

Paradigm Project



The Blueprint: Paradigm Project Updates

A Message From Dr. Simpson

Dear Colleagues,

This summer in Washington, D.C., AcademyHealth brought together more than 100 of the leading thinkers in health care, philanthropy, open data, technology, academia, and more for the first meeting of the [Paradigm Project](#).

Members of the Paradigm Project Learning Community took important first steps toward our overarching goal: to redesign health services research in order to improve patient outcomes and make people healthier. Participants got a hands-on introduction to human-centered design—a process intended to question assumptions and devise solutions tailored to the needs of end-users—in order to revolutionize the field of health services research (HSR) and increase its impact. Learning Community members were also organized into 17 Design Teams, each focused on improving a specific challenge the field faces.

Curious to find out what happened? Check out the highlights video and download a recap of the meeting on the [Paradigm Project website](#).

Sincerely,

Dr. Lisa Simpson
President and CEO, AcademyHealth

Learning Community Updates



Paradigm Project Learning Community Design Teams have met virtually every month since July. Teams have also begun interviewing stakeholders who have “lived experience” in their areas of focus—an important part of the **empathy phase of the human-centered design process**.

To date, the process has yielded **insightful findings**:

- Stakeholders might not agree about the nature of a problem HSR is trying to solve—

and that's a good thing. A member of a Design Team addressing a lack of shared sense of purpose in HSR interviewed a research director who saw the diversity in perspectives in the field as a strength. This prompted a discussion around checking assumptions and examining the topic from multiple points of view.

- **Researchers have differing priorities.** In an interview conducted by a Design Team member working on improving the timeliness of HSR, a researcher expressed, "The truth is that I don't want to be a leader. I want to do my work." Project participants recognize that some researchers might not feel inclined or able to communicate and advocate for their findings, and that they must consider this heterogeneity when designing solutions.
- **To design good solutions, it is important to step into the shoes of end-users.** The Design Team working on ways to improve communication around research findings interviewed a health delivery organization representative who mentioned, "We want to consume research, but we spend a lot of time looking for it." This led to a great discussion on how to use channels already in place to share information instead of creating new tools that add unnecessary hurdles for health care administrators.

Learning Community Member Spotlight



Each month, the Paradigm Project will feature one of the diverse, dynamic thought leaders and innovators who represent our Learning Community. This month, we feature [Robin Strongin](#).

Robin Strongin is a public affairs expert with more than 30 years of experience working for government, think tanks, nonprofits, and corporations. More recently, she co-founded the Center for Contemporary Political Art.

Robin joined the Paradigm Project because she felt frustrated with the field's narrow definition of valid research: "There is a hesitation that if something is not methodologically rigorous or peer-reviewed, then it's not valuable. This leaves out other legitimate sources of information, like qualitative studies or the experiences of patients and caregivers themselves."

Robin is part of a Design Team focused on solving the disconnect between health services research and the needs of people who could benefit from it. So far, her biggest moment of inspiration has been "seeing some of my colleagues who have been trained traditionally get out of their comfort zone, take risks, and embrace nontraditional methods and ideas because they appreciate something needs to change."



Featured Resource: [Design Thinking in Action](#)

Want to know more about how human-centered design can be used to solve complex social issues, particularly related to health? Stephen Shortell, Professor and Dean Emeritus of the University of California, Berkeley, School of Public Health, and a Paradigm Project Steering Council member, shared [a report](#)

about the “Reimagine Lab.” In this initiative, funded by the Blue Shield of California Foundation, fellows from various fields used human-centered design to devise prevention-based strategies to address family and domestic violence in California.



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