

# Making the Patient Paramount

*Author Commentary*

## CHAPTER ABSTRACT:

Healthcare delivery is undergoing radical changes as it experiences influences such as the Affordable Care Act, cost transparency, and increased healthcare consumerism. Academic health centers are poised to help develop and lead strategies and tactics to be successful in this changing market.

This chapter outlines how putting a strategic focus on the patient and driving better patient-centered tactics will help organizations and providers be successful in the new healthcare market.

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The first thing that everyone in healthcare should do is frame the fact that we are here for patients. We serve people. Those people are just like us. We are all part of an ecosystem. Every one of us will be a patient one day. Really, it is starting with putting patients at the center and having conversations about that.

Keeping the patient at the center requires a willingness to lead, an ability to execute, and a desire or passion to constantly think about putting the patient at the center of everything that we do. As I was putting the chapter together and thinking about it organizationally, what should have seemed intuitive was that anyone can do this. It is not rocket science. It really is not that complicated for providers or healthcare organizations.

Developing the culture first is really important. That is hard to do because often when people start messing around with the culture it is viewed as an attack against the organization. The challenge is not so much about changing the culture per se, but is really about how we need to develop to get where we need to be. This is about people taking care of people; and if we don't start with that first, we are probably behind.

There is no better time than right now in healthcare to implement a patient-centered strategy. When looking at the changing environment, a lot of times the first reaction for many is to put our heads in the sand and say 'woe is me' and it is all bad; healthcare as we know it will be destroyed. But I don't see it like that. This is an opportunity to implement healthcare reform at a higher standard. We should embrace transparency. We should embrace the patient-centered aspects of this. We should embrace the opportunity to get healthcare silos to work together. This is an opportunity.