

Harvest Consulting Group, LLC

Case Study: Advancing Strategic Vision at Mainline Health Systems, Inc.

Client Spotlight

Mainline Health Systems, Inc. (Arkansas)

Mainline Health Systems, Inc. (MHSI) is a federally qualified health center (FQHC) that has served residents of Southeast Arkansas since 1978 with a compassionate approach and a commitment to the highest standard of medical, dental, and behavioral health care. From its first office in Portland all those years ago, MHSI has grown to 28 locations across Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Cleveland, Columbia, Drew, Grant, Lincoln, and Pulaski counties.

The Opportunity

As a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) serving Southeastern Arkansas, Mainline Health Systems, Inc. operates at the intersection of access, quality, and financial sustainability. Facing increasing pressure to succeed in value-based care environments while addressing complex community health needs, the organization launched a comprehensive strategic planning initiative to define its path forward for 2026–2028.

This effort was designed to align mission-driven care delivery with operational, financial, and population health strategies required for long-term success.

About Harvest Consulting Group, LLC

At Harvest Consulting Group, we partner with healthcare organizations to transform care and deliver value. Our mission is to cultivate success by providing tailored solutions to help design, activate, and optimize business strategies for better patient outcomes, reduced costs, and sustainable business models—particularly in rural and underserved communities.

With over 15 years of experience in healthcare, Harvest has built a reputation for guiding healthcare organizations through complex growth strategies by partnering with large hospital systems, critical access hospitals (CAHs), rural health clinics (RHCs), and federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) to design and implement strategic business plans that align with community health priorities.

Strategic Approach

1. Governance & Leadership Alignment

Active engagement from the Board of Directors and Executive Team ensured that strategic priorities reflected both community mission and value-based care realities, including:

- Sustainability under prospective payment and alternative payment models
- Balancing access with quality and cost performance
- Strengthening accountability at both governance and operational levels

2. Community-Driven Strategy Development

A **Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)** grounded the strategy in the lived realities of Southeastern Arkansas, including:

- Access barriers in rural and underserved populations
- Chronic disease burden and behavioral health needs
- Social drivers of health impacting outcomes

Stakeholder assessments across internal teams and external partners further informed opportunities for care coordination, partnerships, and service expansion.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

1. Invest in Staff Retention & Recognition
 - a. Implement small but meaningful recognition programs.
 - b. Provide clear career pathways and leadership development.
2. Strengthen Financial and Operational Sustainability Planning
 - a. Conduct strategic service line reviews before any new clinic openings/service offerings.
 - b. Explore diversified funding sources (grants, partnerships, value-based models).
3. Deepen Structured Collaboration
 - a. Formalize partnerships with rural health organizations and schools/universities.
 - b. Create shared goals and accountability frameworks with external partners.
4. Prioritize Service Excellence in Expansion
 - a. Develop "quality first" expansion criteria – only grow where high standards can be maintained.
 - b. Pilot-test new service areas (e.g., maternal health) before large-scale rollouts.
5. Enhance Community Engagement and Communication
 - a. Regularly report back to community members and partners on MHSI's impact.
 - b. Create feedback loops from the community to the board/staff for continuous improvement.



3. Operational Readiness for Integrated Care Models

Department-level needs assessments evaluated readiness for expanded care models, including:

- Workforce capacity (care teams, behavioral health integration, enabling services)
- Technology infrastructure (data, reporting, care management tools)
- Physical space and access points to support growth

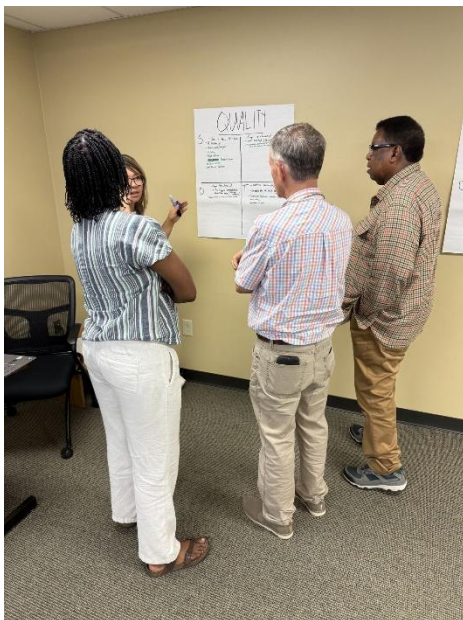
This ensured alignment with FQHC requirements while positioning the organization for enhanced care delivery under population health management initiatives.

4. Structured Engagement & Facilitation

Through weekly project team meetings and ongoing facilitation:

- Cross-functional teams remained aligned and accountable
- Silos were reduced across clinical, operational, and administrative functions
- Strategy development stayed connected to frontline realities

An in-person Board of Managers strategic vision session and leadership agility workshop created space for deeper alignment around transformation priorities and change readiness.



Strategic Outputs

Board Facilitated & Approved Vision Statement (2026–2028):

To be the trusted leader delivering compassionate, high-quality, and accessible care that builds a healthier community.

Strategic Priorities Aligned to Community Health Center Mission:

STRATEGIC AIMS & DRIVERS



Care Delivery & Operational Workstreams:

- Integrated care model enhancements (primary care, behavioral health, care management, community health workers)
- Data-driven population health initiatives
- Workforce optimization aligned with team-based care

Financial & Capital Alignment:

- Department-level budgets tied directly to strategic priorities
- Capital improvement planning to support access and service expansion
- Alignment of funding strategies with grant opportunities and value-based incentives

Outcome & Impact

- ✓ Board-approved 3-Year Strategic Plan (2026–2028)
- ✓ Clear alignment between mission, operations, and value-based care strategy
- ✓ Strengthened readiness for population health and alternative payment models
- ✓ Enhanced organizational focus on access, quality, and sustainability

Key Success Factors

Mission-Driven, Data-Informed Strategy

The strategic plan was firmly anchored in both **community need and measurable performance realities**. By integrating insights from the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), stakeholder feedback, and operational data, the organization avoided a common pitfall, creating strategy in isolation. Instead, priorities reflect the **true burden of disease, access gaps, and social drivers of health** in Southeastern Arkansas, while also aligning quality metrics and population health management expectations. This dual lens ensures the strategy is not only aspirational but directly tied to improving outcomes and expanding access to underserved communities inside and outside the traditional service area.

Board Engagement in Value-Based Transformation

This process elevated the role of the Board beyond governance oversight into **active strategic partnership**. Through structured engagement and in-person facilitation, Board members deepened their understanding of:

- The role of the board in strategic vision and planning
- The operational implications of population health management
- The tradeoffs required to balance mission, margin, and growth

This level of engagement strengthened decision-making and positioned the Board to more effectively guide the organization through **increasing financial and clinical accountability**.

Operational Realism & Readiness

Strategy was built from the ground up, starting with a clear-eyed view of **current-state capacity and constraints**. Department-level assessments across staffing, technology, space, and program impact ensured that strategic priorities were matched with:

- Realistic workforce models to support team-based, integrated care
- Technology capabilities needed for reporting, care coordination, and quality improvement
- Infrastructure investments required to expand access

This focus on operational readiness is particularly critical in FQHC settings, where **resource constraints and regulatory requirements** demand that strategy be executable from day one.

Integrated Financial & Capital Alignment

Rather than treating finance as a downstream exercise, this process intentionally connected **strategy, budgeting, and capital planning**. Department-level budgets—including workforce, capital, and programmatic investments—were developed in parallel with strategic priorities.

This alignment ensures that:

- Strategic initiatives are adequately resourced
- Capital investments directly support access, quality, and growth goals
- The organization is better positioned to navigate **prospective payment systems and emerging value-based reimbursement models**

The result is a plan that links **mission to margin**, supporting long-term sustainability.

Facilitation that Enabled True Alignment

Consistent, structured facilitation played a critical role in maintaining momentum and focus across a complex, multi-stakeholder process. Weekly project team meetings created accountability and transparency, while also fostering cross-functional collaboration.

Most notably, the **in-person Board of Managers Strategic Vision Session and Executive Leadership Strategic Agility Workshop** created space for:

- Deeper dialogue and trust-building
- Real-time problem solving and prioritization
- Alignment on difficult tradeoffs and transformation goals

This combination of **ongoing engagement and intentional in-person convening** accelerated decision-making and ensured that the final strategy was truly co-created and owned across the organization.

Cross-Functional Ownership & Culture of Accountability

From the beginning, the process emphasized that strategy is not the responsibility of a single team—it is an **enterprise-wide commitment**. By engaging departments in needs assessments, workstream development, and budget alignment, leaders at all levels were brought into the process as owners, not just participants.

This approach:

- Reduced silos between clinical, operational, and administrative teams
- Increased transparency in decision-making
- Established clear accountability for execution

For an FQHC operating in a value-based environment, this level of ownership is essential to successfully manage **quality outcomes, patient experience, and cost performance.**

Harvest Impact Statement

At Harvest Consulting Group, we believe that expanding access to care requires more than a plan—it requires partnership, precision, and persistence.

This project reflects our commitment to helping healthcare organizations **Know their opportunity, Grow their strategy, and Sow meaningful impact in their communities.**

 Connect with Us



**Cultivating Success in Healthcare:
Transforming Care, Delivering Value**

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