

# The Tipping of Maslow's Hierarchy: Developing a collaborative systemwide framework to produce nurse driven, innovative outcomes

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## Background

In 2019, Beth Israel Deaconess and Lahey Hospitals—two major academic systems with strong ties to Harvard and UMass Chan Medical Schools, as well as a distinguished nursing culture—merged to form a unified healthcare network. To enhance operational efficiency and align with its mission, the newly established system needed to institute foundational standardization

## Goal

The system recognized the importance of amplifying the nursing voice to unify diverse nursing practices across its 14 hospitals, over 250 clinics, and 3600 nurses, all while preserving its culture and values.

They hired their inaugural System Chief Nursing Officer, Dr. Puneet Freibott in 2024 to lead this effort and leverage this momentum to produce contemporary nursing operational excellence and outcomes.

## Process

Utilizing AONL Nurse Leader Competencies, the System CNO with the support of the entity CNOs utilized relationship building & establishing trustworthiness by listening and learning the needs of the front line staff.

To enhance nursing expertise and drive system-wide goals, we reimagined Maslow's hierarchy by engaging frontline leaders as a think tank. This approach allowed us to assess variations, prioritize changes, and ensure meaningful, team-driven decision-making. The following advisory councils were established with representatives from each of the hospitals and a grouping of primary care and specialty care settings:

- Professional Development
- Professional Practice
- Emergency Services
- Peri-op Services
- Critical Care
- Ambulatory Care

Each advisory council was further empowered by selecting its own chair and co-chair to facilitate priorities and outcomes



## Results

The councils have been very well received, engaging the teams in collective decision making and knowing that their voice is heard throughout the system.

It has created lines of communication between entities to further enhance collaboration and shared learning beyond the council meetings. This approach preserves the culture and provides the voice that nurses need to have the autonomy in way they practice.

The councils have achieved many outcomes that are accelerating the process of systemness and achieving a balanced approach to the change process and outcomes

## Learning

Early wins are important to achieve the continued engagement and momentum

Setting ground rules for achieving 80% standardization and 20% customization