

Developing our 2025-2027 Impact Strategy

Why are we talking about our Impact Strategy now?

Well one of the things we've been talking a lot about over the last several months is that...in 2024, RMHC is turning 50!

And, beyond being a unique moment to reflect on...and to celebrate our legacy of impact...and of serving families for half a century...it's also a once in a lifetime opportunity and an inflection point to look toward the future and ask ourselves..."how we want to evolve as we kick off the next 50 years."

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What are we creating?

So what we're working to create is the first globally aligned, co-created, locally relevant, and universally adopted strategic framework. That's a mouthful, but each of these words is really significant.

Co-created: That means that we want the entire system to get their fingerprints on this framework.

Aligned: That means we want this framework to be endorsed by the entire system as the direction we're headed in as we kick off our next 50.

Locally relevant: You know, there's one thing to have a global vision, but the way you bring that vision to life around the world...it's just going to look different because the needs of the people we serve are different...the communities we operate in are different...so we have to account for that and we want our Chapters around the world to be able to see themselves inside this framework.

And lastly, Universally adopted: This is the outcome. The goal here is that because this framework will have been co-created...because we're aligned around the world...and because it's locally relevant...we want all Chapters to adopt it and to leverage it to develop their own local plans that ladder up to the framework.

So yes...we're taking a very intentional step to develop a shared point of view around our system's vision, our mission, our values, and our priorities and key outcomes as we kick off the next 50. And we're going to do it together.

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Why is that significant?

Believe it or not, we've never really done this before. So the opportunity is really big when you think about it.

You know, we are a federated system of Chapters. So that means that each of our Chapters is its own registered nonprofit and operates fairly autonomously, and we're not changing that. That's what makes us special. It's what helps make sure we're connected to the local needs of the communities we serve...and that we're a part of those communities around the world in a really authentic way.

But, we've never really been intentional about harnessing the power of our system by aligning around a collective ambition, or purpose.

So that's what we're after. Imagine if we did that? And what better time to give it a go than as we head toward the 50th.

Now let me say this...what we're attempting is ambitious, but it is possible.

McDonald's does this well. They have a framework called Accelerating the Arches. It outlines their mission of *making delicious feel-good moments easy for everyone*, their purpose of *feeding and fostering community*, a set of values...And they also outline a few priorities, like delivery - so they might say, it's critical to get customers the food when they want it, where they want it. Delivery is a way to do that. There are lot of ways to go about delivery...you can use a third party provider...you can have your own delivery drivers and vehicles...do what makes sense for your market...but figure out what you're going to do with delivery...or coffee...or chicken...

For RMHC, we need to figure out what our delivery...or coffee...or chicken is.

So that's really the size of the prize here and why it's so significant.

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What's different about how we are approaching the Impact Strategy this year?

Some people may be surprised to know that we do currently have an Impact strategy, and we also have a global vision, a global mission, and global values.

But, as we thought about how we arrived at all of these...we had a few reflections on what we should have done differently...both in the content and the process.

As it relates to the content, I've already mentioned that we want to leverage the momentum of the 50th. This is about exploring the art of the possible and understanding how we should evolve in a way that is still true to who we are.

In terms of scope, the current Impact Strategy...in all honesty...it was meant mostly for RMHC Global. Some Chapters have been aware of it... some have even adopted it to build their own plans. But there are aspects of it, like building capacity, that just don't apply to everyone.

Then there's the perspective. We want to make sure we are taking a broad, outside/in view, recognizing how trends in various sectors such as technology, changes in the donor environment, the shifting geopolitical landscape, an influx of venture capital cash...how all of this is changing the way healthcare gets delivered. Not to mention things we've also learned from looking at enterprise risk. We want to just take all of this in...and also engage in rich discussions with staff and volunteers, local boards, hospital partners, donors... McDonalds...families, etc. So, we want to take all of this in and land on where we can and should go.

Which leads me to the process. With the last Impact Strategy, I would say that system engagement was mostly through a small selection of Chapter organizational leaders...there was SOME broad Chapter input but it was largely collected through a survey...and that just left people feeling not necessarily engaged or consulted in the development. So we're really investing a lot of time and effort in engagement ...just to make sure **everyone feels heard**. That's how we'll get alignment around the collective impact we want to achieve.

Lastly, in terms of agency support, we wanted to select an agency who had expertise in using engagement to develop frameworks like this...one who had experience working in both the for profit and the not for profit sector...and who had experience working in our RMHC system...and we found that this time with a fantastic organization based in Australia...their name is Bendelta...and they've worked with our chapter in Australia in the past.

So that's how we're approaching all of this differently.

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What are the "big questions" we're exploring?

So I joined the system about 9 months ago and really spent a fair amount of that time on the road connecting with Chapters around the world. I spent a lot of time with organizational leaders in particular, and we'd always have these wide ranging, provocative discussions on topics where we would talk about...in what ways did we need to evolve our core programs so we could better support families...and what would it look like to support families along the continuum of care, so that's before, during, and after illness and injury happens to their children. Or, how we could tell our story better...or how we could leverage our scale and purchasing power to reduce cost and operate more efficiently...or even what our role could be as it relates to advocacy.

Those discussions really formed the foundation for the questions that we're asking through this process...questions that help us get at the main components of the framework we're developing...questions about vision...about our customer (which yes, I know "customer is a commercial term, but it really does help us think about *who we serve* with the right mindset)...also questions about growth...questions about our programs...about advocacy...and about customer experience and operational best practices.

So these are the types of questions that we are going to be exploring.

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How will the process work?

So as I said, we're investing a lot of time and effort to make sure we're engaging the system in a robust way.

We're using the first few months of this year to hear from the system leadership through organizational leader summits around the world...and we're hosting these by region.

During the middle of the year, we're working through organizational leaders to have conversations with the stakeholders I mentioned...so staff, volunteers, local boards, hospital partners, donors, McDonald's, and our families.

Then, in the fall, we're hosting regional conferences where a wide range of role types get to come together and we'll have some interactive sessions for people to share and provide more input.

Then, we'll release the framework at the end of this year...which clears the way for the system to use the first half of 2024 to build their own strategic plans that ladder up...which takes us to International Conference...held in summer of 2024...where we will all come together to not only celebrate our 50 year legacy, but also to kick off the collective future we will all have worked together to create...and we'll also bring the McDonald's system up to speed at their Worldwide Convention in 2024.

I also think it's really important to mention that we have an outstanding group of organizational leaders who are serving as a steering committee of sorts.

They're known as the Impact Strategy Global Advisory Team or the GAT. The group consists of 12 organizational leaders and 1 board chair from 9 different countries. Now, on average, they have about 9 years system experience...nearly \$87 million dollars in system revenue...and about 80 programs...so the full gamut...Houses, Family Rooms, Care Mobiles and Local Programs.

And their role is three-fold.

First, they are giving us that *Chapter lens* to help us think through and execute the best way to engage the system in this process.

Second, they are really *leading from the front* in terms of helping to facilitate the dialogue and workshops we're conducting with the organizational leaders and the system at large.

And lastly, they're really serving as champions to help drive adoption in the system.

Let me say this. These are not global messengers. This group, again, is providing a Chapter lens. They have strong points of view. They push back. They question. But they also wear a regional hat..or sometimes a system hat...to help us think about the various perspectives in our system as well as what could work best for the whole.

So we're really fortunate to have them thinking and working along side us as we engage with the entire system on this important work.

So that's how we'll do it.

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A call to action

I've shared before that there's this great plaque in the conference room of our first House in Philadelphia. At the time the plaque was created, we had about 200 houses around the world and there is this inscription on it...a sort of call to action...it says "keep the dream growing.'

That is what we're doing.

We're at a really pivotal juncture in the life of this great organization.

And my hope is that everyone leans into this and embraces the opportunity to put their stamp on where we're headed...because you don't get opportunities like this often.

We're going to step into our 50th knowing exactly where we want to go and we're going to let the world know who we are becoming...and how we're going to get there.

That is special. That is legacy. And it's a gift we have the privilege of leaving for those who will come behind us 50 years later and take the organization forward.

So let's make some history.