

# Navigating Chaos with Integrity: ERM for Advancing Health Equity

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We do hope this conversation will spur ideas and questions that you can return to your legal team with.

# Objectives

1

Identify key social and political determinants of health that impact healthcare risk management and assess their effects on patient outcomes and institutional stability.

2

Apply Enterprise Risk Management principles to integrate health equity into organizational policies and risk strategies.

3

Develop cross-functional collaboration strategies to proactively address emerging healthcare risks, using data and ethical leadership to mitigate harm for vulnerable populations.

# A Story of Healthcare Inequity and Risk

## Jamal

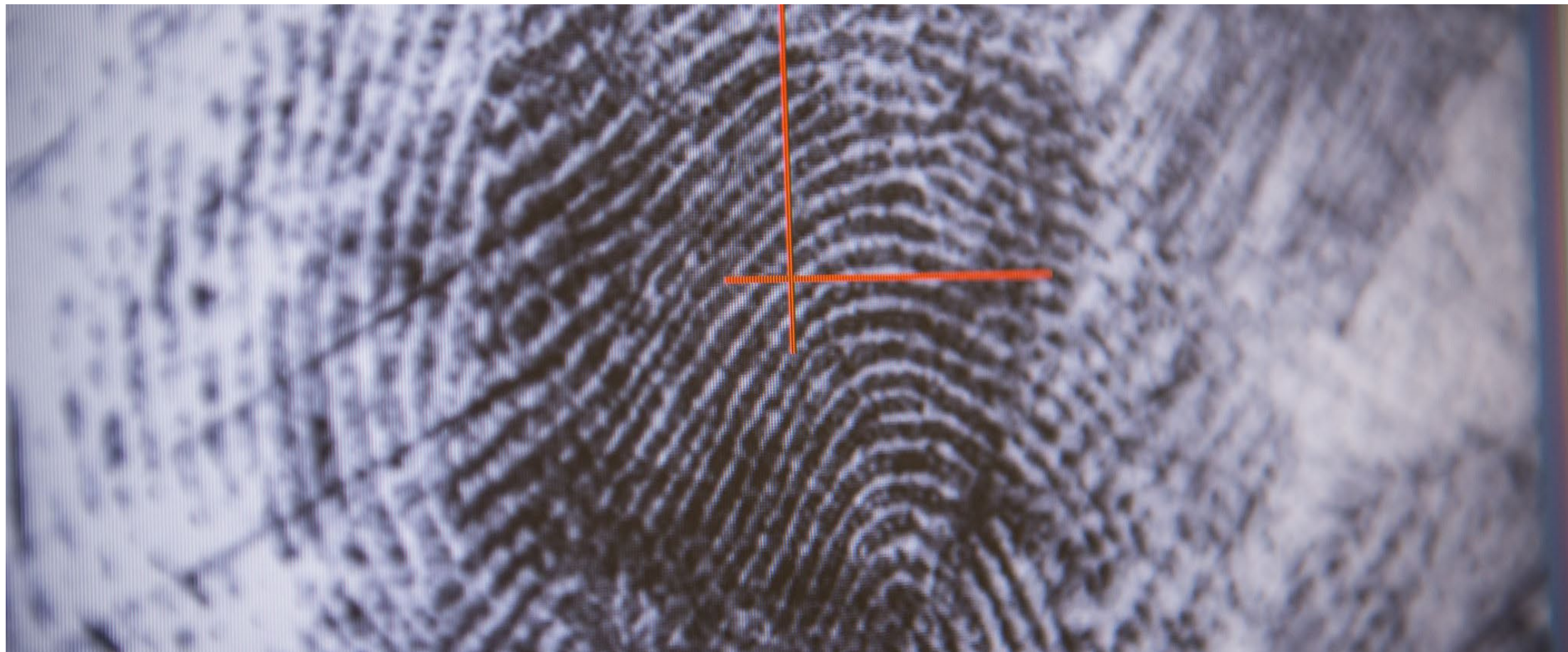
- 10-year-old with asthma
- Arrives in the ER struggling to breathe
- His mother explains that their apartment has mold, but their landlord refuses to address it.
- Without SDoH intervention, what will happen?



OpenAI. (2025). A 10-year-old African-American boy sitting on a hospital bed with an oxygen mask. DALL-E.



# Context and Importance









# Current State



## **Instability**

**Uncertain Policy Environment**  
**Rising Patient Vulnerability**  
**Reputational and Operational Risks**



## **Impact on Healthcare Institutions**

**Escalating Violence Against Providers**  
**Workforce Morale, Burnout, Moral Distress, and a Retention Crisis**  
**Mitigation Strategies Being Undermined**  
**Fear**



## **Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)**

**Risk Identification**  
**Risk Assessment**  
**Mitigation Strategies**  
**Ongoing Monitoring**

# Moral Congruency in Decision-Making

- **Rule-based**
- **Interest-based**
- **Value-based**

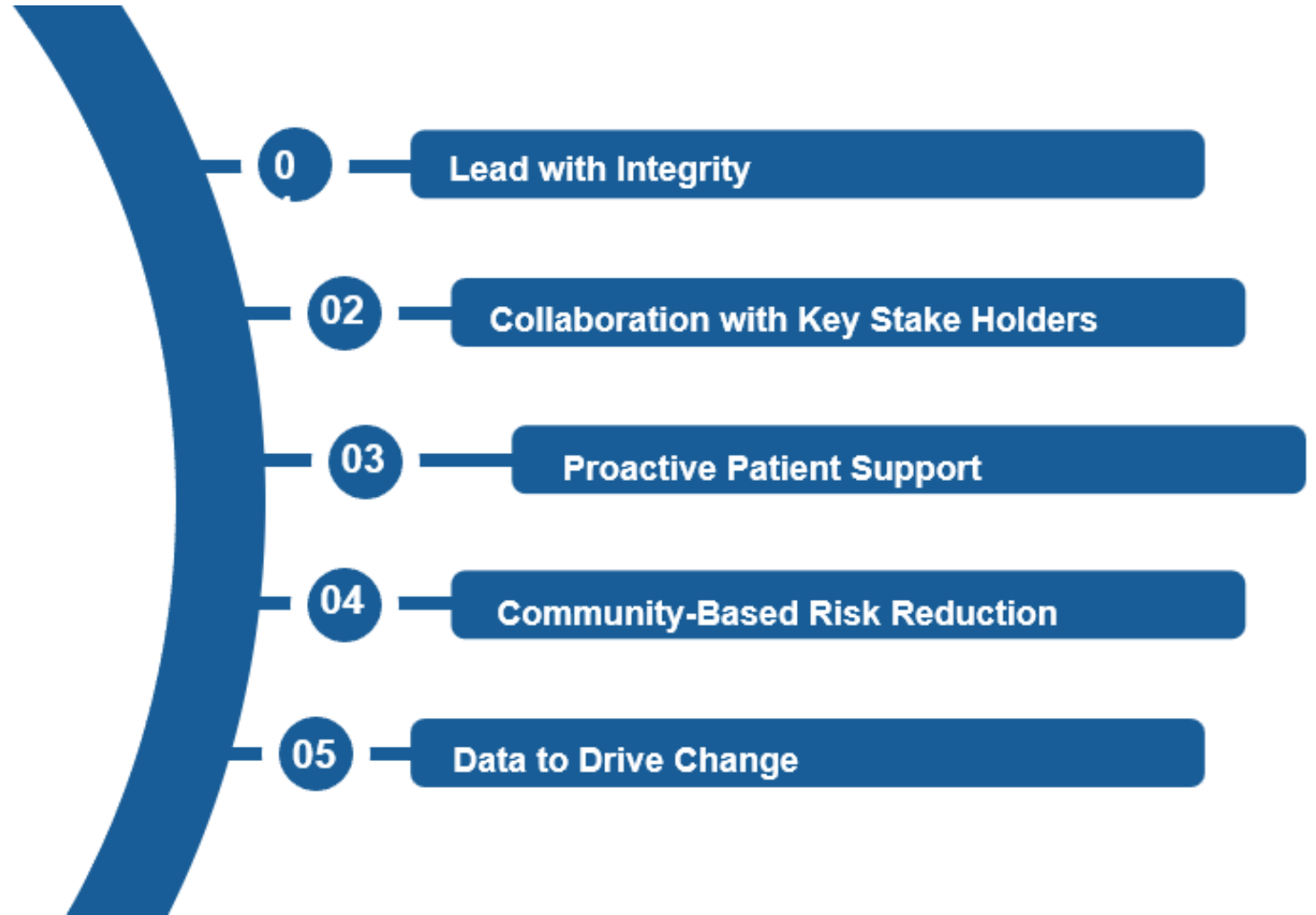




# ERM Strategies



# E.R.M. Strategies a Key Questions





# Leadership

- How are we integrating SDoH and PDoH into our enterprise risk management framework to proactively address emerging threats to patient care and institutional stability?
- What steps are we taking to address psychological safety in reporting about inequities in care?
- How do we assess the unintended consequences of new policies or operational changes on marginalized communities?
- How are we leveraging data to identify and address disparities in health outcomes before they escalate into crises?





# Collaboration

- How can we create structured, cross-functional collaborations between health equity, risk management, patient safety, and legal teams to proactively address policy and operational changes impacting marginalized populations?
- How are front-line staff voices included in decision-making, particularly regarding unintended consequences of institutional policies?
- How can we leverage community partnerships to close healthcare access gaps created by shifting policies?





# Patient Support

- How can we integrate proactive screening for social determinants of health into routine patient care to better identify and address risks before they escalate?
- How can we ensure that patient safety initiatives explicitly address disparities in language access, financial barriers, and discrimination-related risks?
- What strategies can we implement to build trust and reduce fear among vulnerable patients who may be hesitant to seek care due to political and social instability?

# Risk Identification

- **Predictive Modeling for Vulnerable Populations**
- **Cross-Sector Risk Tracking**
- **Social Risk Screening at Intake**



# Risk Assessment

- **Quantify Financial and Operational Impact**
- **Risk Stratification by Population and Condition**
- **Scenario-Based Planning**



# Risk Mitigation

- **Medical-Legal Partnerships (MLP)**
  - **Home-Based and Community Care Programs**
  - **Rapid Response Social Work Team**
  - **Implicit Bias and Equity Training**
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# Risk Monitoring

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- **Establish a SDOH Dashboard**
- **Cross-Sector Collaboration**
- **Public-Private Partnerships for Resource Expansion**



# Governance and Accountability

- **Create a Health Equity and Risk Management Oversight Committee**
- **Tie SDOH Performance to Leadership Evaluation**
- **Annual Public Reporting on Health Equity Progress**

Nobody in leadership  
cares, what can I do?

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# ASHRM Equity of Care Assessment

- Few Meaningful Risk Assessments for Health Equity
- The ASHRM Equity of Care Assessment
- Why It Matters



# How Could ERM Have Helped Jamal?

- Identification
- Assessment
- Strategies
- Monitoring



**"Health equity isn't just a moral obligation — it's a strategic imperative. By embedding social determinants of health into enterprise risk management, we can move from reacting to crises to preventing them.**

**This means stronger patient outcomes, reduced financial strain, and a more resilient healthcare system. The path forward requires bold leadership, strategic collaboration, and a commitment to justice and dignity.**

**The question isn't whether we can afford to prioritize health equity — the question is whether we can afford *not* to. The time to act is now."**



## Resources

- American Society for Healthcare Risk Management (ASHRM)- Equity of Care Assessment
- American Hospital Association- Equity of Care: A Tool Kit for Eliminating Health Care Disparities
- American Medical Association's 2024-2025 Strategic Plan to Advance Health Equity



# Thank you

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