

How Healthcare Leaders Can Balance Planning



"Visual impairment" is a major issue in healthcare globally, according to healthcare policy expert Paul Keckley, PhD. It is for this reason that many healthcare leaders do not have a clear view of the industry's long-term future.

Dr. Keckley says many healthcare organisations are "nearsighted" — their field of vision is too narrow. These organisations focus on immediate pressures, such as cost reduction, consolidation, the transition to value-based care, and price and outcomes transparency. They know little about other sectors and have a blurred view of healthcare's future, he says.

Meanwhile, other healthcare agencies and organisations suffer from "farsightedness", notes Dr. Keckley. In these cases, focusing on the long term can lead them to neglect the day-to-day competencies and cultural shifts needed to achieve their more distant goals.

It is possible for organisations with both problems to correct them, according to Dr. Keckley. When both nearsightedness and farsightedness are treated, organisations will have a clear view of how all of the key sectors in healthcare operate, access capital, integrate emergent technologies, and deliver value-based services. They also have a better understanding of issues such as consumerism, alternative care models and social determinants of population health. In short, they see near-term challenges and long-term goals clearly.

To strike a balance between the two extremes, Dr. Keckley says boards of directors must encourage outside-the-box thinking within their organisations. Management teams should promote self-assessment and across-the-board knowledge of how multiple sectors within healthcare operate. Senior managers must be ready to treat this "visual impairment" within healthcare organisations from the top down, and be prepared to have regular "eye exams" (or self-assessments).

It is important for healthcare leaders to identify these issues early to minimise damage, particularly as many organisations have a culture that views such internal assessments as an "expression of weakness," according to Dr. Keckley.

Source: [Navigant Center for Healthcare Research and Policy Analysis](#)

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