



Healthcare Leaders Association of Texas

Founded by Healthcare Leaders for Healthcare Leaders in 1973

June 2025



Texas HLA President’s Message

As I reflect on our recent conference in Houston at Texas Women’s University, May 21-23rd, I could see this year’s theme come across in an impactful way across our sessions. **Resilience Redefined.**

We heard from Dr. Roberta Schwartz, VP, PhD, on how Houston Methodist promoted transformational growth through early adoption of leading-edge digital technology. With placing cameras in all of their hospital rooms during Covid in order to introduce Virtual ICU complete with physician and nursing monitoring.

Cameron Cox enlightened us with a discussion on “What is resiliency” He approached it from a personal, professional and the industry viewpoint. He touched on the 7 “C’s” of Resilience:

- Competence
- Connection
- Contribution
- Control
- Confidence
- Character
- Coping

Douglass Miller from Straightedge Technology presented on Cybersecurity and disaster recovery and that followed with a panel with Justin Wyrick and Sam Craig from Texas Tech University Clinics with a discussion on how the plan worked when faced with a cyberattack.

Dr. Ray Callas, Immediate Past president of TMA gave us a passionate update on the Texas legislative session currently ongoing and how it is going to affect Texas physicians and healthcare. While Lilly Timon, our Legislative Liaison, gave an update on the federal legislative session.

We had a great networking event on Wednesday evening with our participants and sponsors at the Kirby Icehouse where we had a chance to catch up with one another.

If you missed our conference this year, please take a moment to look at the presentations you missed on our website: www.hlatexas.com, under the Conference / Education Tab.

Your new board will be meeting in late June to focus on expanding our membership, building strong partnerships. and bringing new benefits to you. I invite each of you to take an active role in this growth. We have sent out a survey about what you want to see from us this year and I encourage each of you to let us hear from you.

Thank you for showing up with authenticity, curiosity, and strength. Let us carry forward this deeper understanding of resilience in our work, our challenges, and our communities. Let it guide us to lead with compassion, act with courage, and adapt with intention. Here’s to being resilient - together.

Cassi Taylor

President, Healthcare Leaders Association of Texas



Cassi Taylor
HLA Texas President

HLA Texas 2025 Annual Conference Pictures

May 21-23, 2025

Texas Woman's University, Houston

TEXAS HLA Annual Conference

RESILIENCE REDEFINED: Thriving in the Face of Change

May 21-23, 2025
Texas Women's University • Houston



HLA Texas 2025 Annual Conference Pictures



Thanks to J. Matthew Driskill, FACMPE for his year of service as President of Healthcare Leaders Association of Texas

"I really enjoyed attending this year's HLA Texas Conference. The workshops covered timely, relevant topics that addressed real-world challenges in healthcare. We opened with an engaging keynote from Houston Methodist, highlighting how they are improving healthcare delivery with greater efficiency and effectiveness. The conference concluded with an impressive presentation from the Gulf Coast HLA Case Competition winner, focused on optimizing ambulatory surgery center operations.

Between those bookends, we explored important issues including personal resiliency, human resources, cybersecurity, and legislative updates. Hosting the event at Texas Woman's University brought a sense of return to our educational roots, adding a meaningful layer to the experience. Most of all, the camaraderie among HLA members reminded me that I'm not alone in facing the current challenges in our field—it was both reassuring and energizing."

**- Rick Lucas, CPA
Practice Administrator, River ENT**



Thank you—and the entire Healthcare Leaders Association team—for putting together such a meaningful and well-executed annual conference. The event flowed seamlessly, and I truly appreciated the range of speakers you brought in. The variety of backgrounds and specialties represented shows how intentionally the topics were planned to reflect the real needs and priorities across the healthcare sector.



What really stood out to me was the involvement of students from Baylor College of Medicine. It reminded me of a similar experience I had in a previous course, and it was great to see how much effort is being made to support and inspire the next generation of healthcare professionals. That kind of exposure can make a lasting difference.

As I continue on my journey to find my breakthrough role in healthcare and grow into mid- and senior-level opportunities, this conference will definitely be one I look back on. It helped set a standard for the kind of leadership and forward-thinking I want to be around. Thanks again for all the work you and your team are doing to strengthen and support the industry.

**- ShaLeigha Langston
Texas Woman's University**

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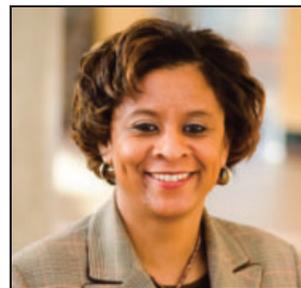
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Welcome Aboard: How an Effective Onboarding Process Helps to Set Your Organization up for Success

You have heard it before – your employees are your greatest asset. To help protect this asset, you can't overstate the importance of a structured onboarding process in healthcare to assist in supporting your team. A strong onboarding process helps to ensure a consistent, comprehensive, and supportive experience for new hires. We would understand why having a comprehensive onboarding process would be best for your new employees, but have you considered how it best protects your organization or practice as well? Whether you're welcoming a new physician or nurse practitioner to your practice, a director of finance for a surgery center, or a team member to your hospital access team, how they are introduced can significantly impact patient care, team morale, productivity, and the overall success of your organization.

Lack of an effective onboarding process can contribute to several serious challenges, including increased medical errors, high staff turnover, poor patient experience, low employee morale and engagement, and compliance violations — all with critical consequences.

Yet, even with those possible impactful outcomes, many practices still treat onboarding as an afterthought — a few quick introductions, logins to various networks and apps, and a stack of HR paperwork. Unfortunately, this approach often leads to confusion, frustration, and a high turnover rate.

High turnover is having a serious impact on medicine today. Frequent staff changes disrupt everything from patient care to driving up costs associated with recruiting and training. Having the revolving door of employees hurts everyone, and investing in a formal onboarding program is not just beneficial — it's essential. Here are some benefits of an effective onboarding process:

1. Accelerates Time to Competency

Healthcare is complex, and new providers and staff need time to learn workflows, systems, and culture. A structured onboarding process accelerates this learning curve by clearly laying out expectations, resources, and support systems from the start.

When new hires are given a roadmap, they more quickly feel confident in their roles, and can focus on delivering high-quality patient care instead of struggling to figure things out on their own. This, in turn, improves productivity and reduces costly mistakes.

2. Strengthens Patient Care

At the heart of every medical practice is the patient experience. Disorganized onboarding can create inconsistencies in how patients are greeted, scheduled, treated, and followed up with.

By taking the time to train all new providers and staff on your practice's standards for patient communication, care protocols, and service expectations, you ensure that patients receive consistent, high-quality care — no matter who they interact with. Better patient experiences lead to stronger patient satisfaction scores, loyalty, and referrals, which should equate to a greater volume of patients.

3. Improves Staff Retention

Turnover in healthcare is expensive. Recruiting and training a new provider, for example, can cost tens of thousands of dollars, not to mention the disruption it causes to your team and your patients.

Studies consistently show that employees who experience a thorough, supportive onboarding process are much more likely to stay long-term. Hospitals that invest in a streamlined onboarding process report up to 20% higher retention rates among new clinicians (Becker's Hospital Review). When new hires feel valued, supported, and connected to your mission, they're more invested in their roles — and less likely to leave when challenges arise.

4. Builds a Stronger Culture

We have discussed the importance of Culture. Culture isn't just about having pizza parties and casual Fridays — it's about shared values, mutual respect, and a commitment to excellence. Onboarding is your first opportunity to immerse new hires in your culture.

By communicating your mission, vision, and values early, and modeling the behaviors you expect, you set the tone for a positive, cohesive workplace. New staff should understand not just what they are doing, but why it matters. This sense of purpose is a powerful motivator.

5. Reduces Risk and Liability

Healthcare operates in a highly regulated environment. Failing to properly train staff can lead to compliance violations, medical errors, and even legal trouble.

Welcome Aboard: How an Effective Onboarding Process Helps to Set Your Organization up for Success

An effective onboarding process includes thorough education on HIPAA regulations, documentation standards, billing practices, safety protocols, and any other legal requirements specific to your specialty. Being proactive about compliance from day one helps protect your practice — and your patients.

6. Enhances Team Collaboration

Healthcare delivery is a team sport. Physicians, nurses, medical assistants, and administrative staff all rely on each other to deliver safe, efficient care.

Onboarding should introduce new recruits not only to their direct responsibilities but also to how the entire practice functions as a team. Information such as: “Who handles what? How do effective handoffs happen? and What is the chain of communication?” are important for new hires to comprehend. When everyone understands each other's roles and workflows, collaboration improves, and both patients and the entire team benefit.

Best Practices for Successful Onboarding - get a plan!

If your practice or healthcare organization doesn't have a formal onboarding plan yet, it's not too late. Here are a few tips to get started:

- **Create an onboarding checklist:** Outline everything a new hire needs to learn and accomplish in their first 90 days. Plan on meeting you're your new team member to go over progress and update regularly.
- *Create a structured timeline:* Onboarding should be phased and progressive with different goals that are timed depending on the new hire role.
- **Assign a mentor or buddy:** Having a go-to person can make a world of difference for new hires navigating a new environment. Consider compensating the current employees who provide this invaluable additional support to your organization.
- **Identify key stakeholders and roles:** Consider all the individuals and departments involved in the onboarding process, such as: HR, Clinical Leaders/Managers, IT, and Compliance Officers, along with peer mentors and support.
- **Design role-specific training models:** Develop customized training plans based on the staff member's

role. Ensure they include a thorough review of all necessary compliance regulations such as HIPAA, Patient Privacy, etc.

- **Focus on both clinical and cultural training:** Skills are important, but so are communication styles, teamwork expectations, and your organization's core principles. Make sure new team members understand your organization's Purpose, Impact and Values.
- **Schedule regular check-ins:** Communication with your team is vital, especially with new employees. Don't assume everything is fine. Proactively ask new hires how they're adjusting and what support they need.
- **Ensure there is continuous education and integration:** Onboarding never really ends — you should consider implementing ongoing training and offer career development strategies and social integration with team-building activities and opportunities for the staff to interact outside of their normal roles.
- **Gather feedback:** Ask for honest feedback about the onboarding process. Take note and use the feedback to make improvements.

Final Thoughts

Quality patient care is ultimately what every healthcare organization strives for. You need to be able to not only attract but also maintain quality staff to provide the best care. In review, the phrase “Your people are your greatest asset” couldn't be truer in today's healthcare environment. Approaching onboarding as a strategic priority — rather than an afterthought — lays the foundation for engaged employees, satisfied patients, and a successful practice or team. Investing in a strong onboarding plan not only protects your team, but your organization's time, finances, and reputation, allowing for sustainable success.

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Upcoming Members Only Webinar

Healthcare Leaders Association of Texas offers Free Member webinars each month to state chapter members. These webinars are archived on our Webinar Page in the Members Only area for view on demand after the webinar as well.

June 10, 2025 / 12:00 - 1:00pm Central

Financial and Operational Improvement Strategies - Michael Cash, FACMPE



About this Webinar:

Financial and Operational Improvement Strategies: Utilizing Patient Self-Service Tools explores how healthcare practices can enhance efficiency and financial performance through self-service technologies. Amid challenges like flat reimbursement rates, staff turnover, collection difficulties, and scheduling inefficiencies, patient expectations are shifting toward greater autonomy in healthcare. Tools such as self-scheduling, telemedicine, patient portals, and online registration streamline operations, reduce administrative burdens, and improve patient satisfaction.

The presentation reviews key financial and operational benchmarks, including overhead and staffing ratios, patient throughput and access, demonstrating how self-service tools impact these areas. Real-world case studies highlight successful implementations, showcasing reduced administrative costs, improved efficiency, and optimized staffing utilization. However, barriers such as adoption resistance, system integration, and data security must be addressed for optimal success.

Meet our Presenter:

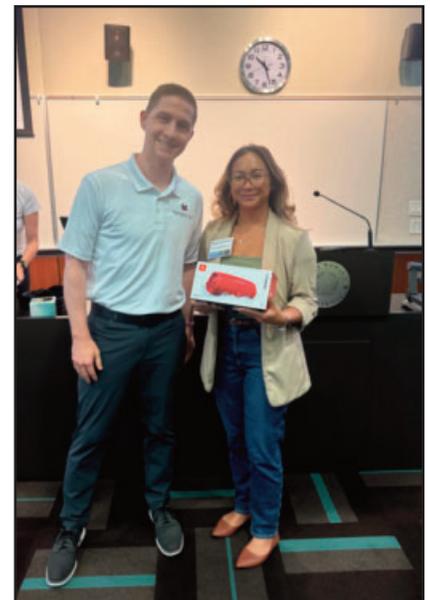
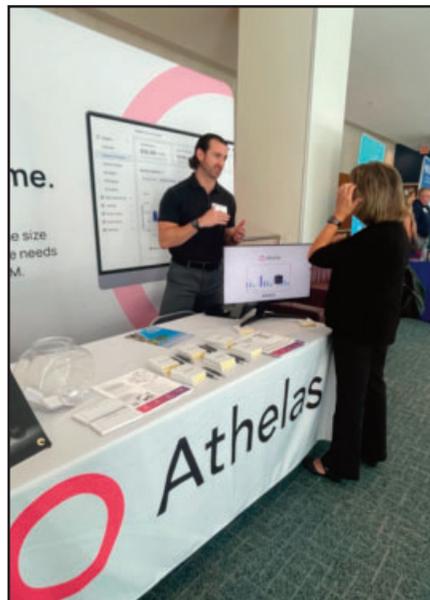
Michael Cash is a seasoned healthcare leader from Hot Springs, Arkansas, with extensive experience in private practice and hospital administration. Currently serving as a Senior Medical Practice Consultant at State Volunteer Mutual Insurance Company, he brings a wealth of expertise in financial management, operational efficiency, and physician employment models. Michael is a Fellow in the American College of Medical Practice Executives (ACMPE), and past president of the Arkansas Medical Group Management Association. He is committed to helping healthcare organizations navigate complex challenges and achieve long-term success.

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HLA Texas 2025 Annual Conference Pictures



Group Membership

Interested in your colleagues joining HLA Texas?

Medical practices that wish to purchase multiple Active memberships:

After 5 paid \$150 Active memberships, each additional membership from the same group is discounted to \$100.

If your practice is interested in taking advantage of the discounted group membership, please contact our office via email at: admin@hlatexas.com or phone at (205) 981-0011.



Healthcare Leaders Association of Texas champions excellence in healthcare leadership, providing resources and networking for professionals to improve care delivery and influence industry standards for a healthier tomorrow.