

# Ensuring Collaborative are Collaborative

## *Successful Post-Acute Networks Require More Than Data*

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Healthcare is in the midst of a dramatic shift from primarily caring for sick people in high cost, institutional settings to keeping people healthy in low cost, non-institutional settings. This shift will take years, likely decades, to happen and offers the promise to dramatically improve the value equation of our healthcare system.

Amidst this shift, there are near-term opportunities for hospitals and health systems to improve coordination with various elements of their post-acute network, including skilled nursing facilities (SNFs), home health providers and other health entities. Accessing and analyzing data will be instrumental in helping provide better and timely care in the appropriate setting. However, it will require more than policy changes and data systems: it will require face-to-face collaboration.

As much as healthcare increasingly leans on data and data analysis, it will still rely heavily on human touch. As such, human collaboration between leaders at hospitals and health systems with their counterparts at skilled nursing facilities and home health providers will be instrumental to become successful. The most effective collaboration requires an understanding of the others' clinical insights, operational challenges and business opportunities. It requires empathy.

Collaboratives that skip over meaningful human-to-human collaboration run the risk of not reaching their potential or, worse, being unsuccessful. Surely, there are temptations to rely exclusively upon data and data analysis and policy incentives or penalties; however, without buy-in from leadership within the post-acute network and gleaning insights from their years of experience, data will show the scoreboard but there will neither be the will nor the ability to adequately improve patient outcomes and financial performance.

This brief white paper provides an overview of the primary challenges facing today's skilled nursing providers today and outlines the best practices around developing truly collaborative post-acute networks. Better understanding post-acute providers and engaging with them in a way that maximizes their ability to deliver a positive outcome is central to any successful post-acute network strategy.

A large number of hospitals and health systems are actively developing post-acute collaboratives. Ironically, many of these may omit the value of collaboration at their peril.

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