

## Creating the Future: Brown University's Executive Master of Healthcare Leadership

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### ABSTRACT

The Affordable Care Act is ushering in a new paradigm for all aspects of the healthcare industry – from hospitals to insurers, from IT companies to physician practice groups. Brown's new executive master's degree in healthcare leadership provides the knowledge healthcare leaders need to navigate this new world. The 16-month program mixes online learning and short campus-based sessions to accommodate the working professional.

**KEYWORDS:** executive master; healthcare leadership; master's program; Brown; healthcare

It's impossible to ignore the dramatic and disruptive changes taking place in American healthcare. Sparked by the familiar but daunting challenges of cost, quality, and access to care, and in response to the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, we are witnessing experiments in healthcare delivery and financing. The goal is nothing less than a 'complete package,' with delivery systems that meet the highest standards of fairness, efficiency, and sustainability; highly effective but affordable products and services that optimize individual health outcomes; and coherent policies that foster an enviable level of population health. Transforming healthcare will be neither fast nor easy but one thing is clear: visionary leaders are needed to reach our goal. Brown University strives to prepare these leaders. In August 2013, clinicians, executives, and senior managers from across the health industry will begin a 16-month journey of intensive study in the Executive Master of Healthcare Leadership (EMHL) program. These highly accomplished professionals will broaden their perspectives, hone their leadership skills, and engage a network of peers to build sustainable solutions for their tough organizational challenges—all while earning a master's degree.

Since no single individual or organization can navigate such a dynamic environment alone, it is critically important to draw upon diverse perspectives. Brown's Healthcare Leadership program delivers a multidisciplinary experience for professionals from across

the health industry. EMHL students are physicians and nurses; top administrators from healthcare systems; executives from biotech, pharmaceutical and insurance companies; patient advocates and leaders from non-profit organizations; and those from consulting, legal, policy, and regulatory settings.

Every student who enters the Healthcare Leadership program is a skilled professional with 10 or more years of health-industry experience, and each identifies a critical organizational challenge to tackle during the program. These professionals move beyond their functional silos, expand their thinking, and create meaningful solutions with their peers. They uncover opportunities and identify partners to advance their organizations and to transform healthcare. EMHL students graduate with forward momentum, a plan to address their critical challenge, and a powerful network of peer consultants.

For executives juggling the demands of work and family, the program's blended format of online and on-campus learning is ideal. During the 16-month program, students travel to Brown four times. Strong bonds are established among the students through the online interaction that starts before they arrive on campus and in the two-week opening session; these relationships deepen further in two one-week sessions on campus, and in the two-week closing session that features the critical challenge projects. The blended format respects students' work, travel and personal commitments; fosters intense interaction; facilitates learning when and where it's convenient; and provides focused time for thinking about the future.

As an added benefit, the online experience is purposefully designed to meet Brown's highest educational standards. Every Healthcare Leadership faculty member is trained in online pedagogy, and instructional design teams prepare every course for online and face-to-face delivery. In an online learning community, all students, not just a dominant few, can engage thoughtfully with the course content and with their peers.

The EMHL curriculum includes data-driven decision making, finance, health IT and electronic records, management and marketing, policy and regulatory issues, strategic planning, quality improvement, and other core topics;



**VIDEO** Overview of Brown's Executive Master of Healthcare Leadership.

and weaves leadership development and discussions of globalization through all courses. EMHL faculty members from Brown and other universities are also health industry practitioners.

In a recent issue of *Rhode Island Medical News* (October 2012), Rhode Island Medical Society President Alyn Adrian, MD, reflected on the era 200 years ago when the Society was founded, and noted that there were no group practices, no specialties or sub-specialties, no third-party payers, and no hospitals in Rhode Island. Today we see physicians establishing Patient-Centered Medical Homes and Accountable Care Organizations, government and community leaders considering the details of the state Health Exchange, insurers designing new reimbursement strategies, and other significant changes. As health leaders face the future in

Rhode Island and across the United States, they will find opportunities to learn and to build sustainable solutions in Brown's Executive Master of Healthcare Leadership program.

The Executive Master of Healthcare Leadership program builds on Brown's proven strengths in public health, public policy, health economics, and evidenced-based medicine at the Warren Alpert Medical School and at the newly designated School of Public Health.

More information about the program is available at [www.Brown.edu/executive](http://www.Brown.edu/executive)

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