

HAWAI'I – PACIFIC CHAPTER OF ACHE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

HAWAI'I PACIFIC CHAPTER OF ACHE
AN INDEPENDENT CHAPTER OF



American College of
Healthcare Executives
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FALL 2025



KARA GORMONT, FACHE
REGENT
HAWAI'I-PACIFIC CHAPTER OF
ACHE

REGENT MESSAGE

Message from your ACHE Regent
Fall 2025

Finding Our Strong Ground: Courageous Leadership in Uncertain Times

This year's ACHE Congress brought healthcare leaders together under the theme Right Here, Right Now, a reminder that leadership is forged in the present moment, not in the comfort of stability. Among the highlights was keynote speaker Brené Brown, whose message could not have been timelier for our profession. Her latest book, *Strong Ground*, offers a playbook for leading with connection, discipline, and accountability in a world that feels increasingly uncertain.

Brown reminds us that courageous leadership requires both poetry, which she defines as the ability to cast a vision that inspires, and plumbing, the operational skill to make that vision real. It is a balance we in healthcare know all too well: serving people's deepest needs while managing the complex machinery of our systems. In today's environment, that balance has never been harder, or more necessary, to strike.

In discussing the role of rapidly evolving technology and adoption of AI, Brown cautions against the easy reassurance that "what makes us human will ensure our relevance" as many leaders are claiming as they reassure their workforce that their jobs will not be replaced by machines. The truth, she notes, is that in this moment, we are not always "doing human well." The pace of change,

"We're not hardwired for this level of uncertainty, and the constant need to self-protect can drive the humanity right out of us."
Brené Brown

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REGENT MESSAGE CONTINUED

the uncertainty, and the instinct to protect ourselves can erode the very empathy, connection, and courage that define great leadership. If those qualities fade from our practice, we risk ceding the most important parts of our work to forces, human or machine, that do not share our values.

Strong Ground challenges us to reverse that trend by intentionally leading in ways that protect and strengthen our shared humanity. Brown calls for an intentional return to empathy, compassion, and courage. She asserts, and I agree, these are qualities that cannot be automated or outsourced. As she noted in her keynote, artificial intelligence and other technological shifts will reshape the way we work, but they will not replace the need for leaders who can foster deep connection, think strategically, and build collaborative cultures that protect the human spirit.

She offers practical tools for this moment: pausing between stimulus and response to create space for thoughtful decisions; recognizing when we are operating “above the line” in rational, strategic action versus “below the line” in reactive drama; and cultivating humility so teams can thrive together, even under pressure.

For those of us leading in Hawaii and across the Pacific, Brown's message resonates deeply. We work in communities where aloha is more than a value, it is an operating principle. Yet our teams are navigating unprecedented change, resource constraints, and the emotional toll of constant uncertainty. We must equip ourselves and our colleagues not just to withstand these forces, but to lead from a stance of strength and stability.

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REGENT MESSAGE CONTINUED

Brown calls this finding our “strong ground,” an athletic stance that offers both stability in the storm and the agility to move quickly when the moment demands it. In our context, that means:

- Staying grounded in our values while making tough, real-time decisions.
- Investing in the human skills of empathy, listening, and honest dialogue alongside technical expertise.
- Creating systems and cultures that protect our workforce from burnout and moral distress.
- Coaching rather than merely managing, empowering our teams to step into their own strong ground.

These are not abstract ideals. They are practical imperatives for leaders guiding organizations through rapid change while safeguarding the well-being of both patients and providers.

Brené Brown closed her ACHE Congress keynote with gratitude for healthcare professionals, acknowledging the weight of leading in such challenging times. Her words remind us that our power lies not in having all the answers, but in the courage to lead with clarity, compassion, and conviction, and to do that “right here, right now.”

As we face the next chapter in healthcare, Strong Ground is more than a book title, it is a leadership necessity. Let us stand together on that solid footing, ready to meet the challenges ahead with steady hands, open hearts, and the enduring spirit of aloha.

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CLAUDIA CRIST, FACHE
PRESIDENT
HAWAI'I-PACIFIC CHAPTER OF
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A Message from your ACHE President

Aloha and Hāfa Adai to our distinguished Members,

I hope you have all had a great summer!

So much activity in our chapter since last newsletter: Most recently, we held our Annual Chapter Business Meeting on July 17th at the Waikiki Prince and provided an overview of chapter activity, sought your input for the 2026 calendar year, and celebrated our mentorship program graduates as well as our two Regent Award Recipients for this year. Congratulations again to Kristen Croom and Kailani Amine!

We had over 60 attendees at the "Leading Enduring Change in Healthcare Today" education event on July 9, 2025, in Honolulu. This and the social that followed (including the indoor simulator golf competition) were a big hit with members and non-members alike. Thanks also for completing the evaluations – we have reviewed your feedback and will be including as much as possible as we plan for the 2026 education season.

A big mahalo nui loa to Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children graciously hosted our New Member Breakfast on June 20th! We would also like to thank the Executive Team at Hawai'i Pacific Health and Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children and for being the first to sign up as Platinum Sponsor for the 2025/2026 sponsorship year!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

What's next in 2025?

Your volunteer Chapter Board of Directors and Committee Chairs are preparing for the next year by coming together for our annual Strategic Planning Session this October, where we will also welcome and host our ACHE Chapter Relations Manager Erin Ringstrand, who is able to join us all the way from Chicago! We will review and refine our existing 3-year plan based on our session, which will also include your feedback in both the May membership survey (we improved from 3.89 in 2024 to 4.02 in 2025) and various event surveys throughout the year.

September offers two great opportunities to connect:

- We partnered with the Hawai'i Association of Healthcare Risk Management (HAHRM) to offer a 2-day education titled the "HAHRM & ACHE 2025 Risk Management and Leadership Conference". Thanks to the HAHRM team and our Education Committee led by Keith Izawa and Kristen Croom for arranging an agenda full of timely, hot-button issues that are most relevant to healthcare professionals. You'll hear from local and national experts including Tim McDonald, Michelle Hackley, RN, Esq., CPHRM, FASHRM, and Representative Gregg Takayama on a variety of topics such as the CANDOR process, healthcare AI, and legal/legislative updates.
- On September 25th, COL Mike Crivello will host both military and non-military members at our next Networking Social at Tripler Army Medical Center.

See the events section in this newsletter or our website for detail and education links for both events!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

September and October marks the time when we will have our Annual Board Member Election. We will have upward of six open volunteer positions to start in 2026, and we look forward for your nominations and votes on the electronic ballot. See the call for Nominations from our President-elect Angela Simmons in this Newsletter!

On October 22, 2025, our Membership Chair Kailani Amine and I will co-host a Live Virtual Welcome and Orientation Session for new ACHE and Chapter members. Please see the events section for more detail and registration.

In November/December, we also plan on hosting one more education and networking event each. These are both in the works as we speak, and our Education and Membership Committees will provide more detail as soon as available. We are looking for sponsors for both events! Sponsorship will get you a special shout-out and invite, plus we provide a few minutes at the beginning of the networking event for our event sponsor to share a message about their organization. Contact me at president@achehawaii.org if interested in this or other sponsorship opportunities!

Have a fantastic fall!

Claudia Crist, FACHE

President, Hawai'i – Pacific Chapter of ACHE

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COMMITTEE UPDATE

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Call for Nominations – ACHE Hawaii Chapter Board

We are now accepting nominations for open positions on the ACHE Hawaii Chapter Board of Directors. Serving on the board is a great opportunity to expand your leadership skills, build connections, and make a direct impact on healthcare leadership in Hawaii.

For those interested in getting more involved with the chapter, the following board positions are open for nominations for the term beginning January 1, 2026:

Open Roles for 2026:

- President-Elect (1-Year Term)
- Secretary (2-Year Term)
- Military Representative (1-year Term)
- Physician Executive Representative (1-year Term)
- Student Representative (1-year Term)
- Directors (2-Year Term)

How to Nominate:

Submit your nomination (self-nominations welcome) with your name, position of interest, a brief statement of interest/qualifications, and CV/resumé by September 26, 2025 to Nominations@HawaiiACHE.com

Help us strengthen the future of our chapter and community by stepping into leadership!

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COMMITTEE UPDATE

MENTORSHIP COMMITTEE

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

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**WE ARE ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR
MENTORS AND MENTEES**

2025-2026 COHORT

9/1-9/15: Accepting
Applications for Mentors and
Mentees

Virtual Orientation:

- Mon Sept 22 at 11:00 AM
(7am Tue, Guam time)
- Tue Sept 23 at 5:00 PM
(1pm Wed, Guam time)

Program runs:

10/1/25-7/31/26

Celebration:

2026 Annual Meeting

Please reach out to Mentorship@hawaiiache.com for any questions



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MEMBER RECOGNITION CORNER

Why did you choose healthcare as your career path?

I chose healthcare because I've always been drawn to a field where I can make a meaningful impact on people's lives. The combination of science, teamwork, and problem-solving makes this career deeply fulfilling.

What is your role in your organization?

I am the Administrative Ancillary Director, overseeing multiple departments and focusing on operational excellence, team development, and delivering high-quality patient care.

What are your primary areas of interest or concern as a healthcare leader?

I focus on improving operational workflows, enhancing team engagement, fostering a culture of accountability, and ensuring high-quality, patient-centered care. Addressing staffing shortages and promoting leadership development are also key priorities.

Meet Angela Simmons President-Elect



Is there anything else you would like to share with our ACHE members?

I believe healthcare leadership thrives on collaboration and shared experiences. I encourage members to actively engage in discussions, share their insights, and support one another in shaping the future of healthcare.

How long have you been a member of ACHE/active roles:

I have been a member of ACHE for 3 years, serving on communications committee and as director on the board.

How has ACHE benefited you in your professional career?

ACHE has provided a platform for professional growth, offering connections with experienced leaders and resources to help navigate the complexities of healthcare management.

What role(s) would you like to see ACHE play in the local healthcare community?

I would love to see ACHE lead more mentorship initiatives, host networking events, and provide resources for tackling unique regional challenges. Building stronger local collaboration is vital for advancing healthcare.

Want us to post a member recognition?
Email us at Contact@HawaiiPacificACHE.com

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UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION (VIRTUAL)



We are hosting another New Member Orientation but this time virtually! If you missed the in-person New Member Breakfast in June or recently joined our Chapter – this event is for you! We are excited to welcome you to the Hawai'i – Pacific Chapter of ACHE! Please join us virtually on Wednesday, October 22, 2025 from 7:00am – 8:00am. This event is an opportunity to connect with other new members, meet our Board of Directors, and learn about our current programs and events.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER MILITARY SOCIAL

Join the Hawaii-Pacific Chapter of ACHE for a special networking event open to military and civilian members. Connect with industry leaders and learn from senior military experts about operational medicine. Register now on Eventbrite!

September Military Social

Thursday 9.25.25

5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Tripler Army Medical Center

1 Jarrett White Road

Honolulu, HI

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[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

HO'OKELE I NĀ WAI MAOPOPO 'OLE...
NAVIGATING UNCHARTED WATERS



HAHRM & ACHE 2025 RISK MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 18, 2025 TO SEPTEMBER 19, 2025

HAWAII IMIN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MONOA
JEFFERSON HALL, 1777 EAST-WEST RD
HONOLULU, HI 96848

LIKE THE WAYFINDERS WHO READ THE STARS AND SWELLS TO CHART A COURSE THROUGH UNCHARTED SEAS, WE FACE HEALTHCARE'S SHIFTING CHALLENGES WITH COURAGE, RESILIENCE, AND KULEANA.

JOIN LOCAL AND NATIONAL EXPERTS (INCLUDING DR. TIM MCDONALD, A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED EXPERT ON DISCLOSURE AND PATIENT SAFETY) FOR A 2-DAY IN-PERSON EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE AS WE EMBARK TOGETHER ON THIS VOYAGE — STEERING WITH PURPOSE, NAVIGATING THE UNKNOWN, AND SHAPING A FUTURE OF EXCELLENCE IN PATIENT SAFETY. TOGETHER WE NAVIGATE TOWARD A FUTURE OF SAFER, MORE COMPASSIONATE HEALTHCARE.

THE HAWAI'I ASSOCIATION OF HEALTHCARE RISK MANAGEMENT (HAHRM), AN ASSOCIATION OF HAWAI'I STATEWIDE HEALTHCARE IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE OUR 2025 INAUGURAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE. THIS CONFERENCE IS BEING CO-HOSTED BY THE HAWAI'I-PACIFIC CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF HEALTHCARE EXECUTIVES (ACHE).

THIS 2-DAY EVENT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY ACHE FOR 3.0 IN-PERSON EDUCATION CREDITS AND 6.0 QUALIFIED EDUCATION CREDITS!

[Clinic Here to Register](#)

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UPCOMING EVENTS



2025 Nashville Cluster

Nov 3–Nov 5, 2025

Nashville, TN

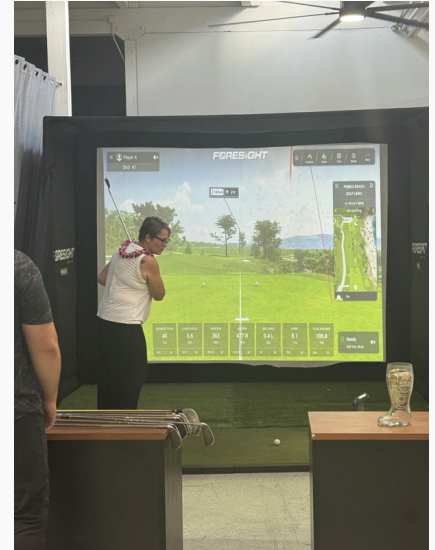
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PAST EVENTS

LEADING ENDURING CHANGE IN HEALTHCARE TODAY



On Wednesday, July 9, 2025, the ACHE Hawai'i-Pacific Chapter hosted Leading Enduring Change in Healthcare Today.

The program opened with an engaging workshop, Leading and Navigating Change that Sticks, presented by Claudia Crist of Kalaukia Enterprises. Attendees then participated in a thought-provoking panel discussion, Leading Change in Healthcare Organizations, moderated by Colonel (Ret.) Kara Gormont. Panelists included COL Michael Crivello, Deputy Commander of Administration at TAMC; Rose Hata, Director at Queen Emma Nursing Institute; and Leina Ijacic, CEO/Administrator at One Kalakaua Senior Living, who shared their perspectives on driving transformation in complex healthcare environments.

The day wrapped up with a networking social featuring an indoor golf simulator tournament—bringing a fun and memorable close to an afternoon of learning, collaboration, and connection.

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PAST EVENTS

2025 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING



On July 17, 2025, ACHE Hawai'i-Pacific Chapter members gathered at the Prince Waikiki for the Annual Business Meeting. The afternoon was a chance to reconnect, celebrate accomplishments, and look ahead to new opportunities. Hilton R. Raethel, President and CEO of the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i, delivered an inspiring keynote that reinforced our collective vision for advancing healthcare leadership in the islands.

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE

There are many opportunities to get involved in our Chapter. Joining a committee is a great way to participate. To learn more about the Hawaii – Pacific Chapter of ACHE visit our website at <https://hawaii.ache.org>.



Questions? Contact us at Contact@HawaiiPacificACHE.com.

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THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



Mahalo to Our Amazing
2025-2026 Sponsors!

Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsors



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2025/2026 SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ARE OPEN!
CONTACT PRESIDENT@HAWAIIACHE.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION

Getting Ahead: Strategic Planning for a Competitive Edge

Meredith C. Inniger, FACHE

John M. Harris

Getting Ahead Strategic Planning for a Competitive Edge

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Shockwaves have rattled hospitals and health systems in the past five years. Amid the chaos, some executives have abandoned strategic planning in favor of addressing immediate needs. But successful leaders are using it to gain a competitive edge.

Gone are the tedious 5x5 strategic plans: five years of Five Pillars, tracked on a balanced scorecard. While this approach helped guide organizations in stabler times, top hospitals and health systems now gain a competitive edge through focus, engagement and agility in their strategic plans.

To focus a strategic plan, an organization identifies three to five critical issues that need addressing. Leaders select the issues based on an external and internal strategic assessment, then develop goals to address them.

The four goals described below demonstrate how to focus a strategic plan. These examples reflect the challenges and opportunities many hospitals and health systems face, although they of course will differ for each organization.

1. Maximize Physician Impact

Enhancing alignment and engagement with physicians is a competitive differentiator, which is especially crucial to regain or grow market share. As clinician burnout increases and physicians become more active in unions, adopt a dedicated strategy to strengthen the organization's physician enterprise.

A multifaceted, strategic approach includes initiatives spanning the comprehensive portfolio of alignment approaches, addressing current and anticipated issues for the enterprise. Programs include enhancing employed network financial performance, achieving clinical excellence, offering innovative relationship options for independents, and developing (or partnering to provide) comprehensive practice management and population health capabilities. This will likely require redesigning physician compensation models and changes to the organization's physician governance structure and function.

An organization's commitment and ability to tackle these complex challenges requires strong physician leadership and attention to organizational culture. When done correctly, they will form a strong foundation for organizational success.

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The expertise that drives success on the journey to value has led some organizations to consider partnering with value-based care enablers that offer new expertise, speed transformation and may provide capital that helps realize higher rewards in risk contracts.

4. Enhance Governance Effectiveness

Today's dynamic healthcare environment has increased public scrutiny on hospital and health system boards. At a time when public perception of hospitals is at an all-time low, it is imperative for boards to be in top form, making timely, informed and community-centric decisions to foster a positive public image.

A high-performing board requires a range of experience and perspectives to appropriately understand and address the challenges the organization may face. Boards that proactively recruit this expertise and continuously invest in education are positioned to ensure members are well-versed in vital industry topics. Education is particularly critical for new board members, allowing them to get up to speed quickly and contribute effectively from the start.

The board, working closely with senior management, drives the strategic planning process. The planning effort must be efficient, inclusive and engaging, and it should contain the right strategies for organizational success over the short and long term.

At the same time, the board should empower management to flexibly address issues within the strategic plan's framework. This flexibility may be needed to address local strategies in a health system strategic plan. Flexibility is also needed to adjust and refine strategies as internal and external circumstances change.

Other Potential Focus Areas

The goals above are just a few examples of what a particular hospital or health system may prioritize. Others can include partnerships, mergers and affiliations, achieving benefits post-merger, innovation, community engagement, technology and AI, and more. Each serves as the foundation of the plan while also allowing flexibility to be responsive as the strategic environment changes.

Other issues that may be important to address in the planning process include:

Engagement

While incorporating the right critical issues in your plan is important, what else can healthcare leaders do to ensure their strategies result in a competitive advantage for the organization? The answer lies in having effective processes, meaningful data, engaged people and flexibility.

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The Human Factor

One of the toughest challenges in healthcare right now is motivating staff who are already feeling burned out. Asking staff to take on strategic plan implementation in this environment may feel counter to the overarching goal of decreasing burnout. However, sharing a future vision for the organization may bring out the best in staff, both individually and collectively as a team.

Clear communication and involvement in the strategic planning process can increase the buy-in needed to achieve results. Making the process engaging (and not burdensome) can spark joy and commitment to achieving the organization's shared goals. The key is for your organization to identify issues that need your team's strategic focus, while providing the resources, authority and flexibility to address other issues as they evolve.

An organization's people and culture drive its ongoing success. Leaders who understand, appreciate and harness their teams to work together toward a common goal will position their organization to thrive.

Implementing for Success

Former GE CEO Jack Welch aptly said, "In reality, strategy is actually very straightforward. You pick a general direction and implement like hell."

When leaders have done the analysis, selected the right issues, and cultivated a culture to motivate and engage staff, the last piece of the puzzle is execution. Implementation is (of course) easier said than done. Organizations that are prepared and vigilant during implementation can secure a strong start, maintain momentum and allow for course corrections along the way.

Ensuring a strong start to implementation includes formalizing a communication plan and tracking mechanism so that leaders and staff are clear on deliverables, responsibilities and timelines. Executive leadership and the board should also allocate appropriate resources to the plan's initiatives. Schedule regular meetings with initiative owners to gauge progress and troubleshoot where necessary. Additionally, provide the board with regular updates to keep them informed and engaged.

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Agility

A stale strategic plan is worse than no strategic plan. Failure to update a strategic plan makes it ineffective in responding to new challenges or opportunities. Once leaders see that a strategic plan no longer addresses key issues, they will abandon it completely or let it limp along, losing the thoughtful insights that led to each strategy.

Use annual reviews to ensure your plan is an up-to-date vehicle that can revise market insights, goals and key strategies to accommodate evolving challenges and opportunities.

Real-time data allows leaders to refine strategies quickly and effectively, allowing for the monitoring of key indicators that may signal a need to change course on specific strategies. Taking advantage of business intelligence and other project management tools can also help with scenario planning, ensuring leaders are prepared for unforeseen challenges so they can flex the strategic plan accordingly.

A healthy strategic plan typically undergoes material revisions to roughly 25% of its strategies each year. Exceptional leaders show a willingness to adapt and can cultivate a culture of resilience among their teams that will allow the organization to succeed in the face of market changes.

Strategic planning is no longer just about survival and predictability; it's about positioning for excellence in a rapidly changing healthcare landscape. Strategic planning empowers leading organizations to establish a lasting competitive edge. By capitalizing on new data resources, engaging stakeholders, and continually updating strategies, organizations can increase the likelihood of fully executing the plan and achieving their potential.

Leaders who embrace this new approach to strategic planning with focus, engagement and agility will create a sustainable competitive advantage, ensuring their organization stays resilient and continues building on its success for years to come.

Meredith Inniger, FACHE, is principal, VMG Health, Bentonville, Ark. John Harris is managing director, VMG Health, Philadelphia. This article was adapted from their book Healthcare Strategic Planning, Fifth Edition (ACHE Learn, 2024).