

MILITARY HEALTH

MEASURING YOUR HIGH RELIABILITY ORGANIZATION (HRO) VITAL SIGNS

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THE CHALLENGE: A CLEAR IMPERATIVE, BUT NO CLEAR PATH

Medical treatment facilities (MTF) around the globe are committed to reducing preventable harm to patients, which is the ultimate goal of high-reliability healthcare. Becoming a high-reliability organization (HRO) requires an exceptional degree of safety—one that is on the order of organizations that operate in high-risk sectors, like commercial aviation and nuclear power. And although the Military Health System (MHS) has aggressively taken on this transformational HRO challenge, the path forward for any individual treatment facility is far from clear.

The Department of Defense has embraced the Joint Commission's framework for becoming a healthcare HRO, with its three domains of change: leadership commitment, a culture of safety, and continuous process improvement. However, the framework is really just a starting point. It does not provide clear-cut methods with built-in measures and metrics, nor does it detail the specific tools and techniques that are needed to attain HRO goals.

HRO efforts are complicated by the unique nature of military operations, which makes achieving high-reliability healthcare more challenging than in civilian hospitals. MTFs must contend with multiple chains of command, often with conflicting priorities and guidance and varying levels of authority. For example, Air Force MTFs are owned by and report to aviation wing commanders who control funding and resources. Yet, these MTFs must also comply with Air Force Medical Operations Agency requirements and Defense Health Agency policy. Furthermore, MTF leadership frequently rotates in and out, making it harder to attain the kind of consistency that a high-reliability health organization demands. And although there is a high expectation that each MTF is pushing forward to reach HRO goals, there

is an absence of well-defined metrics in the military medical field by which MTFs can show progress.

This has meant that MTFs have been largely on their own in figuring out how to adopt the high-reliability healthcare concepts outlined by the Joint Commission. And since each treatment facility is unique—from both an operational and cultural perspective—each must determine its own best course for achievement. Facility administrators have many questions but no simple answers. *What specifically do we need to do differently on a day-to-day basis? How do we prioritize and implement those changes, step by step? What is the best way to maximize our efforts, given budget constraints, scarce resources, and other obstacles? How do we know how much progress we're making, and how do we demonstrate that progress?*

A NEW PERSPECTIVE: HIGH-RELIABILITY ORGANIZATION DIAGNOSTIC

MTFs need a workable mechanism to help them determine exactly where they stand in relation to the Joint Commission's framework, what their specific HRO goals should be, and how to reach each goal, step by step.

The best such mechanism is a diagnostic approach—one that is not unlike a doctor's approach to a patient. A doctor assesses a patient as an individual, conducts tests, makes diagnoses, determines health improvement goals for the patient, thinks through the various treatment alternatives, and then discusses the options and selects the best course of action with the patient. No doctor would consider prescribing medications or treatment without first going through this process. An HRO diagnostic assessment should be based on these same principles.

Several factors must go into the design of an effective HRO diagnostic. First, the diagnostic must be aligned with the common framework developed by the Joint

Commission, which has already been adopted by the military health community. This is necessary to make sure all MTFs are pursuing the same high-reliability goals and have a uniform point of departure for measuring and reporting progress toward those goals.

At the same time, it is essential to have a deep understanding of both the Joint Commission framework itself and of military health operations, including aspects such as policy, budget, technology, and culture. Having that knowledge makes it possible to build a diagnostic—specific to the needs of the military community—that truly enables thorough and objective analysis. Such a diagnostic can determine not just whether, for example, an MTF has procedures, experience, and training in place for a given key component area, but also whether those are the right mix for the mission at hand.

Determining whether an MTF has the “right mix” in each key capability area to transform into a high-reliability medical organization is both an art and a science. Becoming an HRO is about reducing variation, making things standard, and continuing to improve. Consequently, an HRO diagnostic approach must draw upon detailed knowledge of established systems and processes. But it also requires an awareness and appreciation for how people work together, learn to do things differently, and improve.

OUR APPROACH: FROM DIAGNOSIS TO TARGETED TREATMENT PLAN

Booz Allen Hamilton’s HRO diagnostic approach follows the same principles as a physician’s diagnostic approach to a patient. We understand that you need to treat the individual, that you must have a thorough understanding of the patient’s baseline health, that cookie-cutter treatment plans do not work, and that the best health outcomes occur when the patient is involved in the decision process.

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Given that the Joint Commission’s framework provides only general guidance, and that an individual MTF must find its own path to high reliability, Booz Allen’s approach takes the guesswork out of the steps required to become an HRO. Our HRO diagnostic first establishes an MTF’s baseline state for each of the Joint Commission’s 14 key component areas (e.g., quality strategy, accountability, and performance-improvement methods). Then, working closely with the facility through analysis and dialogue with the client, we recommend a desired state for each HRO key component area. Based on client-derived goals and constraints, we next provide the MTF with the best options to choose from for moving forward.

And after the MTF selects a preferred approach, we put together a detailed roadmap that charts a path to each goal for the facility to follow as it transforms into an HRO.

Our approach relies on our robustly built HRO diagnostic assessment instrument. To gain an in-depth picture of HRO achievement, we constructed our diagnostic to thoroughly vet a facility's current state in each of the key component areas of the Joint Commission framework. We also tailored it to accurately reflect the world of military healthcare. Our diagnostic, which is organized according to the Commission's three domains of change and the associated component areas and levels of maturity, ensures ease of reporting when demonstrating HRO progress up the chain of command. Intrinsic to the development—as well as the implementation—of the diagnostic are Booz Allen's core consulting capabilities and extensive subject-matter expertise in military operations and healthcare facilities.

Establish MTF HRO Baseline

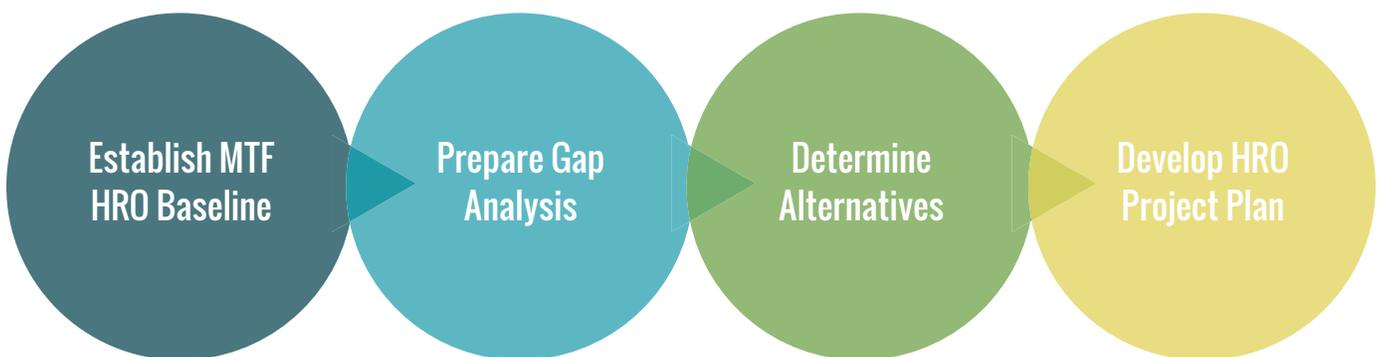
We begin by determining how far along a MTF is in each area of the Joint Commission's HRO framework, which

is the foundation of Booz Allen's HRO diagnostic. We use the HRO diagnostic to systematically assess all of the factors that contribute to HRO achievement through a series of interviews, observations, and document reviews. In approaching each MTF as a separate facility, we also take time to comprehensively get to know the MTF's culture and organization. We ascertain stakeholder and leadership views on the MTF's specific resources, constraints, and goals. Having this comprehensive picture of the MTF is essential for providing the best options to move forward.

Prepare Gap Analysis

Once we establish where the MTF currently stands and how strong it is in each HRO key component area, we map that achievement on a level chart, organized according to our enhanced version of the Joint Commission's framework. The level chart is a visual representation of the spectrum of possible states—or levels—in each HRO key component area. The component areas are broken down by all of the associated processes, conditions, and activities that we evaluated to establish the baseline and translated to rows on the level chart. As you move to the right, columns define

Here's how it works:



increasing levels of achievement in each area. By mapping your current accomplishments and the success you are driving toward, the charts help to identify gaps and potential gap-closing opportunities between these “as-is” and “to-be” states. Each “cell” provides an accounting of the number of improvements that need to be made in each key component area, making it easy to show measurable progress from your baseline toward the desired end result.

Determine Alternative Approaches

Booz Allen knows there are always multiple approaches to moving from level to level to ultimately attain the highest level of HRO standing. Our aim is to help you to understand the best options that will work for your facility. In line with the MTF’s specific goals, resources, and organizational culture, we develop a summary comparison of alternatives to migrate the MTF toward its HRO vision. For each alternative approach, the summary comparison defines targeted focus areas, level of difficulty, estimated investment, and timeframe to accomplish the goal. The alternatives we put forward are customized to account for the MTF’s budget and organizational constraints, schedule requirements, operational tempos, etc. We lay out the optimized approaches side by side for you. For example, one approach might focus on closing the biggest gaps first, while another might concentrate on making the greatest impact in the shortest amount of time, or making steady progress on all fronts at once. We present the summary comparison for discussion and assist you in selecting the best course of action for the environment in which your MTF operates.

Develop HRO Project Plan

After the MTF has selected an approach, we develop a project plan that details the strategy and steps necessary to take the facility from where it is on the HRO spectrum to where it wants to be. These are the clearly articulated steps to move from level to level in the key

component areas, to implement the Joint Commission’s framework, and to become an HRO.

Booz Allen’s diagnostic process is informed by and viewed through the perspective of our core competencies in key areas such as organizational design, stakeholder engagement, and process improvement. While these capabilities are grounded in our general management consulting practice, our military operations subject matter experts have adapted them to the specific needs of high-reliability military health. For each MTF, we use these capabilities to understand the facility’s culture, to establish its HRO baseline, to present viable options for moving forward, and especially to develop the detailed project plan that will drive its HRO transformation.

BOOZ ALLEN: YOUR ESSENTIAL PARTNER IN HRO TRANSFORMATION

Booz Allen is an industry leader in the diagnostic approach, including developing diagnostic assessment instruments, conducting assessments, performing gap analyses, determining alternative approaches, and developing and implementing program plans. And while our HRO diagnostic is based on the Joint Commission framework, it goes well beyond that to reflect not only our consulting heritage but also our deep knowledge of military operations, and MTFs in particular, and our broad HRO expertise.

Consulting Heritage

Booz Allen works with clients to support their strategic transformation agendas and build programs in alignment with each organization’s goals and mission. Our HRO diagnostic approach is informed by core competencies—strategy, organization/process improvement, and human capital planning—that form an essential part of our general management consulting practice and give us the basis by which we can provide accurate HRO assessment and practical implementation strategies. Our core competencies attest to the fact that we

thoroughly know our way around the three domains of change required for HRO success. We are accustomed to tackling projects that require us to address the human dimension to achieve continuous process improvement, leadership commitment, and cultural change. Many of these capabilities also show Booz Allen to be a singular force in disciplines ranging from safety science and quality assurance, such as the implementation of ISO 9000 quality management systems, to change management, including bringing about cultural and behavioral changes based on the psychology of safety. In addition, our groundbreaking work in data analytics and IT solutions yields performance measures and actionable insights that capture and harness healthcare data to support high-reliability goals and position organizations for institutional resilience.

Military Health Performance Planning, Measurement, and Monitoring

Booz Allen provides comprehensive performance planning and analytic expertise to support military health in care delivery (re)design, measurement and analysis, and outcomes improvement. Our experts conceive and develop customized tools to help organizations identify cost-saving opportunities, assess return on investment, and improve quality and clinical currency. We have provided support for seminal efforts such as the MHS 90-Day Plan. This included establishing a performance management system, developing the campaign plan, and developing transparency initiatives to move toward MHS-wide HRO objectives. For individual services, such as the Air Force Medical Service (AFMS), we executed a

high-reliability gap analysis and integrated the results into an HRO pilot transformation initiative for Air Force MTFs. We also supported patient-safety training, risk assessment, analysis, and process improvement at AFMS headquarters and at nearly 30 Air Force MTFs worldwide.

HRO Expertise

Booz Allen's perspective on the high-reliability transformation of military healthcare is founded on decades of experience providing support to long-standing HRO industries, such as commercial and government nuclear power and aviation. In the field of nuclear power, for example, we have developed strategies for the Department of Energy (DOE) to propagate nuclear safety best practices, and we have aligned DOE facilities with commercial benchmarks. We have also conducted hazard-abatement gap analyses and developed information systems for proactive and predictive safety. At the same time, we have supported military and commercial aviation safety, focusing on areas such as incident investigation, standardization/evaluations, and the development of mishap trend analysis information systems. We have also assisted the Federal Aviation Administration in applying the principles of safety management systems to help the aviation industry anticipate, plan for, and mitigate safety risks.

Booz Allen—through our consulting heritage, our extensive military health experience and continued support to other major HRO industry sectors—can provide the best prescription for HRO transformation at MTFs.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Scott Barr, *Senior Vice President*

Scott Barr (CMAP, PMP) leads Booz Allen's military healthcare market. Mr. Barr has more than 17 years of experience in management and strategy consulting for the Department of Defense, civil government agencies, and commercial and healthcare organizations. His functional background is in organization design and transformation, large-scale process improvement, and organizational change management. Mr. Barr is an Adjunct Professor of Change Management at Georgetown and leads Booz Allen's solutions consulting capability—developing intellectual capital, training, and thought leadership in general management consulting capabilities. He and his teams are leading key efforts to help transform the Military Health System into a high-reliability organization to improve patient outcomes for our active service members. Beyond his professional engagements, Mr. Barr also serves on the Board and Executive Committee for the USO Metro providing support and assistance to military personnel and their families.



Stephanie Keyser, *Principal*

Stephanie is a market lead for Booz Allen's business in the Defense Health Agency (DHA) and Air Force Medical Service and leads the firm's high-reliability organization capabilities across the Military Health System.

Ms. Keyser has 30 years of experience leading solutions to complex issues, managing large-scale programs, and implementing change across Department of Defense, Homeland Security, Justice, National Security Agency, civilian, and international commercial clients. She has been instrumental in helping drive multiple large-scale organizational transformations, for the National Geospatial Agency, Department of Homeland Security, and Federal Bureau of Investigation. For military health, Stephanie led the support to stand up the DHA, transitioning from an Activity to a Combat Support Agency and establishing ten shared services (including elements of DHA, Army, Air Force, and Navy).

She has a B.S. in aeronautical engineering and is a certified project management professional and certified professional innovator.

About Booz Allen

Booz Allen Hamilton has been at the forefront of strategy and technology for more than 100 years. Today, the firm provides management and technology consulting and engineering services to leading *Fortune* 500 corporations, governments, and not-for-profits across the globe. Booz Allen partners with public and private sector clients to solve their most difficult challenges through a combination of consulting, analytics, mission operations, technology, systems delivery, cybersecurity, engineering, and innovation expertise.

With international headquarters in McLean, Virginia, the firm employs more than 22,600 people globally and had revenue of \$5.41 billion for the 12 months ended March 31, 2016. To learn more, visit BoozAllen.com. (NYSE: BAH)