

CEO Dan Savitt Presents at 2024 Home Care Innovation Forum

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By VNS Health TODAY

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Speaking at the 2024 Home Care Innovation Forum in Napa, California in mid-May, CEO and President Dan Savitt, expanded on the event's theme — “For the home health care industry, innovation isn't just a buzzword, it's a necessity”— by sharing his thoughts on what's required for home health care organizations to innovate successfully in today's environment.

Dan opened by suggesting to the gathering, which included home health care and hospice executives from around the nation, that their task as leaders was to empower their teams to innovate continually in a collaborative, purposeful way. “With the challenges facing our industry today — margin compression, regulatory pressures, rapid vertical integration — it's not enough just to declare ourselves innovative,” he observed. “We have to deliver real, patient-centric innovation that improves health outcomes, enhances patient experience, and reduces costs.”

In support of this goal, Dan outlined three organizational prerequisites for successful innovation:

- A company-wide culture of innovation, in which communication, creativity, risk-taking and a growth mindset are encouraged and supported;
- A focused corporate strategy that aligns with company values and provides a framework for innovative thinking that plays into the organization's strengths; and
- A process for hiring, training and retaining top talent who can carry out this approach.

Dan pointed out, too, that effective innovations aren't limited to new technology or products — they can and should include rethinking processes and systems — and they don't

necessarily have to be groundbreaking. “Successful innovation might involve small improvements to existing practices,” he said. “Nothing is more satisfying to me than hearing that a team member deep within our organization has come up with an incremental solution that delivers a big impact.”

Dan also stressed the importance of avoiding common innovation-related pitfalls. “Without an aligned strategy to support your efforts, innovation will occur in pockets or in a shotgun fashion,” he cautioned, “when what you need is consistent, company-wide innovation.”

In addition, he noted, if innovation isn’t done thoughtfully, it can be internally disruptive and may actually interfere with a company’s goals. “Innovation requires energy,” Dan said. “Pursuing unsuccessful projects where you simply innovate for innovation’s sake is draining for an organization. As leaders, we need to identify *why* innovation matters to you, your business, and your people. That’s the first step in making innovation real.”

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