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## IHI FORUM CONVENES WITH CALL TO ACTION FOR A SYSTEM-WIDE APPROACH TO HEALTH EQUITY

**34<sup>th</sup> annual gathering focuses on practical quality improvement methods to address health equity, patient safety, workforce burnout, and other pressing health care challenges**

**Boston, Mass. and Orlando, Fla. — December 6, 2022** – Dr. Kedar Mate, President and CEO of the [Institute for Healthcare Improvement](#) (IHI), kicked-off the [IHI Forum 2022](#) today by calling for collective action to address health equity. He urged the audience of health and health care professionals to change the narrative around inequities, “to understand them not as inevitabilities, but as things that we can, in fact, improve. Inequity in American health care is not our destiny, equity is.”

Dr. Mate reflected on the prevalence of burnout at all levels of the health care workforce, describing it as moral injury, and made the connection between these problems, the financial challenges our health systems face, and the prevalence of health inequities in our health care system today. “I had always imagined that if we worked to improve health equity, we would improve the lives of those for whom we provided care. But what I had not realized until recently was that working on equity would be healing for the healer.”

Citing powerful examples from IHI’s work with health systems across the country, Dr. Mate explained how quality improvement methods can address inequities, since inequities are fundamentally examples of unwanted variation. “Here’s the good news: quality science – methods now widely understood in health care and that all of you are here to study and learn – are designed to identify and eliminate undesired variation in our systems.”

Dr. Mate then announced that IHI has joined with the American Medical Association (AMA), in collaboration with [Race Forward](#) and an impressive list of organizations, to create [Rise to Health: A National Coalition for Equity in Health Care](#). “The time has come for a system-wide approach – where health care organizations, individual practitioners, payers, professional societies, and pharmaceutical, research, and biotech organizations come together and align activities to make the whole ecosystem of health care more equitable.”

The Rise to Health Coalition will catalyze individuals and organizations committed to health equity and justice to build, change, and transform health care with shared solutions and collective actions. Dr. Mate concluded, “By doing this together we will change the story on equity from one of confusion and competition to one of hope, possibility, collaboration, and alignment.”

Joining Dr. Mate on stage was Aletha Maybank, M.D., M.P.H., Chief Health Equity Officer and Senior Vice President, American Medical Association, and Glenn Harris, President of Race Forward and Publisher of Colorlines, who discussed the importance of the Rise to Health Coalition and encouraged attendees to get involved and [take action](#) to transform health care together.

This year's IHI Forum convened in person for the first time since 2019, providing an opportunity for attendees from 40 countries to gather as a community to learn about innovative, evidence-based approaches to improving health and health care. Attendees will benefit from five inspiring [Keynotes](#), 100+ learning sessions led by 280 presenters, and numerous networking and wellness experiences. For those unable to attend in person, IHI is also hosting an [Online Forum](#), running from December 13–15, 2022, that will provide more than 100 hours of content, including 90 sessions and 450 posters.

To address the complex challenges the health care industry is facing on multiple fronts, IHI Forum programming is organized around [topic tracks](#) that include Health Equity, Workforce and Patient Safety, Workforce Well-Being, Person-Centered Care, Building Improvement Capability, and many more.

#### *Health Equity*

More than 20 sessions and workshops are dedicated to the topic of health equity, offering attendees actionable insights and resources they can learn from and apply in their own settings. Among the presenters are past and present participants in core IHI equity programs, including Pursuing Equity and a new initiative focused on improving outcomes for Black mothers.

- **Pursuing Equity Initiative** – During Dr. Mate's Keynote remarks he announced the teams that were selected for the third iteration of [Pursuing Equity](#), which catalyzes health systems to take systemic action to achieve improvements in health equity and racial justice. Ten teams were chosen for an [Action Community](#) and 60 teams were selected for a [Learning Network](#), both of which will begin in January 2023 and run through June 2024. More information about the IHI initiative, which is funded by Genentech – a member of the Roche Group – can be found at [ihi.org/PursuingEquity](https://ihi.org/PursuingEquity).
- **Eliminating Inequities in Postpartum Care** – A special interest breakfast session on December 7 (SIB06) will focus on a new IHI initiative, funded by Merck for Mothers, created to better understand the risks to Black mothers and birthing persons and their babies in the first 30 days postpartum, and to reduce inequities in morbidity and mortality. IHI will unveil the names of five birthing hospitals that were chosen to participate in a six-month Learning Community that convenes in January 2023. Details about the plans and phases of this new initiative can be found [here](#).

#### *Patient and Workforce Safety*

Two dynamic tracks at the IHI Forum address the interrelated challenges of patient and workforce safety, focusing on how to make the health care continuum safer by reducing all types of harm and preventing mortality for patients and the dedicated professionals and teams who care for them. These tracks are Workforce Well-being and Workforce and Patient Safety.

- **Diagnostic Excellence** – This year’s IHI Forum includes comprehensive programming dedicated to diagnostic excellence. Diagnosis is an essential component of clinical medicine and is required for the provision of high-quality, effective care. Yet errors in diagnosis are the most common cause of medical errors experienced by patients, frequently resulting in serious harm and preventable deaths. This programming is made possible by a generous grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and will advance awareness, engagement, and capabilities of quality and safety professionals on this critical and emerging topic. Sessions include SP01: Advancing Diagnostic Excellence in Older Adults; C06: Adding a Diagnostic Safety Lens to Maternal Mortality Reduction Efforts; C09: New Tools for Advancing Diagnostic Excellence, and more.
- **Workforce Well-Being** – IHI’s commitment to the health care workforce is evidenced by the range of sessions on this important topic, including MF04: Your Patients Are Only As Safe As Your Workforce; SH05: Designing QI Projects that Improve, Not Worsen Joy in Work; MH02: Improvement Principles to Support Health Care Worker Well-being - an International Perspective; and more. IHI is now offering a new professional development program on this topic, [Leadership for Workforce Well-Being](#), that will help leaders address burnout, retention, and recruitment.

### *System Resilience*

One of IHI’s strategic priorities is to strengthen health care systems’ ability to individually and collectively adapt and thrive in the face of current and emerging disruptive challenges using improvement science and Whole System Quality (WSQ) methods to help systems prepare, rapidly adapt, recover, and improve care and health.

- **Whole System Quality** – Five Forum sessions will explore various aspects of IHI’s holistic approach to quality management – [Whole System Quality](#) – which integrates quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement across multiple levels of a health system. Attendees can learn about Whole System Quality: A Unified Approach to Building Responsive, Resilient Health Care Systems (SH03); Leading for Whole System Quality (C15); Aligning the Quality, Safety, and Risk Functions to Support a “Whole System” Approach to Quality (VC03); and more.
- **Climate and Health Care** – Health systems are grappling with the need to reduce their carbon footprint while protecting their communities from climate vulnerabilities. Several sessions will focus on these challenges, including a special interest lunch on December 7 (LB03) featuring Dr. Donald Berwick, IHI President Emeritus and Senior Fellow, and Dr. Mate. Additionally, IHI will announce the health systems selected to participate in a year-long Learning Community, kicking-off in January 2023, to accelerate progress towards lowering their carbon footprint (decarbonizing). This Learning Community is made possible thanks to the Commonwealth Fund and a contribution from the Kaiser Permanente National Community Benefit Fund at the East Bay Community Foundation.

Also at the Forum, IHI recorded the inaugural episode of its new *Turn on the Lights Podcast*, which is co-hosted by Dr. Mate and Dr. Berwick. *Turn on the Lights Podcast* is a thought-provoking series of candid conversations about how the US health care system is

working and not working. Featuring practical solutions from around the world, inspirational stories, and calls to action, the podcast is an outlet for discourse on a range of topics, including improving health and health care delivery, health equity and quality, and social justice. The first episode will air this month on all listening platforms.

For more information about the IHI Forum, or to register for the Online Forum taking place December 13 -15, 2022, please visit [ihi.org/Forum](https://ihi.org/Forum). All Keynotes from the in-person Forum will be available on demand as part of the Online Forum. Journalists wishing to attend online should contact Joanna Clark at [joanna@cxocommunication.com](mailto:joanna@cxocommunication.com).

### **About the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)**

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) is an independent not-for-profit organization based in Boston, Massachusetts, USA. For more than 30 years, IHI has used improvement science to advance and sustain better outcomes in health and health systems across the world. IHI brings awareness of safety and quality to millions, catalyzes learning and the systematic improvement of care, develops solutions to previously intractable challenges, and mobilizes health systems, communities, regions, and nations to reduce harm and deaths. IHI collaborates with a growing community to spark bold, inventive ways to improve the health of individuals and populations. IHI generates optimism, harvests fresh ideas, and supports anyone, anywhere who wants to profoundly change health and health care for the better. Learn more at [ihi.org](https://ihi.org).

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