



# OPTIMAL HEALING ENVIRONMENTS







THE TIME HAS COME...

A photograph of a zen garden with a stone path, a small tree, and a circular stone arrangement, overlaid with a semi-transparent red box containing text.

... TO TAKE THE NATURAL NEXT STEP  
IN PATIENT-CENTERED CARE

Health care is one of the most personal things in life. Patients want to feel comfortable and safe and know that their care team is working to provide them with the best care. Patients want a care team dedicated to helping to heal them and to taking care of their loved ones' needs for information and participation. They want a healing experience that nourishes their soul and their body. They are not willing to compromise high tech for high touch — they expect both. Patients want an optimal healing environment.

Imagine an Optimal Healing Environment (OHE<sup>SM</sup>) where all aspects of patient care — physical, emotional, spiritual, behavioral, and environmental — are optimized to support and stimulate healing. Patient care is developed with the proper attitudes and intentions of all health care providers and within the patients themselves. Patients have access to opportunities for personal growth and self-care practices that promote wholeness. Healing relationships are cultivated as patients and their families interact with caring and compassionate health care providers and staff. Through the application of behavioral medicine, patients are supported in developing healthy lifestyles. Their care includes complementary therapies, practices and products appropriately integrated with conventional medicine.

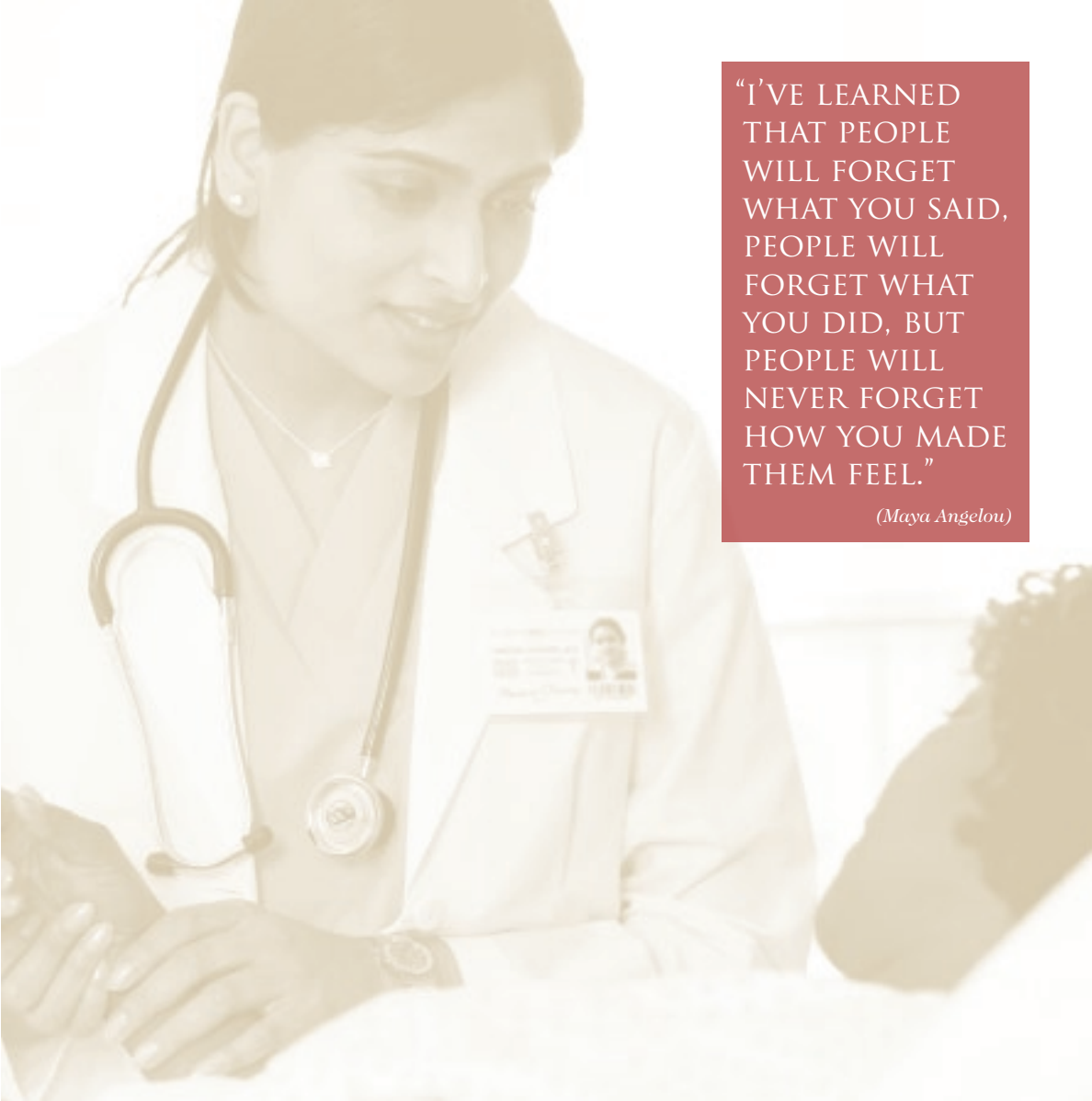
To support ongoing innovation in the area of optimal healing environments, the Samueli Institute launched the OHE<sup>SM</sup> Program in the

spring of 2005 to determine how theory about healing translates into real world practice. The Samueli Institute developed the Optimal Healing Environments Program as a unifying concept and research framework to study the application of OHE<sup>SM</sup> in a variety of settings and populations. An Optimal Healing Environment supports and stimulates patient healing by combining one or more of the following approaches:

- Developing Healing Intention
- Experiencing Personal Wholeness
- Cultivating Healing Relationships
- Practicing Healthy Lifestyles
- Applying Collaborative Medicine
- Creating Healing Organizations
- Building Healing Spaces

The Samueli Institute OHE<sup>SM</sup> Program is also exploring what impact optimal healing environments may have on:

- Improving quality of care and safety for patients
- Increasing patient satisfaction with their health care experience
- Enhancing patient loyalty to their health care providers
- Recruiting and retaining health professionals
- Enhancing operational efficiency and productivity
- Increasing philanthropic, community and corporate support



“I’VE LEARNED  
THAT PEOPLE  
WILL FORGET  
WHAT YOU SAID,  
PEOPLE WILL  
FORGET WHAT  
YOU DID, BUT  
PEOPLE WILL  
NEVER FORGET  
HOW YOU MADE  
THEM FEEL.”

*(Maya Angelou)*



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## OHE<sup>SM</sup> Program — A Catalyst For Change

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While there are many innovators working to transform health care organizations in the United States into more healing environments, efforts to date consist mainly of isolated initiatives that are not evaluated in ways that have built a knowledge base in the area. The OHE<sup>SM</sup> Program is building that knowledge base. The OHE<sup>SM</sup> Program is one of the Samueli Institute's primary research programs and is a catalyst for speeding the flow of information on healing environments from research to health care practice. The OHE<sup>SM</sup> Program has two key goals:

1. Develop and validate a business case for OHE<sup>SM</sup> to facilitate widespread adoption by innovative health care leaders and their organizations
2. Establish national standards for creating optimal healing environments

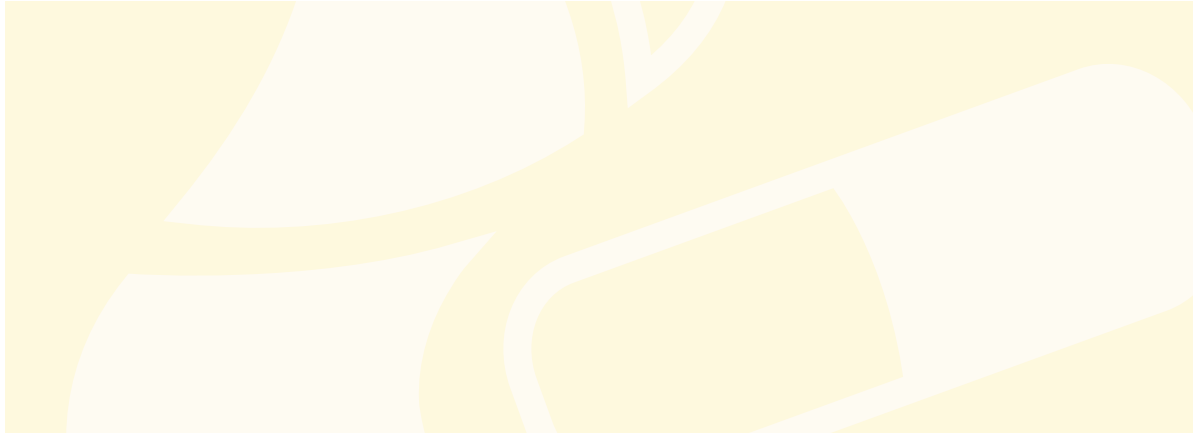
What will it take to move the concept of “healing environments” from research to practice? As more and more hospitals implement “healing initiatives,” how are they defining and measuring success? Can this body of knowledge about healing have a transformative effect on our health care system in the absence of a promising business case? These are all questions the Samueli Institute is exploring through its OHE<sup>SM</sup> Program.

The Samueli Institute's aim is to articulate a complete framework of actionable practices and evaluation methods that, if implemented, would lead to more cost-effective, efficient organizations in which the environment truly facilitates healing and where care providers are fully supported to reconnect to the mission at their professional roots — the mission of caring.



“WITH OUR THOUGHTS WE MAKE THE WORLD.”

*(Buddha)*



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## Building a Business Case

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After surviving a variety of threats to their financial viability over the past decade, hospitals now face the challenge of responding to an increasingly consumer-driven health care environment. In responding to this consumerism, hospitals are reconsidering what the experience of hospitalized patients and their families should be. Combine this response with the rising cost of health care and it is clear that all innovations in health care must be seen through the microscope of cost-benefit analysis.

The Samueli Institute's research is addressing the lack of cost-benefit information to support OHE<sup>SM</sup> implementation by working directly with health care organizations to define the financial elements and build a business case for optimal healing environments.

We collaborate with leaders of U.S. health care systems who are already transforming their organizations into more healing environments. In working with these "living laboratories," we correlate outcomes from their healing initiatives with widely recognized measures of business success in health care such as quality, satisfaction, safety, reduced costs and return on investment.

A close-up photograph of a white dog, possibly a Golden Retriever, looking towards the camera. A person's hand is gently petting the dog's head. The person is wearing a wheelchair, and their legs and feet are visible in the background. The image has a warm, golden-brown tint.

“THE WISH FOR HEALING HAS EVER  
BEEN THE HALF OF HEALTH.”

*(Hippolytus)*




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## Constructing National Standards for Healing Environments

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In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a Nobel physicist was challenged to describe the atom and the potential application of atomic science at a time when there was no commonly accepted language for doing so. In this same way, our health care systems are challenged to describe healing, and the potential application of healing science in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today, the Samueli Institute, whose mission is to transform health care through the scientific exploration of healing, is rising to this important challenge.

Over time, through our collaborative research efforts, we will build a collection body of knowledge about healing environments. The results? Evidence-based national standards for OHE<sup>SM</sup> in different settings — hospitals, outpatient clinics, workplaces and in specialized populations.



“TOO OFTEN WE UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF A TOUCH, A SMILE, A KIND WORD, A LISTENING EAR, AN HONEST COMPLIMENT, OR THE SMALLEST ACT OF CARING, ALL OF WHICH HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO TURN A LIFE AROUND.”

*(Leo Buscaglia)*



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## Our Science

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The OHE<sup>SM</sup> Program has a multi-disciplinary team comprised of individuals with expertise in clinical care delivery, health services research, public health, Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of Veterans Administration (DVA) health care systems, financial analytics and complementary and alternative medicine.

Our team designs research protocols to examine health and business outcomes. Because we aim to describe process and measure outcomes, we advocate for the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. In order to avoid the prohibitive costs of planning and implementing prospective, controlled studies, we prefer to take a retrospective approach, analyzing data generated within our “living laboratories” during real-time operation and examining relationships between organizational initiatives that reflect

components of OHE<sup>SM</sup> and conventional indicators of success.

As our program evolves, we hope to become a repository for solid, science-based information on the health and business outcome of a wide range of healing initiatives.

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## Research Achievements

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## Creating a Healing Environment: An Eight Hospital Case Study

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The aim of this project was to develop case studies of eight hospitals whose unique healing environment initiatives represented the range and diversity of experiences across the country. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with members of each organization's executive team as well as initiative champions.

Four common themes of innovation related to healing environments were identified across study organizations: 1) physical environments were redesigned for patients and families; 2) programs were included that intended to change nurse-patient relationships at the bedside; 3) patients were provided access to complementary therapies; and, 4) programs addressed the spiritual and emotional needs of hospitalized patients and their families. The CEO or designate from each study hospital participated in a post-study meeting to collectively analyze study findings and comment

on challenges, opportunities and future implications. Our findings have been published in the following articles and book:

Christianson, JB, Finch M, Findlay, B, Goertz C, Jonas WB (2007). Reinventing the Hospital Experience. *Health Administration Press: Chicago, IL, USA* (in press)

Christianson, Jon B., Finch, Michael D., Goertz Choate, Christine, and Findlay, Barbara (2007). Implementation of Consumer-Focused Innovations in Hospitals: The Experience of Early Adopters, *Hospitals & Health Networks*, (in press)

Christianson, Jon B., Finch, Michael D., Goertz Choate, Christine, and Findlay, Barbara (2007). Consumer-Focused Strategies of Innovative Hospitals: The Role of Complementary Therapies. *Explore*, March (in press)

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## Survey of Healing Environments in Hospitals

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This pilot survey of 126 hospitals collected qualitative and quantitative data from nursing or patient-care executives to determine the nature and prevalence of healing environment initiatives being implemented in hospital settings in the

Midwest United States. If found to be a useful approach, this survey will be expanded to several thousand hospitals nationwide in 2007.


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## Evaluation of a Clinician Coaching Program

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For the past 10 years, Group Health Permanente's Department of Practice and Leadership Development has provided an evolving variety of learning opportunities for physicians in their organization, with the goal of improving the quality of the physician-patient relationship. Leaders for Group Health Permanente's Clinician Coaching Program expressed a strong interest in measuring the outcomes of their training initiatives, including analysis of cost-benefit, thereby "building a business case" for their strategic approach to

facilitating healing relationships between health care providers and their patients. The Samueli Institute partnered with Group Health to jointly conduct research that addressed these questions. Initial findings from their program suggest that improving a physician's communication skills can increase patient compliance and satisfaction, influence physician job satisfaction, and improve diagnostic accuracy, while also lessening the risk of malpractice litigation. This study is due to be completed by March 2007.



“THERE IS ONE THING  
STRONGER THAN ALL THE  
ARMIES IN THE WORLD,  
AND THAT IS AN IDEA  
WHOSE TIME HAS COME.”

*(Victor Hugo)*

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## Working with Us

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The Samueli Institute and OHE<sup>SM</sup> program work collaboratively with innovative health care leaders and organizations to explore the science of healing—in this case, optimal healing environments. The OHE<sup>SM</sup> Program works with organizations that:

- Are committed to transforming health care
- Have experience designing and implementing healing initiatives
- Have relevant, unanalyzed data on their healing initiatives
- Want to evaluate their programs
- Establish benchmarks for quality health care
- Serve as a network for health care decision makers
- Are interested in transferring knowledge into practice
- Can imagine themselves as a ‘living laboratory’ for health care research

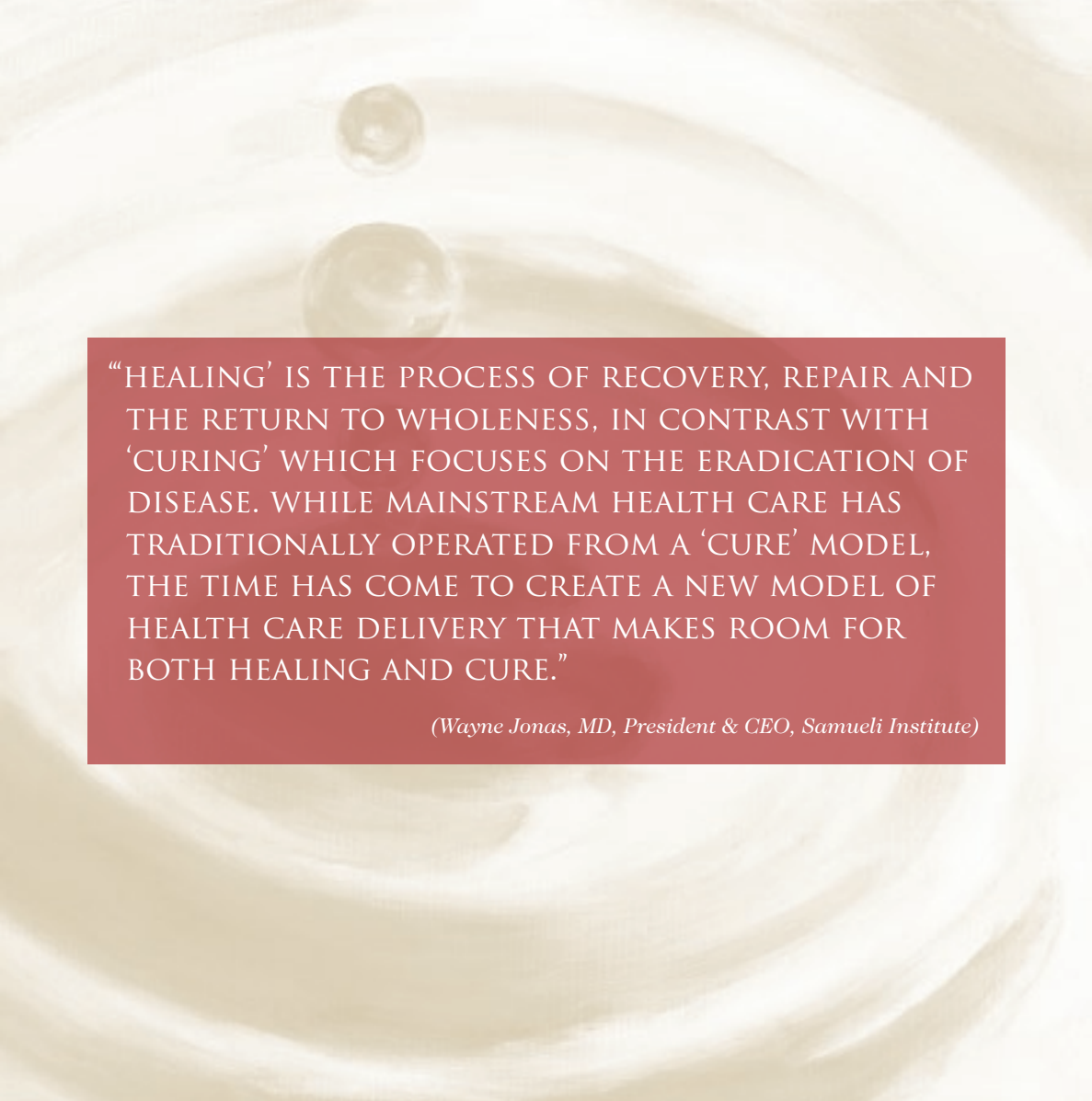
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## Some Key Collaborators

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To date, some of the OHE<sup>SM</sup> Program collaborators include:

- Allina Hospitals & Clinics, Minnesota
- Atlantic Health System, New Jersey
- The BirchTree Center, Massachusetts
- Florida Hospital Celebration Health, Florida
- Group Health of Puget Sound, Washington
- Health Forum/American Hospital Association, Washington, DC
- Highline Medical Center, Washington
- North Hawaii Community Hospital, Hawaii
- St. Charles Medical Center, Oregon
- St. Rose Dominican Hospitals, Catholic Healthcare West, Nevada
- Valley Hospital, New Jersey
- Veterans Health Administration, Washington, DC
- Volunteer Hospitals Association, Inc., Texas
- Windber Medical Center, Pennsylvania



“HEALING’ IS THE PROCESS OF RECOVERY, REPAIR AND THE RETURN TO WHOLENESS, IN CONTRAST WITH ‘CURING’ WHICH FOCUSES ON THE ERADICATION OF DISEASE. WHILE MAINSTREAM HEALTH CARE HAS TRADITIONALLY OPERATED FROM A ‘CURE’ MODEL, THE TIME HAS COME TO CREATE A NEW MODEL OF HEALTH CARE DELIVERY THAT MAKES ROOM FOR BOTH HEALING AND CURE.”

*(Wayne Jonas, MD, President & CEO, Samueli Institute)*

## About the Samueli Institute

The Samueli Institute is a non-profit, medical research organization supporting the scientific investigation of healing processes and their application in health and disease. The Institute's mission is to explore the scientific foundations of healing and to apply that understanding in medicine and health care. The Institute is one of a select group of organizations in the nation with a track record in both complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), healing relationships, and military research.

## For More Information

For more information about the Samueli Institute or recent OHE<sup>SM</sup> Program projects and publications, visit our website at [www.SamueliInstitute.org](http://www.SamueliInstitute.org) or call us at 703-299-4800.



**SAMUELI INSTITUTE**  
EXPLORING THE SCIENCE OF HEALING

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