes in healthcare have been radical but where there are challenges there are also opportunities. It is hoped that this issue of HealthManagement.org will inspire leaders to rise to the challenges of the future of healthcare. Together with vision and cooperation, we can create a future of health and safety for all our European citizens.

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