

Thought Leadership Retreat 2019: Beyond Boundaries: The Future of Healthcare

A growing body of evidence has demonstrated that health and healthcare outcomes are driven mostly by influences outside of healthcare facilities and physicians' offices. As the healthcare sector increasingly recognizes the impact of outside factors on the health of patients, leaders and innovators have begun identifying ways for their organizations to address those factors.

Although the healthcare system determines only between 10% and 20% of individuals' health status, providers are taking on increasing financial accountability for outcomes. Such financial pressures are driving more providers and health plans to look for ways to influence social and environmental factors, as well as patient behavior, which combine to determine up to 60% of individuals' health status.

These outside factors, known as the social determinants of health (SDOH), may be influenced by nonmedical services such as housing, nutrition, transportation, education, employment and social services.

Identifying the social determinants that impact individuals' health and charting ways to influence them were the focus of HFMA's 13th annual Thought Leadership Retreat in October. The gathering, sponsored in part by Global Healthcare Exchange (GHX), Intuitive Surgical, AbbVie, BKD, Baker Tilly, Mapstone Veritas, nThrive and Patientco brought together 100 thought leaders from across the healthcare industry to share ideas on how providers and health plans can identify and implement a range of SDOH-related innovations to improve patient health.

"The truth is that you can't talk about clinical issues, you can't talk about physician issues, nursing issues, you can't talk about social determinants and not talk about them having some financial impact," said Joe Fifer, president and CEO of HFMA. "The charge for the financial people is that you can't have those conversations and not participate and think broadly, and that's the whole essence of this retreat."

Topics addressed in this report include:

- Identifying the outside factors that affect the health status of local patient populations
- Determining what roles various parts of the healthcare system play in addressing SDOH
- Finding the partnerships that can most effectively impact SDOH
- Identifying what SDOH strategies work
- Funding initiatives to address SDOH
- Enlisting patients and families in improving health-influencing factors
- Overcoming practical obstacles, such as data collection, technology and partnership issues