

A Declaration for Human Experience

Our shared experience over the past year has shifted the foundation of healthcare forever, exposing systemic weaknesses and wounds that can no longer go untreated. Immersed in a global pandemic, we acted with agility and urgency to innovate at a pace never seen before.

Healthcare professionals and organizations never hesitated to respond to the needs of patients and the communities they serve, even as hospitals overflowed with patients, adequate staffing and supply levels grew challenging and exhaustion overwhelmed the healthcare workforce. As COVID-19 cases and deaths climbed higher, the devastating impact of systemic disparities, inequities and injustices faced by people of color and marginalized populations became painfully apparent.

While the world has been inspired by the level of compassion and care that healthcare professionals have demonstrated time and time again, this service and sacrifice has come with a heavy price. With the clouds of COVID-19 beginning to lift, the real impact of trauma and an ever-increasing demand for rapid change is looming over a healthcare workforce that was showing signs of stress and burnout years before the pandemic.

Although these issues are not new, this moment has exposed the shortcomings in our approach and the need for a fundamental shift in thinking and direction. We are now at a critical inflection point. There is no normal to which to return; and those who slide back, either intentionally searching for the comforts of the past or due to lack of clarity on how to push forward, are likely to become obsolete in a new world.

Our current realities call us to forge a new existence that begins with looking beyond the distinct silos of patient experience, employee engagement or community health to focus on the common thread that binds each of these areas together—the human experience. By elevating and transforming the human experience in healthcare, we can create a more effective, responsive and equitable healthcare system that results in better experiences and outcomes for patients of all backgrounds, a more supportive, energizing and collaborative environment for healthcare professionals and healthier communities that break down barriers to care.

We are called to lead courageously with the understanding that we are, first and foremost, human beings caring for human beings. In answering this call, we commit to:

Acknowledge and dismantle systemic racism and prejudice, tackle disparities and provide the highest-quality, most equitable care possible.

Understand and act on the needs and vulnerabilities of the healthcare workforce to honor their commitment and reaffirm and reenergize their purpose

Recognize and maintain a focus on what matters most to patients, their family members and care partners to ensure unparalleled care and a commitment to health and well-being.

Collaborate through shared learning within and between organizations, systems and the broader healthcare continuum to forge a bold new path to a more human-centered, equitable and effective healthcare system.

In making this declaration personally and publicly, we stand for all we can and must be in healthcare. In aligning our words and actions to move this cause forward, we commit to transforming the human experience in healthcare for all patients, the healthcare workforce and the communities we serve.

Join the global commitment by signing this historic declaration at transformHX.org.

