



Three Key Factors to Consider When Choosing a Healthcare Management Partner

Hospital CEOs today face unprecedented challenges in the face of enormous uncertainty. Even before the pandemic hit, many were struggling with growing self-pay collections, increased administrative burdens and regulations, and plummeting reimbursements. According to a report published by the American Hospital Association, the median margin for hospitals in the U.S. prior to the pandemic was just 3.5%. The report predicts that nearly half of all hospitals could have negative operating margins by the end of 2021 and that the financial impact on rural hospitals could be significant.

One of the challenges is maintaining sufficient staffing levels, a problem that existed even before the pandemic. The impact on clinician burnout has been significant. In 2019, before the pandemic began, 40% of physicians reported feeling burned out. Since the pandemic, burnout has skyrocketed with nearly 30% of clinicians now saying they have considered leaving healthcare altogether due to burnout. The problem, unfortunately, is likely to get even worse. A study published by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) projects a physician shortage of up to 124,000 by 2034. This means even longer hours and greater caseloads for clinicians, which can significantly impact the care quality and safety.

Pre-Pandemic
40% of physicians reported feeling burned out.

Post-Pandemic
30% of clinicians say they have considered leaving healthcare due to burnout.

“It has been well-documented that clinical departments that rely on external expertise can see improvements in patient flow and patient satisfaction scores due to the establishment of shared best practices and years of experience focusing on key metrics.”

Dr. Brian Santin,
vascular surgeon and chief medical officer at Clinton Memorial Hospital



Following are three areas to focus on when choosing a partner. The key is to ensure the company you choose can demonstrate a track record of proven success in each area.

- ¹ <https://www.aha.org/system/files/media/file/2021/03/Kaufman-Hall-2021-Margins-Report-final.pdf>
- ² <https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/practices/physician-shortage-continues-to-widen-now-estimated-at-124-000-by-2034>
- ³ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/04/22/health-workers-covid-quit/>
- ⁴ <https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/practices/physician-shortage-continues-to-widen-now-estimated-at-124-000-by-2034>
- ⁵ <https://www.ahrq.gov/prevention/clinician/ahrq-works/burnout/index.html>
- ⁶ <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/hospital-management-administration/3-ways-outsourcing-clinical-services-helps-the-bottom-line.html>

01 COLLABORATIVE CARE MODEL

Hospitals need partners who exhibit quality leadership and who are willing to roll up their sleeves and work alongside hospital leadership, managers, and clinicians. Choose a partner that understands the importance of being a valued member of the hospital's team and of embracing the hospital's corporate culture. They should

be willing to play key roles in committees and strategic initiatives and should hold themselves accountable. That means collecting and analyzing key performance data to help identify opportunities to improve clinical and operational performance.

Success story

The University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center (BWMC) is home to leading-edge technology, nationally recognized quality, personalized service and outstanding people. BWMC has 285 licensed beds and is home to more than 3,300 employees and 1,000 medical staff members. BWMC needed a way to improve workflows, enhance safety, and improve patient satisfaction scores.

BWMC chose to partner with Adfinitas Health for its reputation of providing exceptional hospital management and high-quality physicians and hospitalists. David Lauver, MD, an Adfinitas Health physician, now serves as Medical Director and vice president of the medical staff for BWMC. Lauver devotes half his time to administration and the other half to direct patient care. With Lauver, Adfinitas Health has representation and involvement across the majority of committees at BWMC, including standing reviews, peer review and credentials. Lauver is also involved in work groups that include patient flow, patient satisfaction, and specific quality initiatives that arise.

With Adfinitas Health, BWMC reached its goals of improving workflows, enhancing safety, and improving patient satisfaction. The medical center also experienced improvements in many other areas.



Safety. BWMC has achieved a mortality "observe to expect ratio" of 0.46.



Infection Rates. BWMC has had fewer than one case of clostridium difficile (C. diff) per month, and only two catheter associated UTIs and two central line associated bloodstream infections, year to date (January 2021 - June 2021).



Patient Satisfaction. Patient satisfaction scores have increased to 78%, in large part due to the new IDT (Interdisciplinary Team) rounding model implemented by Adfinitas Health.



Benchmarks. Out of seven units, BWMC has been able to reach threshold level for two and benchmarks for three—all within a single month with Adfinitas Health.



Rounding. Lauver led the effort to implement IDT rounding, a room-to-room process that includes the patient, family, provider, nurse, clinical pharmacist, and chart nurse.



Growth. The BWMC leadership team decided to integrate their existing team of physicians with Adfinitas Health. All hospital providers were offered a position with Adfinitas Health and about 80% accepted.



"Adfinitas Health is a true partner, involved at all levels of hospital operations, patient safety, patient quality, and medical staff leadership."

David Lauver, Medical Director at BWMC

02 INNOVATION

When it comes to today's unprecedented challenges, hospitals can't afford to settle for status-quo in their partnerships. They need to choose partners with a commitment to innovation and ongoing learning. Look for organizations that think outside the box, such as using a model that trains and employs high-performing

advanced practice providers (APPs). With the right development, these professionals can work alongside physicians to create a customized mix of talent based on the needs of the care setting. In this way, physicians can focus on higher acuity patients while APPs can focus on keeping patients moving throughout the continuum.

Success story

Clinton Memorial Hospital (CMH) is a 141-bed hospital located in Wilmington, Ohio. CMH, a part of LifePoint Health, offers a full range of inpatient and outpatient specialized services. CMH found its existing hospitalist management vendor to be unresponsive and ineffective, which was negatively impacting care quality and the patient experience, while also causing excessive operational and administrative work for the organization. Dr. Brian Santin, vascular surgeon and chief medical officer at CMH, said that while the providers themselves were of high quality, CMH really needed a new hospitalist management partner that could more effectively run the hospital's entire program. Santin also emphasized the need for a partner that could provide quality metrics, something the current vendor could not do.

CMH chose to partner with Adfinitas Health because of its reputation for transparency, collaboration, and service excellence, as well as their ability to recruit highly qualified clinicians. Santin said they appreciated that Adfinitas Health was founded and led by board-certified physicians. "The leadership teams at both Adfinitas Health and CMH connected from day one," said Santin. The partnership is one that aligns around operational strategies and the patient experience, and includes standing monthly leadership meetings to ensure any potential issues are addressed up front.

"We've seen firsthand that a well-run, efficient IDT model greatly improves the patient care environment, quality of care, and the bottom line—something our previous partner didn't recognize."

Dr. Brian Santin, *vascular surgeon and chief medical officer at Clinton Memorial Hospital*



With Adfinitas Health, CMH saw improvements right away, especially in its interdisciplinary team (IDT) rounding strategy. Adfinitas Health was very mindful and supportive of the CMH IDT strategy because they had helped pioneer the IDT model. "This really hit home with us," said Santin. In addition to supporting CMH with quality hospitalists and managers, Adfinitas Health also takes the lead in educating CMH clinicians about the IDT model. "Adfinitas Health brings a willingness to explore alternative solutions to an array of issues," said Santin. For example, the CMH medical director is a nurse practitioner which is a bit unusual, but Adfinitas Health fully supports this innovative approach.

Santin and other CMH leaders are especially appreciative of the responsiveness Adfinitas Health has shown. In one case, a CMH physician had to unexpectedly take a medical leave on very short notice. Adfinitas Health was able to find a highly qualified replacement who was willing to fill in for the six-day leave of absence. "I can't say that another hospitalist team or medical director would have been willing to do that," said Santin.

03 CARE ACROSS THE CONTINUUM

Care shouldn't end when the patient leaves the hospital. Yet many patients fail to get the follow-up care they need once they get home. This can result in complications, trips to the emergency department and readmissions. Research shows that nearly one in five patients experiences an adverse event within just three weeks of being discharged, 75% of which could have been prevented or alleviated. The three primary reasons are hospital-acquired infections, procedural complications, and adverse drug events.

Many forward-thinking health systems now leverage telehealth outsourcers for post-acute care and remote patient monitoring (RPM) as a way to improve outcomes and prevent readmissions. When looking for a partner, choose one that demonstrates an understanding of

the importance of providing consistency and quality in every patient encounter, no matter where the patient is in the healthcare spectrum. The best partners should employ the latest in remote monitoring devices such as EKG monitors, in addition to blood pressure cuffs, blood glucose monitors, and pulse oximeters. Look for a partner that has a team of certified clinicians to monitor patient vitals and intervene when issues arise by alerting the patient's primary care provider or other clinical team.

A part of providing quality care across the continuum is to monitor and measure patient satisfaction trends. Partnering with an outsourcer can help streamline this process and give you the data you need to effectively implement process improvement plans.

The Journey Forward

Hospitals and health systems face an immense amount of uncertainty right now. We don't know when the pandemic will end, when volumes will return to normal, when elective procedures will resume. The bottom line is that we don't know what the "new normal" will look like. One of the best ways to mitigate these unknowns and ensure you have the resources needed to meet today's needs as well as tomorrow's—whatever those needs may be—is to partner with a healthcare management company dedicated to providing collaborate, high-quality care across the entire continuum. Look for a partner that understands how to manage day-to-day operations and the importance of providing an exceptional patient experience.

Adfinitas Health can help. Our experienced hospitalist medical directors oversee the financial and clinical care components of your program while you maintain complete control of your overall operations. We deliver consistent, high-quality care through continual communications with your hospital staff, and your patients and their families. We achieve this through the following:



24-hour care coordination with primary care physicians, case managers, nurses, patients, and families



Peer-reviewed clinical pathways for consistent, effective care



Clinical chart audits and documentation reviews of our medical staff



Multidisciplinary rounding and bed huddles to ensure accurate tracking of patient progress



Review of the condition, treatment protocols, and discharge instructions with patients and family members to promote adherence to care plans and ongoing progress post-discharge



Compliance monitoring and transparent results via formal programs:

- Rapid Cycle Feedback (*HIPAA-compliant electronic chart auditing and management*)
- Adfinitas Health Connects (*CMS-compliant patient post-discharge communications tool*)



“With Adfinitas Health, we have stabilized our turnover among providers and our stakeholders remain positively engaged in our hospital and its operation. They possess a depth of providers that are well developed at the medical director level, a key component for the hospitalist service. By partnering with Adfinitas Health, we are able to transition to population health management and modify our financial incentives under a global cap budget. It has been a very positive experience for us.”

James J. Xinis,
former President & CEO, Calvert Memorial Hospital



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