

# Strategic Management for Healthcare Organizations: Navigating the Challenges of Complexity

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**Abstract**— Strategic management is the design and implementation of tactical plans to reach specific goals using available resources. This integrative literature review will outline the application of strategic management in healthcare organizations. The purpose of this discussion is to give an overview of strategic management in healthcare organizations, and the unique characteristics and context that exists, as well as highlight the key principles of a strategic management plan that is well executed and implemented. A review of the literature will highlight the strengths and challenges that exist due to the ever-increasing complexity in healthcare settings and use Drucker's theory of business to add value and fill the gaps in knowledge. Strategic management plans often fall short of implementation. Successful execution of the plan will be discussed with a focus on strategic thinking, strategic branding, and strategy redesign as principles of success. The goal is to provide a deeper understanding of strategic management in healthcare organizations and identify elements that can improve strategy success.

**Keywords**— healthcare organization, strategic branding, strategic management, strategic thinking

## I. INTRODUCTION

Strategic management is a systematic process guided by fundamental principles that inform short- and long-term goals. These goals help organizations move from the current state to the desired future state [1], by using purposeful and intentional strategic actions [2]. It is at times challenging for leaders to use strategic initiatives to achieve organizational goals, especially in high-risk healthcare environments, and when the future state is unknown and uncertain. However, the importance of strategic management is critical in achieving organizational goals, meeting targets, and maintaining a competitive edge. This review explores the published literature for the best available evidence of strategic management in healthcare, applies theoretical principles to explain how, why, and to what degree strategic management in healthcare exists and adds value and practical application of strategic management principles to healthcare organizations. The importance of this review lies in developing a deeper understanding of strategic management in healthcare settings, exploring the strengths and challenges unique to this environment, and providing strategic tools to effectively lead teams through complex situations of change.

This review is organized as follows, Section I contains the introduction and purpose of the review, Section II discusses the background and related work relevant to this topic, Section III outlines the literature review methodology, Section IV presents the literature review

results and discussion, Section V adds a theoretical consideration using Drucker's theory of business, Section VI offers practical recommendations for strategic management, and Section VII concludes with a summary of the review paper.

## II. RELATED WORK

Healthcare organizations are believed to run like clockwork, which has engrained expectations from the public and healthcare consumers that equate to high performance, safety, and quality outcomes [3]. However, with increased advancement in care and technology, the complexity of health systems has been compounded with constant change and risk [4, 5]. Each additional moving part in the clock adds more layers of complexity and uncertainty [3].

A decade ago, healthcare services were much more invasive and more aggressive, and consumers had fewer treatment options. For example, in cardiac services, we are currently witnessing a downward trend in open-heart surgeries, and an upward swing in less invasive procedures, like coronary stents and non-surgical heart valve implantation. These non-invasive high-tech solutions add complexity to the health system and require strategic changes. On one hand, this trend is impacting costs by reducing resource utilization, shortening hospital stays, and expediting recovery. On the other hand, it has created pressure to keep up with the innovation trend, the high volumes of procedures, advanced training, and expectations of the consumer.

One way to reduce the complexity of health systems is through effective strategic management. Healthcare systems are complex with multiple moving parts and interconnecting nodes. Rather than static, these networks and connections are moving constantly in an unpredictable fashion, making it difficult to pinpoint the best strategy to take. Following a systematic and transparent process that outlines the plan, the key deliverables, and the roles of all team members can help with the successful implementation of the strategy [5]. If the network connections are well-defined even during times of stress and uncertainty, all stakeholders will be clear on their roles and how they fit into the bigger picture. It is in this complex network of moving parts that a strategy brings all the components together. The key is to ensure that the goals are relevant, useful, usable, and add value to all the stakeholders of the network.

Preparing for future events is a critical component of strategic management. This includes assessing how the organization will respond to a crisis and building strategies that support innovation, synthesis, development, and forecasting to manage uncertainty [6]. This could not be more relevant today, where we have seen the effects of strong and weak strategic planning in the pandemic crisis globally. Strategies can include innovative ways of managing systems and synthesizing new ideas from various sources. It can also incorporate scalability and forecasting to predict growth and patterns of events, highlighting the value of data modelling.

Operational structures and strategic ideas contribute to strategic management, which is directed at ensuring resources are available to generate the action needed to achieve the goal. In healthcare organizations, these resources are under the direction of, and dependent on, mobilization by the leadership teams. The goal is to develop a reliable leadership workforce that employs accurate decision-makers to sustain the strategy. If performed correctly, effective strategic management can bridge the gap between strategy formation and strategy execution, while staying flexible to external changes [1].

### III. METHODOLOGY

The first objective of this paper is to explore the published literature for the best available evidence discussing strategic management in healthcare. Using an integrative literature review methodology, published literature was assessed, critiqued, and synthesized for inclusion and discussion. Literature was collated under topics of strategic management to combine perspectives and insights from different contributors. Data was extracted in the form of descriptive information and conceptual ideas relevant to the review topic.

The published literature was searched using databases including Google Scholar, Science Direct, EBSCO, Medline, and CORE. Using the keywords "Strategic management of healthcare organizations". 55 English

articles were published between 2017 and 2022 that were relevant to this review. Of these, 44 were excluded for the following reasons: not healthcare (10), incomplete text (8) not English (7), not strategic management (16), and duplicates (3). An additional three relevant articles were found through hand searches.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the inclusion criteria, the search of databases resulted in 14 articles that comprehensively covered the topic of interest. The results of the literature search are grouped into four key foci (Table 1):

1. Overview of strategic management in healthcare,
2. performance,
3. challenges, and
4. tools for strategic management in healthcare.

These will be discussed in more detail to illuminate the current findings.

Table 1: Articles included and respective primary foci

Strategic Management Focus	Literature
Overview of strategic management in healthcare	Adeola 2019 Price 2019
Performance and strategic management in healthcare	Rasouli 2020 Layland 2019 Remondino 2020 Mwaura et al. 2019 Ryan 2018
Challenges in strategic management in healthcare	Alomran 2019 Safonov et al. 2019 Comacchio et al 2017 Mikhno 2020
Tools for strategic management in healthcare	Mutua 2017 Sewradj 2017 Gouglas 2019

#### 4.1 Overview

Strategic management in health services is not a new concept. All organizations make plans to reach their goals and to push products or services to the consumer. However, strategy has different meanings in different organizations and is largely dependent on the direction of the organization, the goals, and the corporate agenda and enterprise priorities [1].

The complexity of health strategies is compounded by the expectation to do more with less. Identifying a desired future state for a complex environment is heavily influenced by external and internal unpredictable factors [7] and risks inherent in health care [1]. External factors include government mandates, natural disasters, disease outbreaks, privacy laws, and pandemic states. Internal factors include technology, human resources, finances, infrastructure, and enterprise solutions.

To respond to increasing complexity in health systems, strategies require a higher level of strategic thinking and flexibility. Incorporating flexibility and nonlinear thinking in strategic planning can be challenging for health organizations, shifting from the usual cause-and-effect models of thinking [7] to a more agile approach.

There is value in understanding the connection between the organizational structure and the strategy. Structures include the networks and relationships or interfaces within the organizational sectors, as well as interfaces to outside organizations and collaborators. These interfaces exist between executive policy, local organizations, and frontline providers. The layers provide stability, permeability, control, transparency of goals, and knowledge sharing [7]. The strength lies in the critical connection of these networks to the corporate agenda that flows through the organization [1].

To be effective, the strategy needs to be logical, staged [7], flexible, and follow a systematic process that guides progress and action [1]. The strategy also requires strength sourced from the organizational structures and the capacity to leverage the connections between the network nodes to collectively work through the decision-making process. Strategic management in healthcare can therefore be explained as a complex yet calculated plan that is dependent on multiple internal and external factors. The moving parts of the health system work together towards a common strategic goal. The risk of not performing or reaching the goal comes with dire consequences and potential harm. So, the strategy needs to be systematic, have a clear direction, be flexible to change, and align with the organizational priorities, while adding value to the network. Those organizational priorities become the benchmark against which performance is measured.

#### ***4.2 Performance and Strategic Management in Healthcare***

Without performance, the strategy will fail. Performance equates to the productivity of the entire organization; it is the catalyst for action. Performance is not only measured by profitability and growth. Non-financial performance indicators include employee satisfaction, the efficiency of service delivery, consumer satisfaction, and professional development [8]. Performance and productivity need resources, innovation, and efficiency to achieve organizational goals [2]. These resources are often scarce in healthcare and require creative innovative solutions with limited supplies to achieve the desired outcome.

Performance is a way to assess if the organizational strategy is effective and if objectives have been met [8]. Managing performance strategically involves setting direction, operationalizing that direction, creating actionable work, and implementing an evaluation of the performance cycle [2]. Without building capacity in management and leadership, performance is predicted to suffer [9].

Performance in strategic management is a product of strategic leaders [9], and strategic planning coordinates those managers in their action plans [10]. Healthcare management plays a vital role [10] and relies on the competencies and responsibilities of healthcare managers [9]. These leaders require robust performance skills and competencies to action strategies and add a pragmatic approach to a strategic plan. Investing in management [9], innovative approaches [11], and leveraging key talents to build capacity in the organizational performance plan enhances the ability to manage strategy and uncertainty in healthcare [10].

Performance in healthcare organizations is therefore dependent on strong performing leaders to guide the strategy and ensure effective implementation. It is reliant on resources and dependent on building capacity within the organization to foster high performing teams. Performance in healthcare organizations is measured by quality and is a lighthouse to assess if the organization is productive and effective in delivering services to the consumer. This does not come without challenges; many related to the inherent complexities evident in health systems.

#### ***4.3 Challenges in Strategic Management in Healthcare***

Challenges are expected but not always planned for in strategic management. Most complex systems are typically resistant to change and conservative in their strategic approach [12]. The difficulty lies in operationalizing the plan into specific actions [12]. This is dependent on stakeholder motivation [13], end-user engagement with change [14], and performance monitoring after implementation [15]. In addition, there needs to be clarity and transparency in strategic direction, ability to perform, a clear understanding of the goals, and a willingness to participate to realise successful operationalization [14].

Furthermore, there are challenges in balancing competing priorities in healthcare systems. On the one hand, there are cost containment priorities that require increasing numbers of deliverables with ever waning and constrained resources. While on the other hand, the priority is to promote personalized health options, tailor-made treatment solutions and patient-centred care that can incur greater costs of time and resources to ensure higher quality outputs. Similarly, the seesaw of investing in value-add services, while putting people first [15], or maximizing value for consumers, while maintaining low organizational overheads [12]. Ensuring a balance between the internal and external priorities is challenging and requires a working relationship between the environment and an organization guided by long-term strategies [12].

Healthcare challenges are not unique. Limited resources and resistance to change are common in other areas too. The difference is that in the healthcare setting, these challenges come with a higher price if not resolved – like an adverse event or harm to the consumer. Being innovative and leveraging tools for strategic management could be the difference between success and failure.

#### 4.4 Tools for Strategic Management in Healthcare

Strategic tools can help to manage the complexity and challenging decision-making in healthcare organizations. Tools range from process analysis [16], to process mining [17], and even diversification of services through horizontal and vertical integration strategies [18].

Healthcare organizations are challenged with competing priorities. In times of uncertainty, decision-analytic approaches, like decision matrices, strategy maps, or SWOT diagrams, can assist in solidifying strategic direction [16]. Using decision analytics enables preparedness and prioritization while maintaining transparency in the strategic approach [16].

Another tool for success is process mining. Process mining involves using data to assess, define, and evaluate performance. The goal of process mining is to turn event data from logs into actions and strategies to reduce costs and increase the value [17]. In addition to process mining, healthcare diversification strategies have been suggested to increase competitive advantages [18].

Diversification of services includes strategies to promote organizational growth [18]. Diversification and integration are known to improve access to resources and reduce transaction costs and redundancies [19]. However, effectively managing risk associated with investing in growth beyond the organization's core sector is key when implementing diversification or integration strategies.

There are many tools at an organization's disposal to enhance strategic management. Analysing the processes to ensure efficiency, mining the data to evaluate performance, and diversifying the portfolio to enhance organizational growth are all effective ways of leveraging tools to improve the strategy.

In summary, the published literature highlights the benefits of strategic management in healthcare organizations to facilitate growth, innovation, and productivity. The complexity and constantly changing healthcare systems do not lend themselves to effective implementation of linear strategic plans and can result in difficulties with the operationalization of the plans. Building flexibility and supportive structures and resources into plans increases the likelihood of success. Success is also determined by leveraging high performing strategic management teams that can guide the direction, select the right tools, and ensure that all stakeholders are engaged in the process of change. When the strategy is clear and transparent, using decision-analytics, data-driven approaches, and growth forward goals, the gap between strategic planning and successful implementation can be bridged.

## V. THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The second objective of this paper is to apply theoretical principles to help explain how, why, and to what degree strategic management in healthcare exists and adds value.

Peter Drucker was an Austrian management consultant, educator, and author who specialized in modern management philosophy and foundations. Drucker (2002, 1994) believed that the most important goals for any organization were innovation and marketing. Drucker coined many terms, the most well-known is "knowledge worker". A knowledge worker is someone who leverages information to perform their job. Another concept Drucker introduced was "management by objectives" which measures performance against typical standards for the job [20]. He proposed that if employees collaborated on what standards are required for the job, they would be more satisfied and perform better in the job. Managers are the catalyst to create positive changes and ignite progress in organizations [20, 21]. Managers according to Drucker, are the strategists [22]. These health leaders drive performance and are integral to overcoming challenges and mobilizing resources, as outlined in the published literature review above.

In Drucker's Theory of Business (1994), he emphasizes that organizations must be conscious of where they are investing their time and resources. To increase awareness, he suggests asking 5 questions: what is your purpose as an organization, who is your consumer, what do they value, what are your intended outcomes, and how do you plan to reach those outcomes [20]? Figure 2 illustrates an example of the cyclic nature of investing time and resources in health systems. A complex balance and challenge occur between the efficient and effective use of the limited organizational resources to provide quality care services to the people.

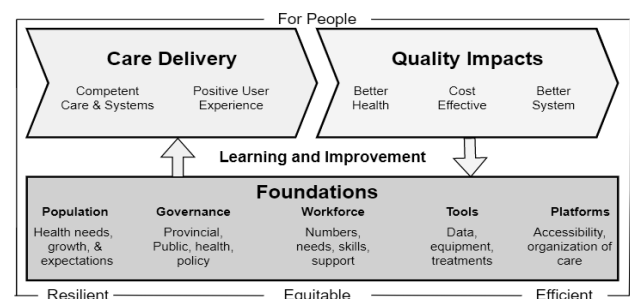


Figure 1: Priority Goals for Healthcare Organizations  
Note: Cyclic nature of healthcare priorities. Authors work.

Often, organizations take the right action, but the desired outcome is not produced. Drucker proposed that this is due to the organizational normative assumptions not fitting the reality of the situation [20], [22]. Assumptions govern organizational culture, determine what action to take, and define what adds value [23]. Drucker's theory challenges these assumptions to achieve the desired outcome [20].

Drucker's theory of business focuses on decentralization, workforce development, knowledge workers, corporate social responsibility, consumer experience, and organizational culture [22]. Drucker supports a healthy organizational culture that puts the consumer first and prioritizes knowledge growth, social responsibility, data-informed decision-making, and shared responsibility.

Drucker's theory of business helps to explain the nuances and underpinnings revealed in the published literature review above. It adds value to healthcare organizations, where performance is measured by the quality of care, where knowledge workers are catalysts for innovative strategies, and where clear priorities and planning can help to overcome the challenges of complexity. Putting the consumers first is always the right path to follow, according to Drucker, which resonates with the healthcare environment.

At the core, establishing a strategy to ensure innovation and strategic management is the result of knowing, rather than doing (Drucker, 2002). This adds value to understanding health organizational management, ensuring that everyone knows which direction the organization is going, especially during times of uncertainty [23].

## VI. PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The third objective of this paper is the practical application of strategic management principles to healthcare organizations. The published literature highlights the strengths and challenges of strategic management and offers decision-analytics approaches that can help. Drucker's theory adds meaning and depth; highlighting the necessary pause to think broadly about the organizational assumptions before moving forward in a strategy, ensuring that there is a clear understanding, knowing, of the roles and responsibilities.

While planning and forming the strategy appear to be easier, implementing and executing the strategy is where the greatest difficulty lies. The author posits that the biggest determinants of success in strategic implementation and execution are:

1. strategic thinking,
2. strategic branding, and
3. strategic redesign.

These three strategic determinants collectively add to individual, leadership, and organization's strategic management success.

### 6.1 Strategic Thinking

Strategic thinking is critical when striving for high performance. Yet it is challenging, especially in times of constant change and pressure to do more with less. There is value in taking the time to step back to look at the situation and the complexity and relationships within it. Taking a step back allows for reflection on successes and failures, and a review of the organization and if it is moving in the right direction with the right priorities. This enhances the organization's ability to anticipate opportunities, leveraging creativity and understanding, while being objective in decision-making to maximize success.

Strategic thinking creates a clear decision-making approach, which outlines criteria that can be logically worked through, while balancing short and long-term goals. Taking a future-focused rather than outcomes-

focused approach creates strategies that proactively seek diverse perspectives and challenge current thinking while investing in the growth of the organization. Strategic thinking needs to be embodied by leadership and be in alignment with the priorities of end-users [24] to shift an organization into a growth mindset, focusing and responding to emergent priorities.

Successful organizations employ an effective corporate strategy that aligns networks with a common goal. Staying relevant, while embracing change, requires flexibility and innovation, with strong leadership and a clear strategic plan. These organizations think often and think big picture, using strategic tools to plan and measure success.

Using a prioritization matrix like the example the author has illustrated in Figure 3 can help to keep the strategy on track, thoughts focused, and ensure transparency in goals and direction. Smart strategies invest resources, time, and money in priorities with low cost and add high value. Organizations should think critically about low-effort and high-risk initiatives, avoiding these as a value drain on the organization. Thinking strategically about all organizational priorities and sorting them into the priority matrix boxes can help to create clear pathways and pockets of work with their associated resource and value-adds.

Thinking strategically requires that these priorities are further ranked according to importance and impact. Higher priority items should be deemed as urgent and required with a significant impact on the system. While lower priority initiatives have little to no impact or include a workaround that requires minimal resources. Setting priorities in health systems is imperative and helps to inform the strategic goals and organizational direction.

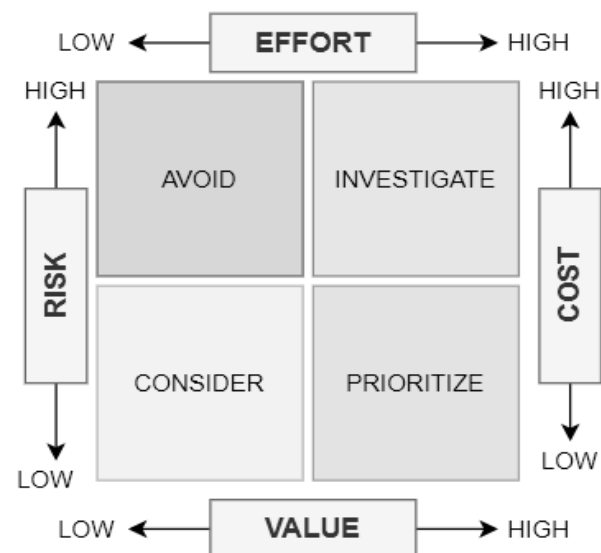


Figure 2: Prioritization Matrix

Note. Adapted from McCarty & Moran (2018) [25]

In healthcare organizations, strategic thinking includes looking at all the human resources and ensuring that the best leaders are strategically located to ensure success. Not

only does the leader need the management skills, but the clinical expertise too. This is an example of management by objectives. We have seen countless leaders make poor decisions in planning and implementation due to a lack of clinical expertise. To achieve the best possible outcome, leaders in health organizations must meet the requirements for the job and know what tools to use to deliver the results. A balance of skills, experience, knowledge and a history of successful strategic leadership is essential for organizational performance and success.

The author proposed five key steps for effective strategic thinking in Figure 4. Strategic thinking involves firstly, thinking about the big picture and how all parts of the internal and external network are connected. Secondly, questioning the current state and if it meets the needs of the organization and consumer. Lastly, combining steps three to five, positioning the relevant resources strategically to achieve the highest priority initiatives with maximum positive impact. This process may not be linear, but rather adaptive in its utilization, moving back and forth between the steps to ensure that priorities are being met and that decision-making is sound. These steps form the basis of strategic thinking and assist in planning and preparation for strategic implementation.

Strategic thinking gives an opportunity to pause, evaluate, and take stock that you have all the resources you need to be effective in the implementation of the strategy. The pause also allows time for reflection on how the strategy will impact the organization, its people, the resources, and the public, and how that will be received. Anticipating the ripple effect of strategic changes in all impacted areas of the health systems can increase the level of preparedness, mitigate resistance to change, and assist in strategy implementation success.

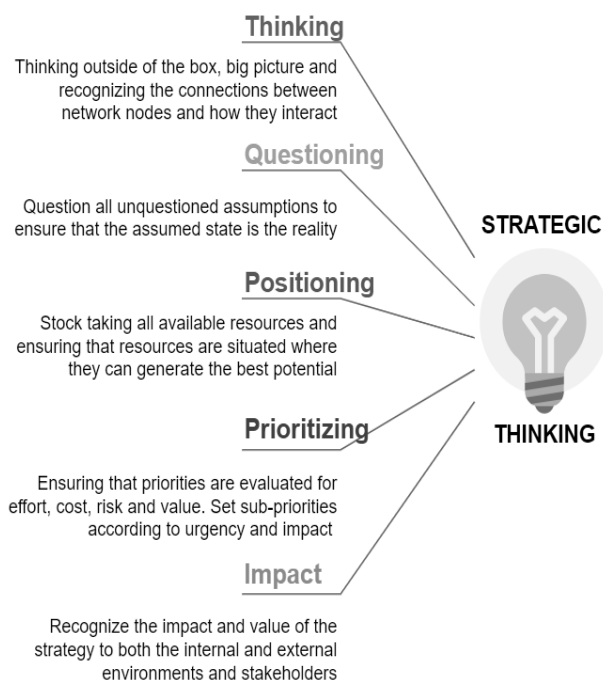


Figure 3: Principles of Strategic Thinking

Note: Adapted from McKinsey & Company (2017) [26]

The future-focused approach that comes with strategic thinking seeks input from end-users and challenges the status quo, working as a catalyst for organizational growth. Part of strategic thinking is creating a brand to increase awareness, define the goals, and create a clear picture of what the strategy represents.

**6.2 Strategic Branding**

Akin to what was retrieved from the published literature review results, there are many examples of strategic plans that fail in healthcare. The reasons for this are plentiful and may include not understanding the customer, lack of senior leadership endorsement, overestimating resources while underestimating the time, lack of change management, poor communication, and weak employee commitment, to name a few. In contrast, successful strategies include awareness of the value of branding to the consumers, the organization, and the reputation.

Brands are plentiful in our everyday lives, we see brands in almost every facet of life, including clothing, food, and technology. The brand says a tremendous amount about the product, the company's reputation, and the value that the consumer places on the item. Similar to strategic fails, many brands have failed too. A prime example of brand failure is when the popular clothing company GAP rebranded its logo in 2010. A small change in the graphic design resulted in one of the most well-known failures, which caused GAP to revert to the old logo within three days. The failure is attributed to a lack of planning, not knowing the audience, or misunderstanding the basic rules of brand identity. At the simplest level, the brand represents the organization, its history, performance, and success.

The author proposes that branding needs to follow a process to be successful. This process ensures that all the assumptions are met, that the message is useful and relevant, and clearly and accurately articulated.

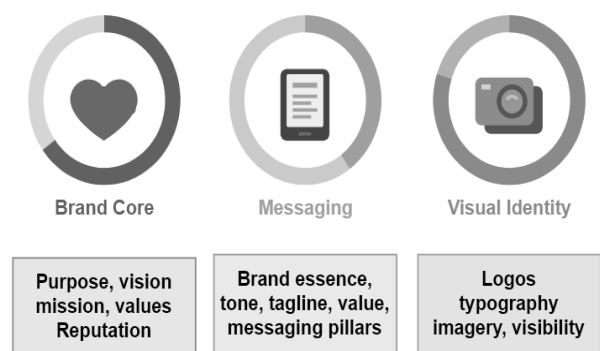


Figure 4: The Branding Process

Note: Adapted from K. French (2012) [27]

Figure 5 outlines the process of branding, which includes the purpose, the message, and the visual identity. The brand functions as the advocate for the organization, it tells a story, offers a consistent message, and creates a reputation or even an emotion for those reading it.

Branding can be the make or break of a strategy. For example, if a health organisation's brand was "better health" while intending to reflect the high quality of services, this could be seen as a negative. If you aim to just be better, rather than excellent or exceptional, what message is that giving to the consumer and the employees? In addition, the brand has to be relevant to the workers, be useful and usable, to be sustainable. Irrelevant brands are harder to market, resulting in resistance to the change, or at best, apathy toward the brand. In addition, the brand should be known. If employees are asked what the organizational brand is, there should be little hesitation in response. An unknown brand is a failed brand and contributes to a weak strategy.

Organizations need to aim high in their strategic management, planning, and branding while simultaneously ensuring that the goals can be achieved. Successfully branded organizations ensured that their brand, mission, and values were canvassed and illustrated on every elevator door, every hallway wall, and every hand sanitiser dispenser. This canvassing ensures that everyone, from the frontline worker to the senior leader is aware of the goals, the direction, and the mission of the organization. A great deal of investment is needed to ensure awareness, knowing, and visibility of the strategy – this is where branding can be leveraged.

A fine example of successful healthcare organization branding includes Mayo Clinic. A world-renowned organization that is well known for its focus on research and innovation to improve health. Mayo Clinic's brand is "the patient comes first", and its mission statement is: "inspiring hope and promoting health through integrated clinical practice, education, and research". The brand is clear, accessible, and aligns well with the strategy. This is an effective brand and highlights the strengths of the strategy while ensuring that global audiences are holding them accountable to the high standard they have set. This brand is also widely known; most of the North American population would be able to recognize these as Mayo Clinic traits.

Johns Hopkins is another example of effective health organization branding. Like Mayo Clinic, Johns Hopkins is world-renowned for excellence in research and healthcare. During the pandemic, their COVID-19 dashboard became commonplace in all healthcare settings to track and trace numbers around the world. Johns Hopkins's mission is to "improve the health of the community and world by setting the standard of excellence...". Their strategic brand is to "delivery the promise of medicine" and "be the best". Not only do they strive to be a role model, but they also strive for it on a global scale. This is another example of a brand aiming high and aligning with the mission and values of an organization to assist in strategy implementation and success.

The author proposes that the branding of a strategy is critically important to successful implementation and

execution. This affords everyone the knowledge of what the organizational strengths are, what their ultimate goal is, and how they plan to achieve it. Successful healthcare organizations like Mayo Clinic and Johns Hopkins aim high in their strategic plan and mission statements, ensure that the message is well disseminated to create a global image and reputation that matches the strategic plan, and deliver on their goal to put the patient first and be the best. In the author's experience, healthcare organizational branding is missing; the awareness of the strategy is weak if at all, and the mission is hidden in corporate websites with little relevance or value to the public or the employees. Strategic management must include the brand to be successful. The strategic brand also needs to reflect reality and align with the assumptions and expectations of the organization. So, if the new brand is "excellence in healthcare" – then there needs to be a strategic plan to achieve excellence and ongoing review to ensure sustainability. The brand represents the organizational culture, the position in the service market, the performance, and the strategy [28]. It effectively guides the direction with just a few words and requires that the organization not only strive for it but is accountable for the strategic plan to reach it.

What if the brand is not working? This creates an opportunity for change and redesign of the strategy. Without a shift, the strategy is unlikely to be executed or generate the desired outcomes. While change is difficult, redesign and rebranding are essential when the strategy is not on the right path or not heading in the right direction.

### **6.3 Redesigning Strategic Management**

How can challenged healthcare organizations develop or improve their strategic management and strategic brand to better reflect the goals and strategic plan? Firstly, the author suggests, aligning with Drucker, that an organization needs to recognize the need to change. This requires that the organization explore the assumptions that underpin its actions and strategic plan. What do they want to achieve?

Secondly, the organization should review and define the purpose. What value do they currently add, and what value are they aiming for? Rather than "better health", the author proposes a shift to represent "exceptional health". The most effective strategy is one that aims high, not mid-range, in its branding. Thereby creating a reputation for the organization that they are accountable for.

Thirdly, the redesign requires that the organization defines specific goals. A redesign would shift to measurable goals, for example 80% self-sufficiency in service delivery, 25% cost reduction with virtual platforms, 50% reduction in staff turnover and sick time, or 85% consumer satisfaction scores. If these are already measured in the health system, make them transparent and report on them regularly to ensure accountability and responsibility for organizational strategic success. This also ensures that the strategy is

productive, effective, and producing the desired measurable results.

Lastly, create and test the new strategic plan after a redesign. This expands on the strategic brand and specific goals. This plan needs to be unique to the organization and separate the strategy from the action and implementation. The strategic plan, as previously mentioned, needs to be flexible to adjust to challenging uncertain times, while outlining performance metrics and quality indicators that reflect growth and success.

In summary, the author proposes that the strategic management approach of health organizations can be redesigned to achieve success. This requires recognition that change is necessary and branding that aims high to achieve the best outcomes. Furthermore, the brand and strategic approach should be widely broadcast to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are aware of the organizational direction and strategy. The healthcare organization must ensure a clear purpose-driven approach that adds value to the people and the organization while setting specific measurable goals and detailing a plan to achieve and evaluate success.

Healthcare organizations must be proactive in their strategy, rather than reactive as we have commonly seen. Using a pivot-ability model where the redesign is encouraged when thinking and branding are not working. The intent is to effectively manage change and reduce variance between strategic plans and strategic execution. Strategic management affords the organization the luxury of hitting the pause button when complexity exceeds capacity, and a chance to strategically think, rebrand, and redesign the priorities for relevance, value, and success.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The objectives of this paper were to outline the evidence available in the published literature, use theory to highlight any gaps and add a philosophical perspective to the knowledge, and apply strategic management principles of success to healthcare organizations' strategies.

The published literature confirmed that healthcare organizations are complex webs of interconnecting unpredictable networks. Implementing and executing a strategy within the complex network is challenging with competing priorities and often resistance. When implementing a strategy in a healthcare setting, strong leadership is essential to turn strategy into action. Productivity becomes a key indicator of success and should be measured early and often. In addition, many tools can assist in successful strategic management, including data mining, process mapping, and decision-analytic pathways.

Drucker's theory of management highlighted the need to put the consumer first. Knowing what the consumer wants, ensures that the organizational strategy is aligned with the

service requirements and demand. Drucker also noted that strong leaders are integral in mobilizing and leveraging strategic resources while ensuring that the needs of the organization and the workforce are met. This theory highlighted the strength of knowing – which is highly relevant. For a strategy to be effective, everyone needs to know the plan, represent the brand, the strategic direction, and the behaviours that determine success.

Lastly, this paper reviewed three key principles of successful strategic management and implementation in healthcare organizations: strategic thinking, strategic branding, and redesigning the strategy. Strategic thinking is critical in gaining a big picture overview of the strategy, how the individual parts are connected, and how they should be prioritized. Strategic branding tells a lot about the organization: the purpose, values, and mission. The brand sets the bar high to measure accountability and frames the reputation of the organization. When change is needed, strategic redesign is essential. Redesigning the strategic plan, action, and outcomes is a way to correct the path when things are not going to plan. A redesign is an opportunity to improve the strategy, the thinking, and the brand.

Overall, strategic management in healthcare organizations is an essential tool to create positive change and ensure that a systematic approach, guided by fundamental principles, is followed to achieve long- and short-term goals.

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