

Controlling Healthcare Costs by Promoting a Culture of Superior Quality and Safety

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Victor Dzau, MD, a speaker at the marcus evans National Healthcare CXO Summit Spring 2010, discusses best practices for healthcare CEOs in North America.

Interview with: Victor Dzau, MD, President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Duke University Health System

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Superior levels of healthcare quality and patient safety require more than simply attention to detail, but an adoption of those principles at the organizational cultural level. Victor Dzau, MD, President and CEO at the Duke University Health System believes that quality improvement measures reduce hospital operational costs, the opposite of what is often thought. As a speaker at the marcus evans National Healthcare CXO Summit Spring 2010 taking place in Florida, April 25-27, 2010, Dzau shares his thoughts on reducing costs through quality and safety improvement.

What long-term strategies and best practices would you recommend to healthcare CEOs?

Victor Dzau: We all recognize that there is a need to change the way healthcare is delivered. Healthcare CEOs can play a very important role in resolving some of the issues facing the nation, on quality, access, costs and coverage for every American. They need to adopt a patient-friendly and patient-centered approach, and create a vertically integrated healthcare delivery system from primary care all the way to specialty care.

How can healthcare CEOs improve quality of care and patient safety, whilst also keeping costs down?

Victor Dzau: CEOs have an enormous opportunity now, to increase efficiency and reduce the cost of healthcare. There are tremendous variations in the cost of care, therefore many hospitals can reduce their expenditure and still achieve the same outcomes. Improving quality and safety reduces unnecessary hospitalization and compensation, thus reducing overall costs.

CEOs must measure the performance of their organization in regards to quality and safety using whatever metrics they have, and create an improved culture of quality and safety adopted by everyone. I strongly believe that these measures keep costs down rather than up. In our organization, our culture is that patients come first; therefore, quality of care is measured by outcomes, patient satisfaction and patient experience.

CEOs have to see themselves as the person responsible and accountable for the performance of the organization, and accountable to the patients and their families. CEOs need to consider themselves as serving their organization and not the other way around. Best practices should be measured by looking at the issues that we care most about, all related to the patients outcome and satisfaction.

What are your projections for the coming few years?

Victor Dzau: The downward pressure on costs is real, and everyone knows the cost of healthcare is too high. While reimbursements decrease, maintaining our mission and being able to invest in our future will be a challenge for healthcare CEOs.

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About the National Healthcare CXO Summit Spring 2010

This unique forum will take place at The Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa, Hollywood, Florida, April 25-27, 2010. Offering much more than any conference, exhibition or trade show, this exclusive meeting will bring together esteemed industry thought leaders and solution providers to a highly focused and interactive networking event. The summit includes presentations on patient safety, the healthcare reform, best practices and the future of healthcare delivery.

For more information please send an email to info@marcusevanscy.com or visit the event website at <http://www.healthcare-summit.com/VictorDzauInterview>

Please note that the summit is a closed business event and the number of participants strictly limited.

About Marcus Evans Summits

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