



 **TLI**
FOUNDATION

HEALTH INNOVATION & THOUGHT LEADERSHIP MONTH
WHITE PAPER

AT THE INTERSECTION OF THOUGHT LEADERSHIP & INNOVATION: WHERE MEANINGFUL HEALTHCARE CHANGES HAPPEN

PART 2

*April 2021 has been officially designated as a national Healthcare Thought Leadership & Innovation Month in the Health Observances & Recognition Days calendar published by **The Society for Health Care Strategy & Market Development (SHSMD)**, part of the **American Hospital Association (AHA)**.*

*SHSMD releases this calendar every year to provide healthcare strategists with practical, timely **resources**. The Thought Leadership and Innovation Foundation (TLI), a not-for-profit organization, is the proud sponsor of this month-long event.*

Leaders throughout the healthcare and related business ecosystem need an organization to help them think through complex, highly challenging issues. The Thought Leadership & Innovation Foundation (TLI) is a not-for-profit organization that helps communities across the country to successfully address serious issues by deploying a coordinated, cohesive set of actions to effect change in healthcare. Over the years, TLI has tackled issues related to healthcare redesign, including how to achieve optimal human performance in the military, identifying societal factors that have spawned the need for innovative approaches and anticipating the behavioral health fall-out from the pandemic – to name a few.

TLI's methodology and track record for deriving innovation from data in each project drives the thinking behind our mission and processes. We aim to better support underserved populations most harshly impacted by society's problems and embed this value proposition across programs covering specific patient populations, broad healthcare issues and economic empowerment.

In the past 10 years, TLI has worked with federal and commercial organizations, as well as partners around the world. Guided by experienced leadership, our teams have learned tremendous lessons that can be applied to current challenges. Positioned as more than a think tank, TLI serves as a change agent that designs data analysis tools and implements collaborative programs with intent, process, diligence, broadmindedness, humility and a touch of humor.

TLI is proud to have provided extensive health services support for veterans, drawing on our methodology and track record for deriving innovation from data. Recently, TLI partnered with the Uniformed Services University and Henry M. Jackson Foundation (HJF) for the Advancement of Military Medicine Building Health Military Communities (BHMC) on the Operation Live Well project.

OPERATION LIVE WELL (OLW)

TLI experts provided strategic insights to shape the Operation Live Well (OLW) portfolio and linked OLW to the 100 Million Healthier Lives Campaign. We also translated the Total Force Fitness (TFF) academic framework into a measurable, actionable behavior change model and created the action domain structure for Technology Enhanced Mobile Platform for Performance Optimization (TEMPPO) that translates to multiple populations.

TLI developed and tested TEMPPO on a mobile platform. TEMPPO goals were to: 1) develop an app that provides individuals with engaging virtual fitness coaching across the TFF multiple domains and 2) conduct human subject research to determine if and how smartphones, apps, and other internet resources, as components of mobile health engagement, are or are not effective strategies to improve behaviors necessary to achieve higher levels of fitness, readiness and wellness in military populations.

TLI provided scientific expertise and research support to the multiple activities of the OLW portfolio by developing the rapid needs assessment (RNA) interview guides and data management plan and supported the interviews and data management for three of the seven BHMC pilot states.

TLI also hosted and facilitated a series of workshops to develop a toolbox for POTFF program leaders. The toolbox provided the basis for programmatic measures of effectiveness and performance consistent with the core principles of human performance, the Special Operations Forces (SOF) mission, and mapped back to

the four key domains of the POTFF program - Human Performance, Psychological Performance and Social Performance.

Various and diverse stakeholders' viewpoints and positions gathered during facilitated workshops were designed to allow for answers that respect Service-specific and joint equities, leaders at many levels and family members. Stakeholders identified the most important goals to achieve and maintain optimal human performance. Their responses were measured in respect to the prime question of "what does successful human performance look like across the four POTFF domains for both deployment and redeployment?"

TLI served as host and facilitator of the workshops, and as the integrator of the information revealed through the workshops. TLI analyzed the information and drafted recommendations for a toolbox of POTFF outcome metrics for use in various evaluation efforts before and after exposure to POTFF-related interventions.

TLI identified the core principles of human performance readiness for the special operating forces SOF—outputs, outcomes and impacts—that mapped to the framework of the four key domains of POTFF to arrive at successful measures and metrics. TLI used a transparent, methodological process to achieve the aims and to assure that clear, comprehensive and unbiased information became available to the POTFF leaders and community seeking to make informed decisions for the construction of a toolbox for outcome measures and metrics.



SOCIETAL FACTORS CREATE NEED FOR INNOVATION

The following factors currently serve as levers that create a tremendous need for healthcare innovation and thought leadership:

“DEATHS OF DESPAIR”:

The disruption to daily life due to the COVID-19 pandemic has hit those with substance use disorder hard. Suicide, drug overdose and alcoholism had already been rising dramatically **over the past two decades**,¹ and now claim hundreds of thousands of American lives each year. The latest numbers show a 20% increase and the highest number of fatal overdoses ever recorded in the United States in a single year in the 12-month period ending in June 2020.² Life expectancy in the United States has fallen since 2014,³ which goes against trends seen in most other developed nations and correlates to a rise in mortality among young and middle-aged adults.⁴

BEHAVIORAL/MENTAL HEALTH:

Mental health and physical health are closely connected – with mental disorders representing the most common causes of disability and the resulting disease burden of mental illness representing the highest of all diseases.⁵ Mental health plays a major role in people’s ability to maintain good physical health. Mental illnesses, such as depression and anxiety, affect people’s ability to participate in health-promoting behaviors. In turn, **problems with physical health, such as chronic diseases**, can have a serious impact on mental health and decrease a person’s ability to participate in treatment and recovery.

In any given year, an estimated 18.1% (43.6 million) of U.S. adults ages 18 years or older suffered from any mental illness and 4.2% (9.8 million) suffered from a seriously debilitating mental illness.⁶ Neuropsychiatric disorders are the leading cause of disability in the United States, accounting for 18.7% of all years of life lost to disability and premature mortality.⁷ Moreover, suicide ranks as the tenth leading cause of death in the United States, accounting for the deaths of approximately 43,000 Americans in 2014.⁸

With behavioral health professionals experiencing burn-out or job loss due to lack of funding, a predicted increase in the need for mental health services is coming in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused a spike in depression, anxiety, substance abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and domestic abuse.⁹

HEALTH DISPARITY:

This describes a type of health difference that closely ties into social, economic and/or environmental disadvantage related to race and ethnicity, gender, sexual identity and orientation, disability status or special healthcare needs and geographic location, i.e. rural and urban.¹⁰ These populations often experience the impact of social determinants of health (SDOH) and compromised access to healthcare services.

ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED:

After declines in Medicaid enrollment from 2017 through 2019, preliminary data show that total enrollment grew to 75.5 million in July 2020, an increase of 4.3 million from actual enrollment February 2020 (6.1%), right before the pandemic and when enrollment began to steadily increase.¹¹

ELDERLY:

The sheer number of Medicare enrollees overwhelms, with the number of beneficiaries expected to increase from 60 million in 2018 to 75 million by 2028. That expansion in enrollment will double over the next 30 years relative to the size of the economy — growing from 3% of GDP in 2019 to 6% by 2049.¹² Furthermore, approximately 80% of older adults have at least one chronic disease, and 77% have at least two.¹³

PANDEMIC IMPACT

Even with widespread vaccinations occurring across the country, the COVID-19 pandemic and concurrent economic recession have negatively impacted mental health and created barriers for those struggling with mental illness and substance use disorders, with many continuing to experience anxiety or depressive disorder.

A recent poll found that many adults report specific negative impacts on their mental health and well-being, such as difficulty sleeping (36%) or eating (32%), increases in alcohol consumption or substance use (12%), and worsening chronic conditions (12%), due to worry and stress over the coronavirus.¹⁴ All of this will have far-reaching medical, economic, social and political consequences.

Individuals, groups (non-profits and other organizations), and businesses now face the limitations of assistance and support. Individuals and communities may also feel abandoned as the gap between community needs and available services are further constrained.

Impact on Employers

A growing number of companies and organizations, such as the Midwest Business Group on Health, are discovering the extraordinary value and impact of a community collaborative approach to effectively build solutions outside of government programs, take action and set the agenda for tackling the mental health problems that affect employees and their families.

Findings from one study found that more than 1,200 U.S.-based employees who receive health insurance

through their employer show that 83% of American workers are experiencing mental health problems and are almost equally impacted by both the pandemic and the racial justice movement.¹⁵

Meanwhile, 40% don't believe their employer cares about their mental health beyond being productive at their job. The research also found that amid all of the uncertainty and work disruption, employees who don't believe their employer supports their mental health are almost twice as likely to be considering a career change.¹⁶

As the pandemic wears on, many people are experiencing situations linked to poor mental health outcomes, such as isolation and job loss.¹⁷ According to new research from the Economic Policy Institute, over the past pandemic-ridden months, more than six million Americans have lost the health insurance they previously received from their employer.¹⁸ Once spouses and children are taken into account, the real number reaches closer to 12 million.¹⁹ Other estimates from the Kaiser Family Foundation found that as many as 27 million people could become uninsured following job loss.²⁰

By working together through community collaboratives, and with employers and organizations taking the lead in supporting these initiatives, this tragic pandemic serves as a learning experience to move forward toward repair and improved access to healthcare for behavioral health problems. Employers should view this as an opportunity to make positive changes.





BEHAVIORAL HEALTH: LOOKING BEYOND THE PANDEMIC

Given the complicated fabric of society, solutions often overlap, intersect and carry unpredictable results that can be detrimental or sub-optimal unless a systematic collaborative approach is undertaken. This requires a broad multiple stakeholder perspective and action plan to fully address every dimension of the mental health problems that are deeply associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

When community organizations coordinate their work and join forces on innovative interventions to impact behavioral health problems, they can avoid siloed actions that are not effective in solving complex problems, such as:

- Disparities in access to behavioral health care: race, gender, sexual orientation, rural vs. inner city population
- Return to work, employee safety, productivity
- SDoH, such as food, nutrition inadequacies, housing insecurities, transportation challenges, social isolation and loneliness
- Patient engagement strategies and outcomes measures

Building on existing efforts, this type of approach draws upon a process that organizes community resources, fosters public-private partnerships and supports key stakeholder actions. Well-orchestrated community-based collaboratives deal with the root causes of poor access to behavioral healthcare services and other factors impacting this public health crisis.

Efforts center on engaging community leaders from all sectors, inviting them to share their stories, ideas and innovation – moving them from dialogue to vision and action. By bringing together multiple groups throughout each city or region, the collaborative engages diverse organizations that deal with socioeconomic disparities, structural racism, resource injustice and the loss of a sense of community.

Interventions to disrupt the symptoms of a distressed community, such as a pandemic crisis, are critical but insufficient to promote community wellness. SDoH are among the most powerful cultural factors at work.

They are either re-created by people or altered and can, therefore, be reshaped with the intention of improving mental healthcare services and healing social or economic ills.

Improved mental health has the power to change the position and growth trajectory of a company, helping the business to optimize the potential of all its employees and move toward better health, happiness and prosperity. Well communities that include robust businesses have strong immune systems that protect them from the diseases of despair and enable them to learn to grow through adversity.

TLI views the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity for business leaders to embrace these changes and proactively tackle the issues related to behavioral health.



WHAT TLI CAN DO FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

Seek out TLI if you have a difficult problem in your organization or community that requires data gathering and deep analysis to determine the true nature of the challenge and how to tackle it. We deliver meaningful change that leads to better healthcare across communities, regions and the world.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CONTACT US
HERE



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