SECTION 1 – THE HEALTH CARE MARKETPLACE
RESOLUTION 4.02:
DATA DRIVEN HEALTH CARE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

A 2009 study by Dartmouth Atlas researchers concludes that there is "irrational distribution of valuable and expensive health care resources" by way of hospital and physician capacity. New hospitals, clinics and specialty niche facilities like sleep clinics are emerging, often within close proximity to preexisting facilities, while many regions in in the country have seen a significant growth in hospital employees.[1] Is the growth in capacity addressing a gap in needed services and improving the value of health care delivered? Or is it duplicating services, driving up utilization and increasing costs?

Given the importance of controlling health care costs and improving outcomes, it is in the public interest to establish a data-driven mechanism to evaluate the health care infrastructure needs for a community. Such an evaluation would enable health care providers and their governing boards, lenders and municipal land use planners to identify and plan for current or future community needs. This evaluation would also create public accountability for the responsible investment of health care resources.

Foundational elements are in place to support this effort. Federal, state and local public health surveillance and planning activities enhance our ability to understand community needs and capacity. And an Affordable Care Act (ACA) provision that recently took effect now requires not-for-profit hospitals to conduct an in-depth analysis of their community's health needs every three years. Hospital-based Community Health Needs Assessments must be publicly reported, involve a number of different stakeholders and include a strategy outlining how the hospital proposes to address a community's needs.

The Alliance® resolves to work with purchasers, providers, academics and public health agencies to promote a data-driven health care infrastructure needs assessment. We will:

> Raise awareness among purchasers, providers, health policy makers and public health officials of the need for and feasibility of a data driven infrastructure needs assessment.

> Encourage credible, objective, non-partisan entities, such as the Population Health Institute, the Dartmouth Institute or the Legislative Council to commit to this project.

> Help secure necessary funding.

> Disseminate the results and encourage their use in future health care construction planning.

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[1] Dartmouth Institute, Hospital and Physician Capacity Update

TA123-0513