

# HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE

An Informative Q&A with OC's Top Healthcare Professionals



**Beth Andersen**  
*President*  
CA Commercial Business  
Anthem Blue Cross



**Barry Arbuckle, PhD**  
*CEO*  
MemorialCare



**Robert T. Braithwaite**  
*President & CEO*  
Hoag



**Kimberly Chavalas Cripe**  
*Co-President and CEO*  
Rady Children's Health



**Shawn Farrokhi, PT, Ph.D.**  
*Chair & Professor*  
Department of Physical Therapy  
Chapman University



**Phil Franks**  
*CEO*  
Be Well OC



**Brian Helleland**  
*Chief Executive*  
Orange County / High Desert  
Providence South Division



**Yunkyung Kim**  
*COO*  
CalOptima Health



**Chad T. Lafferis**  
*President & CEO*  
UCI Health



**Dawn Maroney**  
*President*  
Alignment Health



**Kim Mikes, MBA, BSN**  
*CEO*  
Hoag Orthopedic Institute



**Payman Roshan, MBA**  
*Senior Vice President & Area Manager*  
Kaiser Permanente Orange County



**Stephen E. Thorne IV**  
*Founder & CEO*  
PDS Health



**Annette M. Walker**  
*President*  
City of Hope Orange County



# HEALTHCARE

## ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

### Alignment Health

Alignment Health is championing a new path in senior care that empowers members to age well and live their most vibrant lives. A consumer brand name of Alignment Healthcare (NASDAQ: ALHC), Alignment Health's mission-focused team makes high-quality, low-cost care a reality for its Medicare Advantage members every day. Based in California, the company partners with nationally recognized and trusted local providers to deliver coordinated care, powered by its customized care model, 24/7 concierge care team and purpose-built technology, AVA®. As it expands its offerings and grows its national footprint, Alignment upholds its core values of leading with a serving heart and putting the senior first. For more information, visit [www.alignmenthealth.com](http://www.alignmenthealth.com).



### Anthem Blue Cross

A trusted health partner, Anthem Blue Cross has been providing Californians high-quality, lower-cost care for more than 86 years. Visit [anthem.com/ca](http://anthem.com/ca).



### Be Well OC

Be Well OC is a transformative initiative bringing together public, private, academic and faith-based organizations, as well as others, to create a coordinated system of mental health care and support for all Orange County residents. The Be Well OC mental health system, which also includes substance use services, features first-of-its-kind mental health and wellness facilities in Orange and Irvine, a behavioral health navigation call center, a mobile response program and community outreach. Be Well OC's movement spans across all cities of Orange County and a range of needs, from prevention and early intervention to crisis management, residential care and recovery for adolescents and adults. For more information visit [bewelloc.org](http://bewelloc.org).



### CalOptima Health

CalOptima Health provides quality health care coverage for about 1 in 4 Orange County residents through three programs: Medi-Cal, a publicly funded insurance plan for low-income children, adults, seniors and people with disabilities; OneCare, a Medicare Advantage plan to coordinate care for people who have both Medicare and Medi-Cal; and the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), a comprehensive plan for seniors with chronic conditions to keep them active and living at home. CalOptima Health's mission is to serve member health with excellence and dignity, respecting the value and needs of each person. CalOptima Health serves more than 850,000 members with a network of nearly 9,500 primary care doctors and specialists and 42 acute and rehab hospitals.



### Chapman University

Founded in 1861, Chapman University is a nationally ranked private university in Orange, California, about 30 miles south of Los Angeles. Chapman serves nearly 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students, with a 12:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Students can choose from over 100 areas of study within 11 colleges for a personalized education. Chapman is categorized by the Carnegie Classification as an R2 "high research activity" institution. Students at Chapman learn directly from distinguished world-class faculty including Nobel Prize winners, MacArthur fellows, published authors and Academy Award winners. The campus has produced a Rhodes Scholar, been named a top producer of Fulbright Scholars and hosts a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest and most prestigious honor society. Chapman also includes the Harry and Diane Rinker Health Science Campus in Irvine. Learn more about Chapman University: [www.chapman.edu](http://www.chapman.edu).



# Excellence that speaks for itself.

Not all care is created equal. Hoag delivers a higher standard of care – measured in outcomes, recognized nationally, and driven by exceptional people.



OC's only 5-star quality rating – 4 years straight



Best ranked hospital in Orange County



Top 10 Best Large Employer nationally



# HEALTHCARE

## ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

continued from page B-36

### City of Hope Orange County

City of Hope Orange County is part of one of the largest and most advanced cancer research and treatment organizations in the United States. City of Hope Orange County's advanced, integrated cancer care network includes a 72-acre academic research campus in Irvine that is home to City of Hope Orange County Lennar Foundation Cancer Center and Orange County's only cancer specialty hospital as well as five clinical locations. Patients benefit from the expertise of world-renowned physicians who solely focus on preventing, treating and curing cancer, breakthrough acute and outpatient care, access to more than 700 clinical trials a year and groundbreaking technology. City of Hope research has been the basis for numerous breakthrough cancer medicines, as well as human synthetic insulin and monoclonal antibodies. City of Hope's uniquely integrated model spans cancer care, research and development, academics and training, and a broad philanthropy program that powers its work.



### Hoag

Hoag is a nonprofit, regional healthcare delivery system in Orange County, California. Delivering world-class, comprehensive, personalized care, Hoag consists of 1,800 top physicians, 18 urgent care facilities, 13 health & wellness centers, and two award-winning hospitals. Hoag offers a comprehensive blend of healthcare services that includes seven institutes providing specialized services in the following areas: cancer, digestive health, heart and vascular, neurosciences, spine, women's health, and orthopedics through Hoag's affiliate, Hoag Orthopedic Institute, which consists of an orthopedic hospital and five ambulatory surgical centers. Hoag is the highest ranked hospital in Orange County by U.S. News & World Report and the only OC hospital ranked in the Top 10 in California, as well as a designated Magnet® with Distinction hospital by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). For more information, visit [hoag.org](http://hoag.org).



### Hoag Orthopedic Institute

Hoag Orthopedic Institute (HOI) is the West Coast's premier hospital and surgery center network dedicated solely to orthopedic and spine care. Collectively, HOI affiliated physicians perform the highest volume of hip, knee and shoulder replacement surgeries on the West Coast. HOI hospital is ranked nationally in orthopedics by US News & World Report and is proud to be the only hospital in Southern California offering a 5-star rating for patient experience. HOI is also the only hospital in Orange County to earn a 5-star rating for excellence in hospital cleanliness. Complementing its excellence in musculoskeletal patient care with robust academic research and education and fellowship programs, HOI trains the next generation of orthopedic surgeons under its roof and pioneers innovative treatment protocols. HOI hospital was proudly founded by its premier physicians in 2010 in partnership with Hoag. For more information, visit [www.hoagorthopedicinstitute.com](http://www.hoagorthopedicinstitute.com).



### Kaiser Permanente

Kaiser Permanente is committed to helping shape the future of health care. We are recognized as one of America's leading health care providers and nonprofit health plans. Founded in 1945, Kaiser Permanente has a mission to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. We currently serve 12.4 million members in 8 states and the District of Columbia. Care for members and patients is focused on their total health and guided by their personal Permanente Medical Group physicians, specialists, and team of caregivers. Our expert and caring medical teams are empowered and supported by industry-leading technology advances and tools for health promotion, disease prevention, state-of-the-art care delivery, and world-class chronic disease management. Kaiser Permanente is dedicated to care innovations, clinical research, health education, and the support of community health. For more information, go to [about.kp.org](http://about.kp.org).



continued on page B-40

# Discover seven floors of possible

At UCI Health — Irvine, technologically advanced surgical suites, along with the brightest minds in medicine, bring the promise of a better healing journey. Breathtaking views of the marshlands from floor-to-ceiling windows soothe the mind and stir the soul, while amenities like smart TVs help you stay entertained and virtually connected to loved ones as you recover.

Imagine all this, in the nation's first zero-carbon emission medical facility. Better still, discover it.

Powered by UC Irvine

[ucihealth.org/irvinehospital](https://ucihealth.org/irvinehospital)

**NOW OPEN  
IN IRVINE**

**DISCOVER**

**UCI Health**

# HEALTHCARE

## ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

continued from page B-38

### MemorialCare

MemorialCare is a not-for-profit, integrated health care delivery system with 225 care locations including leading hospitals—Saddleback Medical Center in Laguna Hills, Orange Coast Medical Center in Fountain Valley, Long Beach Medical Center and Miller Children’s & Women’s Hospital Long Beach; MemorialCare Medical Group and MemorialCare Independent Physicians; MemorialCare Research Program; MemorialCare Select Health Plan; and numerous outpatient health, imaging, surgery, urgent care, physical therapy, breast health and dialysis centers throughout Orange and Los Angeles counties. A leader in virtual health care service since 2020, MemorialCare’s “Get Care Now” feature is open to anyone who needs primary or virtual care in California. Accolades include Nation’s Best Health Systems and Workplaces, Best of Orange County and Long Beach Hospitals and Medical Groups, U.S. News & World Report Best Hospitals and “high performing” in more than 30 clinical categories and Newsweek World’s Best Hospitals, Top 100 Hospitals, Best Maternity Hospitals – and more. Visit [memorialcare.org](http://memorialcare.org).



### PDS Health®

PDS Health® continues the journey started by Pacific Dental Services® in 1994, with a vision to redefine health care through the integration of dental and medical services. Its approach, centered on the connection between oral health and overall health, aims to create healthier, happier patients and set new benchmarks in the healthcare industry. As a leading provider of integrated healthcare support, the company delivers a broad spectrum of services to dental, dental specialties, and medical providers, enhancing operations and care delivery for clinicians across the U.S. For more information about PDS Health and its vision, visit [pdshealth.com](http://pdshealth.com).



### Providence Orange County/High Desert

Providence Orange County/High Desert serves communities across Southern California through a faith-based, not-for-profit, integrated network of five acute care hospitals, along with a broad system of clinics, ambulatory care centers and urgent care locations. The service area includes St. Joseph Hospital Orange, Mission Hospital, St. Jude Medical Center and St. Mary Medical Center, supported by a growing network of outpatient facilities and physician practices. More than 10,000 caregivers, 3,300 medical staff and over 2,500 affiliated and medical group providers deliver care across primary, specialty and inpatient settings. Grounded in nearly 100 years of service, Providence remains committed to expanding access, advancing clinical excellence and serving the most vulnerable. The Providence health systems includes 51 hospitals, 1,000+ clinics and a comprehensive range of health and social services across Alaska, California, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas and Washington.



### Rady Children’s Health

Rady Children’s Health in Orange County (formerly CHOC) is part of a pediatric health care system that includes two hospitals in Orange County, a hospital in San Diego, and a growing network of primary and specialty care centers spanning six counties. Uniting the trusted expertise of CHOC and Rady Children’s Hospital San Diego, Rady Children’s Health builds on a combined legacy of more than a century of clinical excellence and is dedicated to advancing children’s health through leading-edge research, innovative treatments and compassionate care.



### UCI Health

UCI Health, one of California’s largest academic health systems, is the clinical enterprise of the University of California, Irvine. The 1,461-bed system comprises its main campus and flagship hospital UCI Health — Orange, the UCI Health — Irvine acute care hospital and medical campus, four hospitals and affiliated physicians of the UCI Health Community Network in Orange and Los Angeles counties and a regional network of ambulatory care centers. UCI Health provides tertiary and quaternary care and is home to the only Orange County-based National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center, high-risk perinatal/neonatal program and American College of Surgeons-verified Level I adult and Level II pediatric trauma center, gold level 1 geriatric emergency department and regional burn center. Powered by UC Irvine, UCI Health plays a critical role across Southern California, serving 5.6 million residents and annually delivering more than 1.4 million patient encounters for surgeries, trauma care, inpatient, emergency and outpatient services.



A man with short brown hair and a light beard, wearing a blue V-neck shirt, is looking down at a tablet computer. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an outdoor setting with trees.

Virtual care  
is everywhere.


Virtual care with  
member health  
history isn't.

Our care teams bring your employees' full health records to every telehealth visit – so they can treat the whole person, not just today's issue. Members love this personalized care, which is why we outpace the nation in telehealth use and satisfaction.\*

Give your business a competitive edge.  
Choose Kaiser Permanente.

\*Kaiser Permanente Telehealth Insights Dashboard, 2024; Fair Health, 2024; Kaiser Permanente internal data, December 19, 2023.

Learn more at [business.kp.org](https://business.kp.org)

 KAISER PERMANENTE®

## HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE



By shifting care upstream, preventive services help reduce avoidable hospitalizations, improve quality of life, and drive long-term affordability.

**Beth Andersen**  
President  
CA Commercial Business  
Anthem Blue Cross



When patients can access routine primary care easily, we can catch issues earlier, manage chronic conditions better, and avoid costly trips to the emergency department or to a specialist.

**Barry Arbuckle**  
CEO  
MemorialCare

**Preventive care is a bedrock of high value health care. What role does preventive care play in your organization's model to reduce costs and improve quality of life?**

**Dawn Maroney, Alignment Health:** Preventive care is one of the cornerstones of Alignment Health's value-based model, proactively managing member health to prevent chronic disease progression, thereby reducing costly emergency hospitalizations and enhancing overall quality of life. By prioritizing early screenings, timely vaccinations, and personalized health guidance tailored to each individual, the model eases long-term financial strain and emotional stress. Alignment Health's AVA® technology platform supports and improves preventive care by leveraging artificial intelligence and real-time data to identify health risks, enabling proactive, in-the-moment interventions before conditions escalate. The platform identifies gaps in care, such as missed appointments or medication regimen issues, and coordinates with providers, pharmacies, and transportation services to address them.

**Beth Andersen, CA Commercial Business, Anthem Blue Cross:** Preventive care is fundamental to Anthem Blue Cross of California's strategy to improve outcomes while managing total cost of care. We prioritize access to high-value services such as wellness visits, immunizations, and screenings by reducing barriers and aligning provider incentives with quality performance. Using advanced analytics, we identify at-risk members early and deliver targeted outreach, care management, and support to prevent disease progression. Prevention also supports health equity through community partnerships, culturally competent care, and expanded telehealth access. By shifting care upstream, preventive services help reduce avoidable hospitalizations, improve quality of life, and drive long-term affordability.

**Kimberly Chavalas Cripe, Rady Children's Health:** Preventive care is where we can make the greatest long-term impact, clinically and financially. We're focused on earlier identification of risk and more consistent follow-up, particularly for children with chronic conditions like asthma and diabetes. That includes using data to flag gaps in care, improving access to primary and specialty services, and coordinating more closely with families between visits. When care is more proactive, we can avoid unnecessary emergency visits and hospitalizations. This is not a single program; it's a shift in how care is delivered, with a stronger emphasis on continuity, coordination and earlier intervention.

**Robert T. Braithwaite, Hoag:** The best care we deliver is the care that keeps people out of the hospital. At Hoag, we are leading an industry-wide shift from a traditional "sick care" model to one centered on lifelong health. Through Hoag Medical Group and our growing primary care network, we are expanding access to preventive care and creating more connected, continuous relationships between patients and their care teams. Complemented by programs such as Hoag Compass, we are integrating lifestyle medicine, digital health tools and personalized coaching into everyday care. This includes helping people

optimize nutrition, sleep, activity and stress management, as well as using data from wearable devices to guide earlier interventions. By focusing upstream – even preparing people to be healthier before elective surgery – we reduce complications, improve recovery, lower costs and help people sustain healthier lives in their own communities.

**Payman Roshan, Kaiser Permanente Orange County:** The best way to fight a serious illness is to stop it from happening in the first place. At Kaiser Permanente, prevention is built into every step. Our members' electronic health record triggers reminders for screenings, so our care teams can see a complete picture of their health at every visit. For instance, when you check in, our receptionist can schedule an appointment for you right on the spot. We understand that health care should never be one-size-fits-all. At Kaiser Permanente, our members get care from teams of experts who take time to truly get to know them. Proactive preventive care that's proven to keep them healthy, and world-class treatment if they do get sick. As a leader in total health, we have continued to expand virtual care options, from preventive care to advanced treatment of complicated and chronic health conditions, in response to our members' needs and preferences.

**Barry Arbuckle, MemorialCare:** Prevention is at the heart of MemorialCare's mission to improve the quality of life for patients. When patients can access routine primary care easily, we can catch issues earlier, manage chronic conditions better, and avoid costly trips to the emergency department or to a specialist. Our system is designed to encourage regular check-ups and comes with unprecedented virtual access and local outpatient care. As a result, our patients can get the right care, at the right place, at the right time, ultimately reducing long-term health care costs while improving overall health. We launched 24/7 virtual care this year to anyone in California, regardless of whether they are a MemorialCare patient. This accessibility has proven to be extremely effective at reducing the need for additional visits.

**Stephen E. Thorne IV, PDS Health:** Preventive care is foundational to our model because it helps patients stay healthier, happier, and live longer lives. This approach is becoming more powerful through advances in saliva science, 3D imaging and AI, which can help clinicians detect concerns earlier, including signs of what may be happening elsewhere in the body. In some cases, these tools can also provide insight into inflammation and how a patient may respond biologically, allowing care to become more personalized over time. Combined with the connection between oral health and overall health, that creates a meaningful opportunity for earlier intervention, better decisions and a better patient experience. That is how prevention improves quality of life while also reducing the total cost of care.

**What are the most innovative things happening in healthcare right now? How is Orange County leading the way — and what role are OC's universities and research institutions playing in driving that innovation forward?**

*continued on page B-44*

# Hands-On Learning, Real Community Impact

At Chapman University's **Crean College of Health and Behavioral Sciences**, we're educating the next generation of clinicians making an impact right now.

With nationally ranked graduate and undergraduate programs, an interdisciplinary approach to clinical education, and world-class faculty, Crean College is preparing students to lead in a rapidly evolving healthcare landscape.

Our students bring hands-on care directly to the community through on campus programs like Stroke Boot Camp and out in the field where the need is greatest.

It's a win-win—our students gain invaluable clinical training and our neighbors receive life-changing support.

**[Chapman.edu/healthcare](https://Chapman.edu/healthcare)**



At Crean College's Stroke Boot Camp, patients undergo assessment and receive treatment from physical therapy students in a supervised clinical setting.

## HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE



We need to move from a reactive system to a coordinated one. When individuals can easily find and enter care earlier, outcomes improve and unnecessary strain on emergency systems is reduced.

**Phil Franks**  
CEO  
Be Well OC

**Yunkyung Kim, CalOptima Health:** To CalOptima Health, innovation means addressing more than just traditional health care. Studies show that 80% of a person's ability to stay healthy is dictated by non-medical factors. That's why CalOptima Health sees housing as health. For the past four years, we have participated in California's Housing and Homelessness Incentive Program, which brought \$72.9 million to Orange County for investments in affordable, transitional and permanent supportive housing. CalOptima Health's Board added \$87.4 million to that amount, and as a result, 96 organizations have received grants to build more than 1,200 units across the community. More than 500 are now open. In February 2026, we just awarded six more grants to build 230 units so Medi-Cal members can live in healthier environments.

**Kimberly Chavalas Cripe, Rady Children's Health:** What's changing most is how quickly innovation is moving into clinical care. Through our Sharon Disney Lund Medical Intelligence, Information, Investigation and Innovation Institute (Mi4), we're applying data, analytics and emerging technologies to improve how care is delivered. That includes work in predictive analytics, clinical decision support and more personalized approaches to treatment. Our partnerships with academic institutions, including UC Irvine, are critical to that progress, allowing us to move ideas from research into practice more efficiently. Orange County has the right combination of health systems, universities and industry to accelerate this work in a meaningful way. Additionally, our research space in our new Southwest Tower positions us well to attract talent worldwide.

**Annette M. Walker, City of Hope Orange County:** Some of today's most important healthcare innovations are emerging where advanced science, technology and personalized care intersect. City of Hope is leading in all of these areas, advancing cell and gene therapies, precision medicine, artificial intelligence and the science that detects cancer earlier, treats it more precisely and helps people return to their lives. Innovation is embedded into Orange County's ecosystem. The region's talent, entrepreneurial energy and academic and research strengths make it a growing destination for healthcare and the life sciences. Universities and research institutions fuel this through discovery, training and partnerships that move ideas from lab to bedside. At City of Hope Orange County, innovation is our responsibility—bringing advanced research, clinical trials and therapies close to home.

**Kim Mikes, Hoag Orthopedic Institute:** Orange County is pioneering the future of healthcare, including in orthopedics. At Hoag Orthopedic Institute, innovation is happening right within our hospital walls—even though we are not an academic medical center. Hoag Orthopedics, a dedicated nonprofit 501(c)(3) research organization, fosters innovation through groundbreaking clinical trials, industry partnerships and a "privademic" model. Research is fueling adoption of robotic surgery in new ways – for example, California's first robotic assisted reverse shoulder replacement was performed here. A Level 1 randomized controlled trial conducted this year earned one of HOI's physicians the prestigious Neer Award. Hoag

Orthopedics has also worked with local biotechnology companies to study regenerative therapies to reverse muscle mass loss and improve physical function.

**The United States has the highest prevalence of neurological disorders in the world. With one-in-two Americans suffering from a condition that ranges from stroke to a movement disorder to dementia, what can health systems do to decrease the impact here in OC?**

**Shawn Farrokhi, Chapman University:** Prevention! Prevention! Prevention! Health systems in Orange County should prioritize early identification of risk factors through screening, community outreach, and integration of emerging research into care. Neurological conditions such as Stroke are highly time-sensitive, making early intervention essential to optimize outcomes. Early, structured, and appropriately dosed rehabilitation further improves function and quality of life, especially when initiated once patients are medically stable, delivered by multidisciplinary teams, and matched to disease stage, while avoiding overly aggressive therapy early after injury. Finally, education for both providers and the community is critical to recognize risks, act quickly, and implement prevention and recovery strategies that reduce the overall burden of neurological disorders.

**Chad T. Lefteris, UCI Health:** UC Irvine and UCI Health are leaders in the fight against neurological disorders. Experts are advancing research and clinical trials that target Parkinson's disease and Huntington's disease with novel stem cell therapies and the annual UCI Health Parkinson's Disease Symposium is an invaluable resource for patients, caregivers and community physicians. The UCI Health ALS & Neuromuscular Center and the UCI Health Comprehensive Stroke & Cerebrovascular Center provide compassionate care and the region's largest portfolio of clinical trials for these conditions. An aging population also drives the need for specialized neurological care. UCI Health offers unmatched geriatric services, including the memory disorders clinic in the UCI Health Senior Health Center and the region's only Level 1 geriatric emergency department, designed to improve outcomes for older adults.

**What trends have shaped behavioral health demand in Orange County over the past two years, and how should healthcare systems adapt to meet this growing need?**

**Phil Franks, Be Well OC:** Behavioral health demand has surged, driven by post-pandemic impacts, rising youth mental health needs, substance use challenges, and workforce shortages. At the same time, many individuals still enter care only at a point of crisis. Healthcare systems must respond by expanding community-based capacity and strengthening the full continuum of care. Just as important is improving navigation—so people can access the right level of care quickly and without confusion. We need to move from a reactive system to a coordinated one. When individuals can easily find and enter care earlier, outcomes improve and

*continued on page B-46*



**24/7 access  
to care,  
without the  
guesswork.**



**Try before you drive.**

Not sure where to go? Use our 24/7 online symptom checker to find the right next step. You may not need to leave the house.



Available at [memorialcare.org](https://www.memorialcare.org)  
and our mobile app, or call us 24/7  
at (877) 696-3622.

Instant access to quality health care. Anytime, anywhere, anyone.

## HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE



We are implementing multiple outreach and communication strategies to ensure that no one loses coverage simply because they are unaware of the new rules.

**Yunkyung Kim**  
COO  
CalOptima Health

unnecessary strain on emergency systems is reduced.

**What role should partnerships between hospitals, nonprofits, local governments and community organizations play in addressing behavioral health needs?**

**Payman Roshan, Kaiser Permanente Orange County:** Kaiser Permanente Orange County continues to build on our social determinants of health strategies focused on increasing income, improving financial security, and reducing economic inequities through our business operations and community partnerships. In 2025, Kaiser Permanente Orange County provided more than \$3.7M through community health grant investments to community-based organizations. These investments help to house chronically homeless individuals and rehouse families experiencing homelessness, provide access to mental health services for teens and adults, and feed hungry seniors on fixed incomes. Our partnerships with schools and districts have grown locally, we provide grants to school districts to help build resilience and foster healthier school environments for students, staff, and teachers. For some in our community, food insecurity, anti-hate incidences, and increased social media usage were the major cause of depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and suicide ideation. The support from Kaiser Permanente enables organizations to provide ongoing counseling, suicide prevention, and racial trauma and healing work in multiple languages to community members in need.

**Phil Franks, Be Well OC:** Addressing behavioral health requires true partnership—no single organization can do it alone. Hospitals, nonprofits, local governments, and community organizations each play a critical role in building a coordinated system of care. When these partners align, they can create seamless pathways that help individuals navigate from one level of care to another without fragmentation or delay. That coordination is essential to improving both access and outcomes. The most effective systems are those designed collaboratively, with shared accountability and a focus on the community as a whole. Behavioral health is not just a healthcare issue—it's a community responsibility that demands a unified approach.

**H.R. 1 has a significant impact on the health care landscape. What is your organization doing to address the changes to people's health coverage and access to care? What are the upcoming challenges/opportunities impacting Medicare and Medicaid?**

**Brian Helleland, Orange County / High Desert, Providence South Division:** Affordability starts with how and where care is delivered. We see that reality every day in the choices patients face. We are moving services to lower-cost settings, expanding virtual care and tightening coordination to reduce unnecessary utilization. Investing in prevention and chronic disease management also helps us address issues earlier, before they become more complex and costly. Policy changes under H.R. 1 will affect coverage for many of our patients. Our priority is simple. People cannot fall through the cracks. We are

expanding financial counseling, strengthening access points, and working closely with community partners so patients can navigate their options with clarity. Medicare and Medicaid continue to bring real reimbursement pressure. They also accelerate the shift to value-based care and more coordinated, outcomes-focused services for the populations who rely on them most.

**Yunkyung Kim, CalOptima Health:** CalOptima Health is taking action to raise awareness of the H.R. 1 changes, ensuring our members, providers and community understand the impact. We are implementing multiple outreach and communication strategies to ensure that no one loses coverage simply because they are unaware of the new rules. Our Board approved significant funding for community enrollers to serve as "boots on the ground" to educate members and handle renewals. We are also partnering with the County of Orange Social Services Agency to support members at community events. In addition, we will launch an advertising campaign later this year. CalOptima Health is committed to ensuring members know how to navigate these changes, so they don't experience a coverage gap.

**How is America's aging population affecting healthcare today, and what role does your organization play in preparing Orange County's healthcare system for these evolving needs?**

**Dawn Maroney, Alignment Health:** America's rapidly aging population is pushing the healthcare system to its limits, driving unprecedented demand for chronic care management, escalating costs, and a powerful movement to "age in place." Alignment Health is transforming senior care by delivering a Medicare Advantage model that fuses personalized, data-driven insight with advanced, compassionate support. Our proprietary, AI-powered technology AVA® platform continuously analyzes real-time member data—including labs, vitals, and social determinants—to anticipate problems and intervene before they escalate. This innovative approach powers our "ACCESS On-Demand Concierge" program, giving members immediate, 24/7 access to clinicians through phone, tablet, or even in-home visits—ensuring care is always within reach. Based in Orange County, Alignment is proud to be a source of care and service for our community.

**Kim Mikes, Hoag Orthopedic Institute:** As people live longer and remain active later in life, we are seeing a "Silver Tsunami" in Orange County. According to the OC Health Care Agency, arthritis and joint issues are among the top concerns for today's seniors. Fragility fractures and chronic mobility limitations are also increasingly prevalent. At Hoag Orthopedic Institute, we specialize in restoring and optimizing our aging patient population's mobility. We are the largest provider of joint replacement surgery on the West Coast and have one of the lowest hip and knee complication rates in California, reducing risk for older patients. Ultimately, an important part of our mission is to help Orange County age well. As mobility is the foundation of independence, our specialized orthopedic care supports healthier aging for our community.

*continued on page B-48*



#1 in

# Orange County for Spine

Hoag  
Orthopedic  
Institute.

We Get You  
Back To You®

Visit [HOIexperts.com](http://HOIexperts.com)

Proudly founded by our premier physicians in partnership with Hoag.

## HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE



Importantly, when implemented thoughtfully, AI will augment, NOT REPLACE, the healthcare workforce, allowing clinicians to focus on caring for patients with empathy, something AI cannot replace.

**Shawn Farrokhi**  
Chair & Professor  
Department of Physical Therapy  
Chapman University

**Stephen E. Thorne IV, PDS Health:** America's aging population is reshaping healthcare as more people live longer and want to maintain their health, independence and quality of life as they age. That calls for care that is more connected, more preventive and easier to navigate across different needs and settings. We are helping prepare for that by bringing dentistry and primary care closer together, supporting clinicians with advanced, proven technologies and creating environments where providers can see more of the full health picture. Oral health is inseparable from overall health, and it must be part of a more complete approach to healthy aging, chronic disease management and longevity. It also reinforces the importance of expanding access, including through Medicare, so more seniors can get the care they need earlier.

**Barry Arbuckle, MemorialCare:** The pending surge of older adults over the next 10 years means more patients managing multiple chronic conditions, which can drive costs higher. We're both building the infrastructure and deepening our investment in more coordinated, tailored care designed to improve outcomes and reduce inefficient, often duplicative treatment for older adults. Last year, we opened a 55+ clinic in Laguna Woods staffed by specialists and designed to offer personalized care for seniors. Our emergency department at Saddleback is geriatric-accredited and includes specific protocols built around the needs of older adults. Designing spaces and systems for this population will help ensure more effective, efficient care that protects longevity. MemorialCare has also been a longtime advocate of Medicare Advantage and encourages broader adoption of the program's principles.

**Yunkyung Kim, CalOptima Health:** CalOptima Health offers OneCare, a program that supports seniors by combining Medicare and Medi-Cal benefits into one coordinated plan, ensuring they can easily access the comprehensive care they deserve. With guidance from a dedicated personal care coordinator, seniors receive individualized support and have a trusted advocate helping them plan their health care. We also operate a Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) center in Garden Grove, with plans to expand to better serve south Orange County in the future. PACE provides transportation and delivers wraparound services — from comprehensive on-site medical care to engaging social activities — in a warm, community-based setting. This holistic model strengthens and empowers seniors to live safely and independently at home for as long as possible.

**With California's diverse population and wide range of health needs, how can we better engage patients before health issues become crises, particularly in communities facing social and economic barriers?**

**Beth Andersen, CA Commercial Business, Anthem Blue Cross:** California's diversity requires culturally responsive, community-based solutions. Health outcomes are closely tied to social factors such as housing stability, food security, transportation, and language access. Anthem Blue Cross is advancing a whole-health approach that integrates physical, behavioral, and social care. We use data-driven insights to identify members who may be at risk and connect them to

care management programs and local community resources. We are also investing in digital engagement tools and multilingual outreach to ensure members can access care in ways that are convenient and culturally aligned. By addressing barriers earlier and building trust at the community level, we can help prevent small issues from becoming serious health events.

**Phil Franks, Be Well OC:** The most important step is ensuring people can find and access the right care the first time, every time. Today, many individuals and families don't struggle with willingness—they struggle with knowing where to go. Navigation must become a core part of our healthcare system. That means clear entry points, real-time guidance, and coordinated pathways that connect people to the appropriate level of care without delay or confusion. When navigation works, we reduce unnecessary emergency visits, improve outcomes, and build trust—especially in communities facing the greatest barriers. Access is not just about availability—it's about clarity.

**Kimberly Chavalas Cripe, Rady Children's Health:** We have to stop relying on the healthcare system as the front door to care. For many families, that's already too late. We're working to reach families more directly through schools and community settings, where we can reach children earlier and reduce barriers to access. Through our population health efforts, we partner with school districts to provide education, screenings and connections to care, particularly for behavioral health and chronic conditions. We're also improving coordination across care teams, so concerns are identified and addressed sooner. The shift is from episodic care to ongoing engagement, helping build relationships with families before issues escalate.

**Which clinical, technological, or operational innovations do you believe will most transform care delivery in the next 5–10 years?**

**Shawn Farrokhi, Chapman University:** Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies will fundamentally reshape the healthcare ecosystem by enabling more precise, data-driven decision-making. Leveraging large clinical datasets, organizations can identify which interventions work best, for whom, and at what time, improving delivery of care to the right patient at the right moment. These tools will also help determine optimal dosing and volume across medical, pharmacological, and therapeutic interventions, enhancing both efficiency and outcomes. From a systems perspective, AI can reduce costs and expand access by streamlining workflows and targeting resources where they are most effective. Importantly, when implemented thoughtfully, AI will augment, NOT REPLACE, the healthcare workforce, allowing clinicians to focus on caring for patients with empathy, something AI cannot replace.

**Annette M. Walker, City of Hope Orange County:** We are entering an era where cancer treatment will become increasingly personalized. Advances in genomics, artificial intelligence and cellular therapies allow physicians to understand cancer at a much deeper biological level and design treatments tailored to each individual

*continued on page B-50*



Mission | St. Joseph | St. Jude

# Trusted excellence. So Providence.



Thomas Kim, MD  
Cardiology

**It's the way we deliver exceptional care that makes it So Providence.**

We bring together the brightest minds in medicine to deliver compassionate, advanced care across Orange County. From groundbreaking treatments to award-winning physicians and hospitals, our focus is always you – our neighbor, our friend, our family. This is where innovation meets heart.

[Providence.org/SoAdvanced](https://www.providence.org/SoAdvanced)

## HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE



Access to the latest innovative research-based treatments will continue to transform how care is delivered to residents of Orange County and across Southern California.

**Chad T. Lefteris**  
President & CEO  
UCI Health

patient. At the same time, AI-driven diagnostics and digital health tools will help physicians detect disease earlier and guide more precise treatment decisions. Innovation is also about how we organize care - bringing multidisciplinary teams together, integrating research with clinical care, and surrounding patients with the full range of services they need to heal. The institutions that will lead the future of medicine are those that can combine scientific discovery, advanced technology and deeply compassionate care. That is the model we are building at City of Hope.

**Chad T. Lefteris, UCI Health:** Access to the latest innovative research-based treatments will continue to transform how care is delivered to residents of Orange County and across Southern California. The collaboration among UCI Health, Sue & Bill Gross Stem Cell Research Center, and the Alpha Clinic reflects the continued promise of stem cell therapies. Additionally, few innovations offer more far-reaching potential than cellular therapy, particularly the use of CAR-T. Home to Orange County's first adult bone marrow/stem cell transplant program, UCI Health is applying this therapy originally developed to treat cancer for patients with autoimmune disorders such as multiple sclerosis and lupus. Results are promising. As residents continue to live longer with chronic conditions, access to treatments and therapies that best support their overall quality of life remain important.

**Dawn Maroney, Alignment Health:** Our aging population is a fundamental factor transforming the healthcare landscape. In the years ahead, we'll see care move closer to home, with complex treatments brought safely to those who need them most. This shift will open doors for more people to receive care surrounded by loved ones, lessening the stress of long hospital stays. Technology and proactive support will empower patients to heal where they feel most comfortable and valued. The Hospital-at-Home model delivers not just advanced treatment, but also dignity and reassurance through virtual nursing and attentive remote monitoring. As the system evolves, payment structures will prioritize meaningful outcomes for patients and families, encouraging greater collaboration across healthcare. Importantly, family and informal caregivers—often the unsung heroes—will receive the recognition and support they deserve as cherished partners in care. These innovations are vital to bridge the care gap created by an aging population and a shrinking workforce, always with the goal of nurturing independence and enhancing the quality of life for every older adult.

**Orange County has experienced substantial development and growth in hospital and healthcare services. How has your organization grown to meet the demand for patients in this burgeoning demographic?**

**Robert T. Braithwaite, Hoag:** We have been thinking strategically about access and capacity for decades in anticipation of Orange County's evolving community needs. Growth for us is not just adding buildings; it is expanding access to excellence. A key part of that strategy is attracting and recruiting world-class physician leaders, care teams and researchers who are drawn to Hoag's collaborative, patient-centered model. Hoag

delivers quality services to every corner of the region, including most recently to San Clemente and Laguna Hills. Additionally, digital products like Hoag On-Demand, our 24/7 virtual care platform, ensures patients can receive the care they need, when and where they need it. Our investment in transformative infrastructure such as the Sun Family Campus in Irvine, scheduled to open in the fall, adds inpatient beds, ambulatory facilities and specialized centers for cancer, digestive health and women's health. Our goal is to deliver highly specialized care close to where people live. Fueled by philanthropy and community partnership, we can grow while maintaining the personalized care experience that defines Hoag.

**Payman Roshan, Kaiser Permanente Orange County:** For more than 45 years, Kaiser Permanente has been a true leader in Orange County's health. We are continuously discussing ways to address what healthcare needs the community will need to live a healthy lifestyle. We have made significant investments in our two medical centers to expand services, in the areas of sports medicine, maternal child health, cancer care and cardiology. Furthermore, we recognize that having access to care within one's neighborhood is important. With that in mind we recently opened our new state-of-the-art Medical Office Building in Aliso Viejo and are in early planning stages to construct a new facility in Westminster. We know that these investments will assist in making Orange County a healthier place to live, work and enjoy.

**What advantages does being part of a health system provide when it comes to innovation, investment, and long-term sustainability in healthcare?**

**Brian Helleland, Orange County / High Desert, Providence South Division:** Being part of an integrated system allows us to operate at a scale that standalone facilities simply cannot match. We can move innovation faster, invest in technology with broader impact and apply lessons across a wider network. That translates into more advanced care delivered closer to home. There are also clear operational advantages. Standardization where it makes sense, better resource alignment and faster adoption of value-based care all become more achievable. Fragmentation is expensive, and patients ultimately feel that cost. Equally important, scale gives us the ability to continue investing in our workforce and community benefit programs. Mission-driven care has to be sustainable, and system integration is a key part of that.

**Kimberly Chavalas Cripe, Rady Children's Health:** Being part of a health system allows us to make larger, more coordinated investments, whether that's in our workforce, technology or specialized services. It strengthens our ability to recruit and retain highly specialized clinicians by offering the scale, resources and collaborative environments needed to support complex care. It also expands access and an ability to offer services and programs across a larger geography. We can connect patients to the right level of care more efficiently and share clinical expertise across regions. At the same time, scale only works if it improves the experience for patients

*continued on page B-52*

Same exceptional care,  
more possibilities.



Rady  
Children's  
Health

**CHOC and  
Rady Children's  
have joined forces.**

Learn more at [radychildrens.org](https://www.radychildrens.org)

## HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE



Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies are transforming healthcare from a reactive, high-cost system into a proactive, personalized, and caring ecosystem.

**Dawn Maroney**  
President  
Alignment Health



For patients, the benefits of outpatient surgery are notable, with faster recovery, fewer costs and reduced risk of complications like infection.

**Kim Mikes**  
CEO  
Hoag Orthopedic Institute

and families. That means aligning systems behind the scenes while maintaining strong local relationships and access points. The advantage is not just size; it's the ability to deliver more connected, consistent and high-quality care across the communities we serve.

**How is Artificial Intelligence and emerging technology transforming the healthcare ecosystem, and how are organizations leveraging these tools to improve cost, access, and patient outcomes?**

**Stephen E. Thorne IV, PDS Health:** Artificial intelligence and emerging technologies are transforming health care by helping clinicians see more, know more and act earlier. The opportunity is to make care more connected, more personalized and more effective. That includes AI, advanced imaging, saliva science and shared health records that bring dental and medical care together around a more complete view of the patient. In many cases, these proven technologies can help detect issues before traditional clinical signs are fully present and support earlier, better-informed decisions. Used the right way, technology does not replace the clinician. It strengthens the clinician's ability to intervene earlier, improve patient outcomes, expand access and reduce the downstream costs that come with delayed care.

**Barry Arbuckle, MemorialCare:** In addition to AI as an ambient-listening tool to significantly reduce clinicians' administrative time and help them be more present with patients, MemorialCare has made a significant investment to embed AI across every department, service line, and appropriate processes so that we are well-positioned to move and evolve within the constantly changing AI landscape. We have a robust governance and change management process in place so that as we deepen the use of AI across workflows, we're improving our overall AI literacy so that we can adapt to changes and continue to leverage the benefits to save time, improve speed, and deliver better, more tailored care to patients based on their needs.

**Beth Andersen, CA Commercial Business, Anthem Blue Cross:** Anthem Blue Cross is leveraging digital innovation and AI to improve care navigation, personalize member outreach, enhance claims accuracy, and identify gaps in care earlier. These capabilities help members access the right care at the right time, which supports better outcomes and more efficient use of healthcare resources. We are committed to transparency in how technology is applied, strong governance to ensure responsible use of AI, and ongoing efforts to reduce bias and advance health equity. Our digital tools, including mobile and virtual care options, are designed to give members clearer insight into their benefits, provider options, and costs. Trust remains foundational to everything we do.

**Dawn Maroney, Alignment Health:** Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies are transforming healthcare from a reactive, high-cost system into a proactive, personalized, and caring ecosystem. Alignment Health leverages our proprietary AVA® platform to revolutionize Medicare Advantage. Through AVA, Alignment's AI

identifies potential health issues, such as the risk of hospitalization or progression of chronic illness, often before they become acute emergencies, enabling timely, compassionate preventive interventions. AVA acts as a centralized command center, analyzing data from hundreds of sources to provide comprehensive insights that help clinicians deliver more human-centered care, never replacing the irreplaceable value of human judgment and empathy. Alignment combines our technology with a "serving heart" service model, ensuring members receive 24/7 support from a concierge care team empowered by AVA Insights.

**Chad T. Lefteris, UCI Health:** UCI Health is leading the way in the strategic adoption of artificial intelligence to improve healthcare delivery and is committed to ensuring AI-enabled technologies complement, not replace, the physician decision-making. The system is seeing measurable benefits. Ambient scribe technology has been very well received by physicians, allowing them to finish charting on time, reduce burnout and reclaim hours once lost to late-night catchup. Another AI-enabled tool helps triage patient messages, with algorithms drafting responses that physicians then edit. Nearly 40% of messages are now generated by the system, saving providers countless clicks and keystrokes. The system has also undertaken an ambitious project — building its own large language model housed entirely on internal servers, designed to prevent patient data leaking into open-source models.

**More surgeries, diagnostics, and specialty services are moving out of the hospital and into outpatient or ambulatory settings. Is your system investing in this shift, and, if so, how is it reshaping how you deliver care?**

**Kim Mikes, Hoag Orthopedic Institute:** A decade ago, HOI surgeons began pioneering the shift to outpatient care for more complex orthopedic procedures, including same-day joint replacement and spine surgery. Today, advancements in advanced imaging, robotic surgery, pre-surgical planning and AI are helping to further shift these procedures out of the inpatient setting. Recently, HOI marked its 300,000 orthopedic procedure milestone since our founding 15 years ago, and a majority of those procedures are performed on an outpatient basis at our Irvine hospital, along with our affiliated surgery centers. For patients, the benefits of outpatient surgery are notable, with faster recovery, fewer costs and reduced risk of complications like infection. HOI proudly leads the shift in future health care delivery to outpatient care.

**Barry Arbuckle, MemorialCare:** MemorialCare invested early in outpatient care, seeing that — especially for certain surgeries or treatment — getting care in one of our 220+ community facilities help improve outcomes and recovery time while lowering overall costs. Many procedures and diagnostics do not require a hospital bed, and we've learned that patients want care that is closer to home and easier to get. When we shift to outpatient care, we also take the burden off our hospitals, protecting capacity for higher acuity needs and reducing delays. The result is a stronger network that supports quality, convenience, and better outcomes. Our early

*continued on page B-54*

# A NEW ERA OF AGING.



**DAWN MARONEY**

**President** of Alignment Health and  
**CEO** of Alignment Health Plan

We're Alignment Health, and senior health care is all we do. We believe seniors deserve better health care, and we empower seniors to take control of their health so they can spend time doing what they love.

Alignment Health is dedicated to inspiring and serving seniors, fueled by technology and empathy. We strive every day to change Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans for the better.

**At Alignment Health, we are  
champions of aging well.**

[AlignmentHealth.com](https://www.AlignmentHealth.com)

## HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE



By aligning medical, surgical and supportive services around the individual, we help people achieve better results while experiencing a more seamless and reassuring care experience.

**Robert T. Braithwaite**  
President & CEO  
Hoag



Irvine is one of the rare places where a long-term ecosystem—health systems, research institutions, biotech, life sciences companies, and a growing population seeking exceptional care—can truly take shape.

**Annette M. Walker**  
President  
City of Hope Orange County

action has helped us build a more durable, supportive network that ensures the highest quality care, and the most convenient and often significantly faster care and recovery time.

**What does care integration look like at your organization, and how are you connecting different aspects of a patient's health?**

**Robert T. Braithwaite, Hoag:** Care integration at Hoag means treating the whole person across every phase of the health journey, from prevention and diagnosis to acute treatment and recovery at home. We bring together multidisciplinary physician teams, advanced technology and coordinated care pathways in a model that connects inpatient services, outpatient specialty institutes, home health and hospice programs so our neighbors remain supported by a consistent clinical team. This ecosystem allows us to address complex conditions with both excellence and compassion. By aligning medical, surgical and supportive services around the individual, we help people achieve better results while experiencing a more seamless and reassuring care experience.

**Brian Helleland, Orange County / High Desert, Providence South Division:** Transitions of care are where breakdowns happen most often, so closing those gaps is a daily operational focus. Patients expect care that is convenient, closer to home and aligned with their needs. We are expanding access across our hospitals, joint ventures and ambulatory care centers, including surgery centers, advanced imaging and specialty clinics, all supported by a fully integrated system. Care integration should feel seamless to our patients. Moving from primary care to specialty care to the hospital and back home again should not feel like starting over. That takes shared data, coordinated care plans and aligned workflows so patients are not left navigating the system on their own. We are strengthening care management, integrating behavioral health into primary care, and using digital tools to keep communication consistent.

**Stephen E. Thorne IV, PDS Health:** Care integration is about connecting the patient journey more intentionally across providers, settings and data. For us, that includes shared health records, co-located practices, stronger collaboration between oral health and primary care providers, and better education so both patients and clinicians understand how closely oral health is tied to overall health. It also means working with other providers more effectively, using the dental visit as an opportunity to identify broader health concerns, and continuing to invest in research and innovation that can advance earlier, more coordinated care. When that happens, clinicians have a more complete view of the patient, decisions are better informed and the patient experience becomes more connected and effective.

**California consistently ranks among the highest-cost healthcare markets in the country. From your perspective, what are the biggest drivers of rising healthcare costs in California today, and how can healthcare organizations use data and analytics to proactively prevent avoidable costs before they occur?**

**Shawn Farrokhi, Chapman University:** California's high healthcare costs are driven by

administrative complexity and bureaucracy that delay timely preventive, medical, and rehabilitative care. Gaps in insurance coverage, limited access to a trained workforce, and few affordable options for uninsured patients often lead to delayed treatment and higher downstream costs. Additionally, misaligned, volume-driven business models incentivize high-cost, and at times low-value, interventions rather than evidence-based, effective care. Healthcare organizations can use data and analytics to identify at-risk patients, close gaps in care, and deliver the right intervention at the right time. Aligning incentives with outcomes and using real-time data can reduce avoidable utilization, improve access, and lower costs while enhancing patient outcomes.

**Beth Andersen, CA Commercial Business, Anthem Blue Cross:** California's healthcare costs are driven by several converging factors: provider consolidation and pricing variation, rising pharmacy and specialty drug costs, increasing behavioral health needs, and a growing burden of chronic conditions. The cost of health care continues to be one of the defining challenges for families and employers across our state. At Anthem Blue Cross, we are using advanced analytics and predictive modeling to identify health risks earlier, before they escalate into avoidable emergency visits or hospitalizations. By integrating medical, pharmacy, and behavioral data, we can proactively engage members, close care gaps, and support providers with actionable insights. Our focus is on shifting from reactive care to preventive, whole-person care that improves outcomes and helps manage long-term costs in California's complex market.

**Irvine has rapidly emerged as a major healthcare and life sciences hub in Orange County. What's driving this growth, and how are hospital systems positioning themselves to be a part of Irvine's long-term healthcare ecosystem?**

**Annette M. Walker, City of Hope Orange County:** Irvine's emergence as a healthcare and life sciences hub reflects purposeful vision and planning. The city's investments in infrastructure, education, business development, and quality of life create an environment where healthcare, research, and innovation thrive. Irvine is one of the rare places where a long-term ecosystem—health systems, research institutions, biotech, life sciences companies, and a growing population seeking exceptional care—can truly take shape. Hospitals are central to this evolution. We help shape the future by investing in specialized services, attracting top clinical talent, expanding capacity, and designing integrated, patient-centered care. At City of Hope Orange County, our long-term commitment reflects a belief that Irvine is the ideal place to build a future in cancer care, where research, treatment, prevention, and survivorship come together.

**Robert T. Braithwaite, Hoag:** Healthcare hubs are built where innovation, talent and community commitment intersect, and Irvine has all three. Our shared philosophy of innovation has made Hoag a natural partner for Irvine's evolution. And the Sun Family Campus is a gleaming example of this: a comprehensive health destination designed to

*continued on page B-56*

# Committed to lowering healthcare costs

Driven by rising prices from care providers, legislative policy changes, and an increase in drug costs, affordability is a problem. At Anthem Blue Cross, we're focused on creating solutions that not only lower costs but improve outcomes and simplify the healthcare experience for hard-working Californians.

## We're focused on:



### Accountability & cost transparency

We partner with care providers to establish fair, sustainable pricing, while digital tools like SmartShopper contribute to **\$185 in average annual savings**.<sup>1</sup>



### Care quality

With value-based care models, **66% of our health plan spending** supports providers for prevention and care coordination, not the volume of services.<sup>2</sup>



### Benefit integration

Plans with integrated medical and pharmacy benefits produce up to **\$100 per member per month in savings** through better care coordination.<sup>3</sup>



### Care accessibility

Virtual care options reduce costly ER visits and drive **\$126 in average savings** per telehealth urgent care visit.<sup>4</sup>



### Fraud, waste, and abuse

Our payment integrity efforts prevent waste and improper billing which drove over **\$4 billion in savings** in 2025.<sup>5</sup>



Scan the QR code or visit [anthem.ly/CA-affordability](https://anthem.ly/CA-affordability) for more on our work to lower costs.

**Anthem** 

<sup>1</sup> Sydney Health cost transparency tool utilization analysis, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Elevance Health: 2024 Impact Report: [www.elevancehealth.com/content/dam/elevance-health/documents/ELV\\_2024\\_Impact\\_Report.pdf](https://www.elevancehealth.com/content/dam/elevance-health/documents/ELV_2024_Impact_Report.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> CarelonRx: *How medical and pharmacy benefit integration drives savings* (February 2024): [www.carelonrx.com/perspectives/value-of-integrated-benefits](https://www.carelonrx.com/perspectives/value-of-integrated-benefits).

<sup>4</sup> Anthem internal data, cost-of-care saving analysis, June 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Anthem Payment Integrity Program results, 2025.

Sydney Health is offered through an arrangement with Carelon Digital Platforms, a separate company offering mobile application services on behalf of your health plan.

CarelonRx, Inc. is an independent company providing pharmacy benefit management services on behalf of your health plan.

Anthem Blue Cross is the trade name of Blue Cross of California. Independent licensee of the Blue Cross Association. Anthem is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc.

1090084CAEENABC 03/26

## HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE



Value-based care emphasizes and rewards healthy outcomes while making care more affordable.

**Payman Roshan**  
Senior Vice President &  
Area Manager  
Kaiser Permanente  
Orange County

bring advanced specialty care, clinical research and next-generation surgical capabilities together in one integrated environment.

By recruiting nationally recognized physician leaders, investing in state-of-the-art facilities and embracing our “privademic” model – where we combine the agility and personalized approach of a private, not-for-profit hospital with the world-class advancements of an academic institution – we are shaping a regional ecosystem that attracts talent, supports innovation and ensures our neighbors have access to leading-edge care without leaving Orange County. This approach reinforces Irvine’s continued trajectory as a hub for both clinical excellence and health-care innovation.

#### How has healthcare in Orange County changed over the last 50 years? What’s in store for the next 50 years?

**Phil Franks, Be Well OC:** Over the past 50 years, Orange County has built a high-quality healthcare system anchored by leading hospitals and specialty care. What’s changed most is the growing recognition that mental health is inseparable from overall health. Over the next 50 years, healthcare will shift from fragmented, facility-based care to integrated, community-based systems that are easier to navigate and centered around the whole person. Behavioral health will be foundational, not secondary. The future will reward systems that are coordinated, accessible, and proactive. The goal is not just better treatment—it’s making it easier for people to find the right care before a crisis occurs.

**Chad T. Lefteris, UCI Health:** This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UCI Health, established when the University of California Regents purchased the Orange County Medical Center as a teaching hospital for the UC Irvine School of Medicine. Since then, UCI Health has grown with Orange County to become a leading academic health system, serving a region of 5.6 million people. That growth included the county’s first Level 1 trauma center, federally qualified health center, National Cancer Institute–designated comprehensive cancer center, comprehensive stroke center and its largest kidney transplant program. The recent completion of the UCI Health — Irvine medical complex and the continued integration of the UCI Health Community Network hospitals provide a solid foundation to drive the future of clinical innovation and improved access to care.

**Kim Mikes, Hoag Orthopedic Institute:** Today, Orange County is a destination for highly specialized and technology driven healthcare. Hoag Orthopedic Institute (HOI), for example, specializes exclusively in orthopedics and spine, performing more hip, knee and shoulder replacements than any other hospital on the entire West Coast. Our physicians are fellowship trained, providing subspecialized care.

In orthopedics, the next 50 years will see more emphasis on the outpatient model of care, along with an increased adoption of advanced robotics, AI and regenerative medicine. Today, half of all patients having orthopedic or spine surgery at HOI are already able to return home the same day of surgery. With time and further advancements, we

predict the majority of orthopedic and spine cases, including complex and revision surgeries, will migrate to the outpatient setting.

#### With health care now Americans’ top financial concern (ahead of rent or food), and with employers projecting that health care costs will increase by 9% in 2026, what strategies is your health system prioritizing to ensure continued access to quality care at a lower cost to patients?

**Payman Roshan, Kaiser Permanente Orange County:** Kaiser Permanente’s integrated model embraces medical evidence, aims to reduce the burden of chronic disease, and fosters collaboration among physicians, specialists, and other medical professionals. It all adds up: With a value-based care model, Permanente physicians focus solely on providing the right care at the right time to our patients, helping them live their healthiest, happiest lives. Furthermore, Kaiser Permanente’s model of health care has established one of the nation’s only truly value-based care environments. Value-based care emphasizes and rewards healthy outcomes while making care more affordable. On the other hand, most U.S. care systems depend on “fee for service” care models that largely rely on providing higher volume of medical services to generate revenue. Kaiser Permanente does not.

**Barry Arbuckle, MemorialCare:** One of the most effective tools to help lower costs is to keep people healthier and make it easier for them to get the right care, in the right place, at the right time. At MemorialCare, we have spent more than a decade building the infrastructure that supports greater coordination and prevention, in which physicians are incentivized to deliver the best care, instead of more care. This improves patient outcomes while avoiding costlier care later. We pair this model with convenient access through our 220+ outpatient locations, and with expanded virtual options, including 24/7 services for all Californians, even those who are not MemorialCare patients. Patients can speak to a doctor and get a prescription within a few hours, helping avoid costly and unnecessary care.

**Beth Andersen, CA Commercial Business, Anthem Blue Cross:** Lowering the cost of health care is central to our strategy in California. Anthem Blue Cross is committed to helping employers manage rising healthcare costs while supporting a healthy, productive workforce. In Orange County, we work closely with employers as a strategic partner, not just a health plan. That means leveraging data to identify cost drivers, designing benefits that encourage high-value care, advancing pharmacy management strategies, and promoting preventive and behavioral health services. We also support workplace well-being initiatives that address physical and mental health, recognizing that a healthier workforce drives long-term business sustainability. Our approach is grounded in collaboration, transparency, and local market expertise. By aligning cost management strategies with whole-person health, we help Orange County employers create long-term value for their organizations and the employees they serve.

*continued on page B-58*



**Be Well**<sup>®</sup>  
ORANGE COUNTY



# **Red Tape leaves our family without care.**

The only thing standing between Orange County residents and life-saving behavioral health care is the County's refusal to open the doors. Seven years ago, Orange County said access to behavioral health care was fragmented and out of reach. Be Well OC took steps to solve that problem—building world-class facilities ready to serve everyone, regardless of insurance status. But today, the problem continues. Red tape is keeping access to these campuses limited, and in the case of the Irvine Campus, the doors remain closed altogether. Now, more than ever, we need your help to open the doors.

**OPEN THE Be Well<sup>®</sup> CAMPUSES TO ALL**  
**[CHANGE.ORG/CutTheRedTapeOC](https://CHANGE.ORG/CutTheRedTapeOC)**



## HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE



When dental and medical care are connected through a shared health record, clinicians have a clearer view of the patient, coordinate care earlier and make better-informed decisions.

**Stephen E. Thorne IV**  
Founder & CEO  
PDS Health



If we want to close workforce gaps in a meaningful way, we have to invest earlier and create more direct pathways into healthcare careers here in Orange County.

**Kimberly Chavalas Cripe**  
Co-President and CEO  
Rady Children's Health

**Stephen E. Thorne IV, PDS Health:** Prevention and early detection are effective strategies for reducing the total cost of care. Too often, the system identifies problems after they have progressed and become more expensive to treat. The opportunity is to intervene earlier, and the dental setting plays a role. Many patients see their dentist more regularly than their physician, which creates an opportunity to identify risk earlier. Many health issues can show up in the mouth first, and oral health is inextricably linked to overall health. When dental and medical care are connected through a shared health record, clinicians have a clearer view of the patient, coordinate care earlier and make better-informed decisions. That leads to earlier intervention, fewer avoidable complications, reduced costs and a better patient experience.

**Where are we seeing the greatest healthcare workforce needs in Orange County right now? And how are healthcare systems and institutions responding — and how are they partnering with academic institutions to build that talent pipeline locally?**

**Yunkyung Kim, CalOptima Health:** The need for providers to serve vulnerable communities is growing, especially as policy changes may leave more individuals uninsured and seeking care in clinics. Since 2024, CalOptima Health has awarded nearly \$25 million to seven major educational institutions in Orange County to expand opportunities for students interested in serving Medi-Cal members and the uninsured. The investments are part of our Workforce Development Initiative, which aims to expand access to care by boosting the availability of medical and behavioral health care providers for the safety net. These budding doctors, nurses and other caregivers understand the important role they play in addressing workforce shortages and gaps, and we are proud to support their education and future success.

**Kimberly Chavalas Cripe, Rady Children's Health:** We're seeing the greatest need in nursing and specialized pediatric roles, but the bigger issue is building a stronger pipeline locally. We've partnered with school districts and higher education to introduce students to healthcare much earlier. Our Healthcare Career Academy works with high school students across Orange County, and our MI4 Summer Internship connects college students to clinical care, research and data-driven innovation. These aren't observational experiences. Students are actively engaged in real work alongside our teams. If we want to close workforce gaps in a meaningful way, we have to invest earlier and create more direct pathways into healthcare careers here in Orange County.

**How are healthcare organizations navigating shifts in payer mix while continuing to invest in high-quality care and community programs?**

**Brian Helleland, Orange County / High Desert, Providence South Division:** Providence's Mission has always focused on caring for those who face the greatest barriers, and that continues to guide our approach. Our Community Health Needs Assessment combines direct community input with data to set priorities grounded in what

people are actually experiencing. Through our family resource centers, community health navigators work alongside nurses and social workers to address social determinants of health and connect patients to resources. That includes Medi-Cal enrollment, insurance exchange support and helping patients establish a primary care home so they can access preventive services. On payer mix, the focus is discipline. We are aligning resources, strengthening care coordination and growing services that meet real community need. Reimbursement is shifting, but our commitment to access and quality is not.

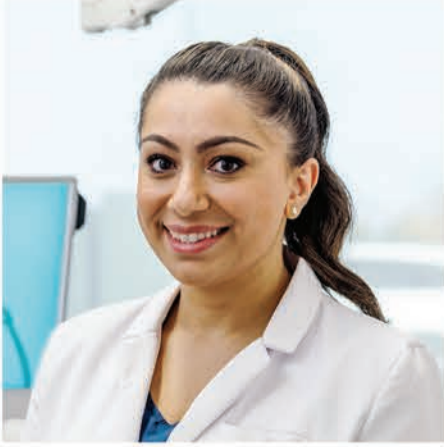
**Dawn Maroney, Alignment Health:** Alignment Health is navigating shifts in the Medicare Advantage payer mix by doubling down on a "high-tech, high-touch" model designed to lower total care costs and improve outcomes. Through strategic investment in its proprietary AI-driven platform, AVA® Alignment delivers 24/7 care coordination and predictive, proactive outreach—setting a new standard for quality and efficiency in senior care. Our flagship "Care Anywhere" program exemplifies this impact, empowering seniors and individuals with complex conditions to thrive through highly personalized, technology-enabled care delivered in-home and virtually. By uniting advanced technology with compassionate, hands-on support, Alignment consistently delivers on its promise to put the senior first.

**What are the solutions to help more people access quality mental health care?**

**Phil Franks, Be Well OC:** Improving access starts with expanding capacity across the full continuum of care, particularly in community-based settings where individuals can receive timely support. But capacity alone is not enough. We must also simplify how people enter the system. Strong navigation, coordinated referrals, and clear pathways into care are essential to ensuring individuals reach the right services quickly. Workforce development and sustainable funding models are also critical to long-term success. Ultimately, access improves when systems are designed around people, not programs. When care is easier to find, easier to enter, and better coordinated, more individuals will receive the support they need.

**Yunkyung Kim, CalOptima Health:** CalOptima Health offers members a wide range of mental health resources designed to support emotional well-being and help individuals live a balanced, fulfilling life. Through our behavioral health network, members can access services in the way that feels most comfortable for them — whether that's traditional in-person counseling and therapy, convenient telemedicine appointments or self-guided support through free mental health and mindfulness apps. These options ensure members can get help at home, in their community or wherever it's convenient. Beyond treatment, our programs emphasize early support, stress management and whole-person care, empowering members to build resilience and stay connected to care. By meeting people where they are and removing barriers to support, we help members nurture their mental wellness with dignity.

*continued on page B-60*



# Oral Health Means Better Health



PDS Health supports clinicians in delivering comprehensive, whole-person care. We provide the business services, clinical education, and advanced, proven technologies that enable dental and medical professionals to focus on what matters most: creating healthier, happier patients.



Our work goes beyond traditional practice support. By connecting oral health and primary care through integrated electronic health records and predictive insights, we help providers detect disease earlier and collaborate more effectively.



With more than 1,100 practices and 5,600 clinicians across the country, PDS Health is shaping the future of preventive, personalized care.

## HEALTHCARE ROUNDTABLE



Continued investment in technology, clinical expertise, and research is making it possible to deliver services locally that once required travel to major academic centers. This is already happening in cardiovascular care, oncology and advanced surgery.

**Brian Helleland**  
Chief Executive  
Orange County / High Desert,  
Providence South Division

### What role does translational research play in bringing scientific advances directly to Orange County patients?

#### **Annette M. Walker, City of Hope Orange**

**County:** At City of Hope, translational research is the bridge between discovery and healing. Our goal is simple: when a breakthrough happens in the lab, patients should benefit quickly. That philosophy is what shaped the development of our Orange County campus. By bringing world-class scientists, physician-researchers and advanced clinical care into one place, we're accelerating the movement of discoveries from bench to bedside. Patients have access to therapies that only a handful of cancer centers in the country can offer—from precision medicine approaches that target the unique biology of a patient's tumor to novel immunotherapies and early-phase clinical trials. For patients and families, translational research means hope is not theoretical. It means the future of cancer care is happening here—and it is happening now.

**Chad T. Lefteris, UCI Health:** The presence of a world-class public research institution and a leading academic health system gives Orange County residents unique access to the latest in translational medicine through UCI Health. Bench-to-bedside research conducted here means promising clinical treatments are within reach for patients who benefit from early access to breakthrough treatments, including clinical trials in cancer, neuroscience and internal medicine specialties like gastroenterology and cardiology. UCI Health is where innovation, research and clinical care converge and builds on the solid foundation of basic science research at UC Irvine and shapes the future of medicine.

#### **Shawn Farrokhi, Chapman University:**

Translational research bridges the gap between scientific discoveries and real-world patient care, ensuring that advances in medicine and rehabilitation directly benefit patients in Orange County. At its core, translational research focuses on delivering effective, personalized interventions that meet the needs of patients, providers, and health systems. Expanding beyond tightly controlled clinical trials, translational research increasingly emphasizes pragmatic, health services studies that evaluate interventions in real-world settings, addressing implementation challenges and ensuring findings are readily transferable to clinical practice. By focusing on practical application, translational research accelerates the adoption of evidence-based therapies, optimizes outcomes and costs, as well as ensures that scientific advances translate into meaningful improvements in patient care locally.

### Over the next decade, what role will Orange County's health systems play in reducing the need for patients to travel outside of Orange County for the most complex, specialized care?

**Kim Mikes, Hoag Orthopedic Institute:** There will be no reason to leave Orange County for the highest quality, innovative and specialized care in a number of specialties. For the past 14 years, Hoag Orthopedic Institute has been a nationally recognized destination hospital, attracting patients

from across the country and even internationally. We are the West Coast's volume leader in joint replacement surgeries and Orange County's leader in spine care. As the regional experts in orthopedics, our physicians have access to the latest innovations—including robotics, presurgical planning tools and AI. In the next 10 years, we predict a growing number of patients from outside of Orange County—including from the Inland Empire and Los Angeles Counties—will increasingly travel here for the highest quality orthopedic and spine care.

#### **Brian Helleland, Orange County / High Desert, Providence South Division:**

Patients should not have to leave Orange County for complex care. Continued investment in technology, clinical expertise, and research is making it possible to deliver services locally that once required travel to major academic centers. This is already happening in cardiovascular care, oncology and advanced surgery. At the same time, no system can do this alone. Collaboration across Orange County and throughout Southern California among health systems is essential for highly specialized care. Competition has its place, but coordination is what ultimately benefits patients. The result is a stronger regional standard of care, less disruption for patients and families and better continuity with the care teams who know them best.

**Robert T. Braithwaite, Hoag:** No one should have to leave Orange County to access world-class care. By delivering academic-level expertise within a community-based system, we are transforming Orange County into a healthcare destination. This is evident in our strategic physician recruitment, investment in clinical research and in the development of programs such as our emerging comprehensive organ transplant center, beginning first with liver and kidney. Historically, many of our most vulnerable neighbors have had to leave the region for life-saving transplant treatments. We are changing that by building upon our clinical depth and infrastructure to deliver true privademic care. Expanding innovative services, clinical trials and specialized institutes will help keep people close to their support networks while elevating the region's overall healthcare capabilities. Ultimately, this is about ensuring world-class care is accessible close to home.

#### **Annette M. Walker, City of Hope Orange**

**County:** Orange County's health systems will play a defining role in ensuring more patients can receive highly specialized care close to home. For too long, patients and their families had to leave the county to access highly specialized cancer care. City of Hope came to Orange County to meet this need. The future depends on building depth, not just breadth: recruiting nationally recognized specialists, expanding access to advanced therapies, investing in research and clinical trials, and creating the infrastructure to care for higher-acuity patients here in Orange County. It also requires rethinking what patients need. Receiving care close to home reduces stress, keeps families together, and allows people to focus on their health. At City of Hope, this has been our vision from the beginning.

# Stay Covered

**Your  
Health Is  
Everything  
to Us**

**Now more  
than ever.**

## **Keeping you connected to care.**

◆ Virtual Appointments ◆ Flexible Mental Health Resources ◆ Trusted Customer Service

Health care rules are changing. That's why it's more important than ever to lean on those you trust to stay connected to care. For 30 years, CalOptima Health has helped Orange County residents understand health plan options and where to turn for coverage. So, when it's time to renew your Medi-Cal, take action to keep covered and stay healthy. We'll be here for you. Because now more than ever, your health is everything to us.

**1-888-587-8088**  
**caloptima.org/OCBJ2**

CalOptima Health, A Public Agency

