

# FUTURE OF HEALTH SUMMIT



## Redefining health, together

It was an absolute pleasure to host all of you at Hamilton Health Sciences' inaugural Future of Health Summit last month.

There's been a lot to process since the event – it was rich with discussion, learning and sharing. Upon reflection, my biggest take-away from our day



Ted Scott

together was that our community is ready to redefine what we mean by "health". Beginning with Dr. Alex Jadad's thought-provoking keynote and branching out throughout the day, there was a collective desire expressed to adopt a more nuanced meaning of the word "health", to encompass much more than a person's physical state.

As we learned together, the World Health Organization's definition states that health is *"a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."* This definition prompted us to consider the many other ways in which our current system can better support an individual's whole health, including their mindset and sense of well-being as they navigate through their care journey.

What became even more apparent to me at the summit is that our community is in need of transformation to enable a more democratic environment for health. Specifically, there was much expression of the need for:

- Access to health information
- Access to health providers for support
- Specialized educational resources designed to support self-management
- A greater focus on community-based care

Many of you spoke, often through your own personal experiences, of the need for greater collaboration between providers, patients and their families, with the view of enabling patients to become active partners in their own care.

This report includes many more reflections on the day, including some feedback received through our post-summit survey which many of you participated in.

I hope you enjoy this report and that it will spark some excitement toward next year's event, when I'm hoping we can dive deeper in to addressing the evolving role of health and social agencies in creating a healthier community for all.

### **Ted Scott**

*Vice President, Research and Chief Innovation Officer  
Hamilton Health Sciences*

presented by:



## Meaningful discussions on palliative care



Dr. Ralph Meyer



Scott Koblyk

We had the great pleasure of co-chairing the palliative care session at the inaugural Future of Health Summit. The goal of the session was to explore through a research lens how Hamilton Health Sciences might advance its palliative approach to care for the people it serves, in our hospitals and our broader community. We were very impressed by the level of engagement that was generated over two sessions. Participants were thoughtful in their contributions to the discussions, sometimes candidly offering examples of lived experience with the health system and sharing ideas for improvement. Our discussions were framed by juxtaposing Ontario health systems documents, selected medical literature evaluating what patients and caregivers value most, and a personal experience describing the journeys of two loved ones.

We heard that central to addressing what patients and family care givers value most is open discussion acknowledging mortality and guidance in anticipating the possibility of death, yet not compromising opportunities for care that enhances the duration and quality of life. The compelling need for such dialogue was contrasted with recognition that gaps exist in meeting this need in our current health system. Participants suggested that understanding these gaps, including exploring the roles of hope and fear, offer an angle for future research.

That research could include determining the underlying causes and testing strategies to overcome the gaps in healthcare provider and patient/family communication at individual and systems levels. Participants recognized the important role of the healthcare system to lead and respond to broader societal discussions about our perceptions of illness, the dying process, and death.

Thank you to all who participated in these very thought-provoking sessions. We found them to be an effective platform for engagement and look forward to building upon these discussions as HHS continues to improve its palliative approach to care.

### **Dr. Ralph Meyer**

*Vice President, Oncology & Palliative Care  
Hamilton Health Sciences*

### **Scott Koblyk**

*Caregiver and patient advocate*

## Inspired to continue collaborating



John Fleming

I pause to reflect on what I took away from our shared day at the Future of Health Summit. It's a challenging subject but happily, I am optimistic about that future.

I'm privileged to serve as co-chair of the Hamilton Health Team, a strongly determined group of many diverse people, working collaboratively and cooperatively to create a dramatically new and highly patient-centred health system for Hamilton. I'm in that position because of my 'regular' role as a patient advisor at Hamilton Health Sciences, and I share that chair with another patient. She amazes me.

Probably like you, I took away two 'biggies' from our day together at the FOH Summit:

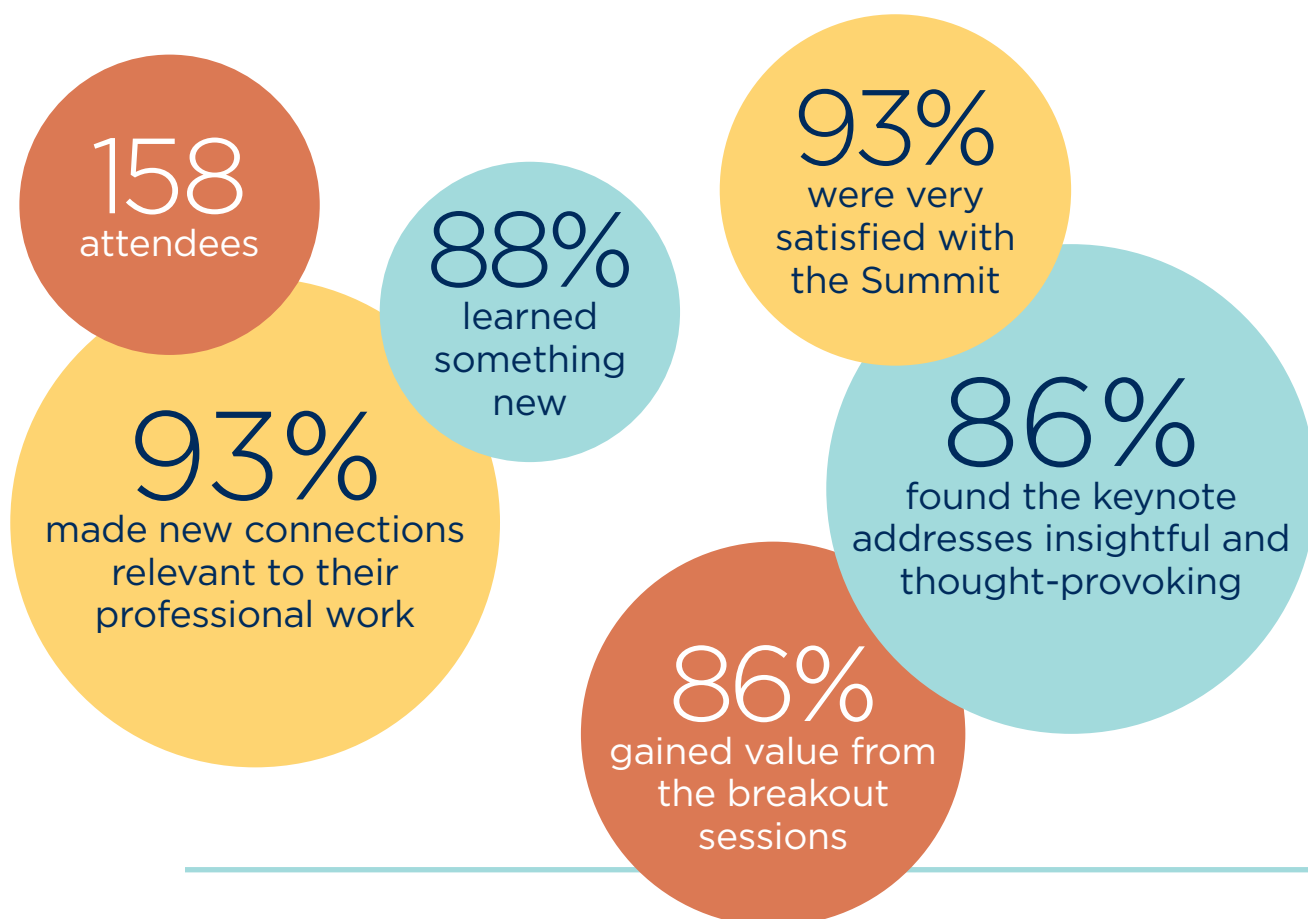
- the inspiring and deeply thought-provoking Alex Jadad; and
- the opportunity among many new colleagues to share our ideas, dreams and challenges of making health a better reality in the lives of all.

Alex challenged us to rework our ideas about 'what is health?', and what flows from that is my inspiration to keep working with many colleagues to make our dream for Hamilton a reality.

### **John Fleming**

*Patient Advisor  
Hamilton Health Sciences*

# Future of Health by the numbers



## Stay connected

For questions, feedback or to receive information about the 2020 Future of Health Summit, contact [researchinnovation@hhsc.ca](mailto:researchinnovation@hhsc.ca).

