

7 Lessons Hospitals Can't Afford to Learn the Hard Way

**LESSON #3:
NOSTALGIA MEETS A
NEW REALITY**



NOT A HOSTILE TAKEOVER

As outpatient growth rates continue to beat inpatient rates, consolidation in healthcare accelerates.

When a local hospital joins a health system, the response from stakeholders can vary -- dramatically. Success requires outreach to cultivate the essence of the hospital's unique identity and stress the benefits of the system.

To successfully navigate this new reality, carefully consider how you engage these three key audiences:

Consolidation: Positive for Patients

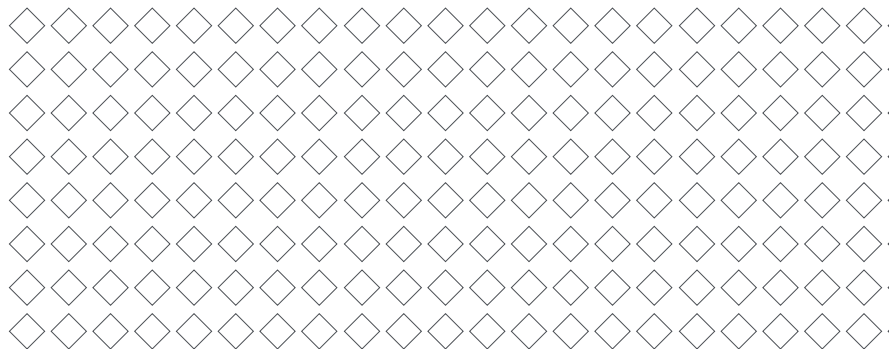
Most patients view joining a system as an opportunity for their local hospital.

Research shows that most consumers expect that the system will improve the quality and patient experience.

But don't assume that they will.

Communicate proactively throughout the transition; explain how system membership:

- Allows greater access to advanced care
- Connects patients to leading providers and specialists
- Provides resources for facility improvements



Engagement for Employees

Prioritize internal stakeholders. Clearly explain how the change will affect their role, their department and the hospital as a whole.

- Anticipate and answer questions before they are asked
- Target internal comms to ensure relevance (e.g., physicians vs. administrative staff)
- Give opportunities to hear from leaders and ask questions (e.g., team "town hall" meetings)
- Emphasize the benefits of system membership

Doing so reassures providers and associates that the hospital can be rooted in strong values and nimble enough to stay strong in an evolving market.

Caution for Community Leaders

This group may regard the system as diluting the mission-focused orientation of a legacy institution – and responsible for a host of other complaints about the general state of our healthcare system.

Ensure this group understands the tangible benefits of system membership.

- Access to capital for infrastructure, equipment and technology that contributes to patient outcomes
- Efficiencies that result from streamlined admin functions (e.g., implementation of EHR)
- Benefit to local patients from collective knowledge of the system's hospitals and providers

For over 20 years, SE2 has worked with hospitals and health systems across the Rocky Mountain West to engage and influence providers, patients and policymakers.

Learn more at

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