

# Leaders innovate to tackle top challenges



Tasked with improving care outcomes and alleviating cost pressures with limited resources, healthcare executives are identifying innovative methods for evolving existing business models and creating a more digitally focused and consumer-centric future.

Huron's longitudinal research tracks how healthcare executives across five functional areas are responding to today's top trends and challenges.

[Explore the insights below ↓](#)

## WHO WE SURVEYED

# 300

**U.S. healthcare executives across 5 functions**

- Strategy and innovation
- Finance and operations
- Clinical care
- Technology
- People



## Top 10 healthcare trends

### Digital advancements top of mind

Digital and technology trends continue to rise compared to previous research, confirming leaders' belief that navigating healthcare's future lies in successful digital transformation. Leaders also indicate an increased focus on care access and virtual care delivery as [consumer preferences evolve](#).

#### Top trends

This year	
1. Technology infrastructure	↑
2. Care access transformation	↑
3. Digital management and analytics	↑
4. Virtual care delivery	↑
5. Cost reduction/optimization	↓
<b>6. Revenue growth</b>	
<b>7. Managing health system capacity</b>	
<b>8. Health equity</b>	
<b>9. Redesigning workforce</b>	
<b>10. Supply chain management and modernization</b>	

3-5 years	
1. Virtual care delivery	↑
2. Technology infrastructure	↑
3. Revenue growth	↑
<b>4. Workforce mental health</b>	
5. Cost reduction/optimization	↓
<b>6. Diagnostic and generative AI</b>	
7. Care delivery	→
<b>8. Health equity</b>	
9. Care access transformation	↓
<b>10. New economic models</b>	

\***Bold** = new trend

↑ ↓ → = change from previous research



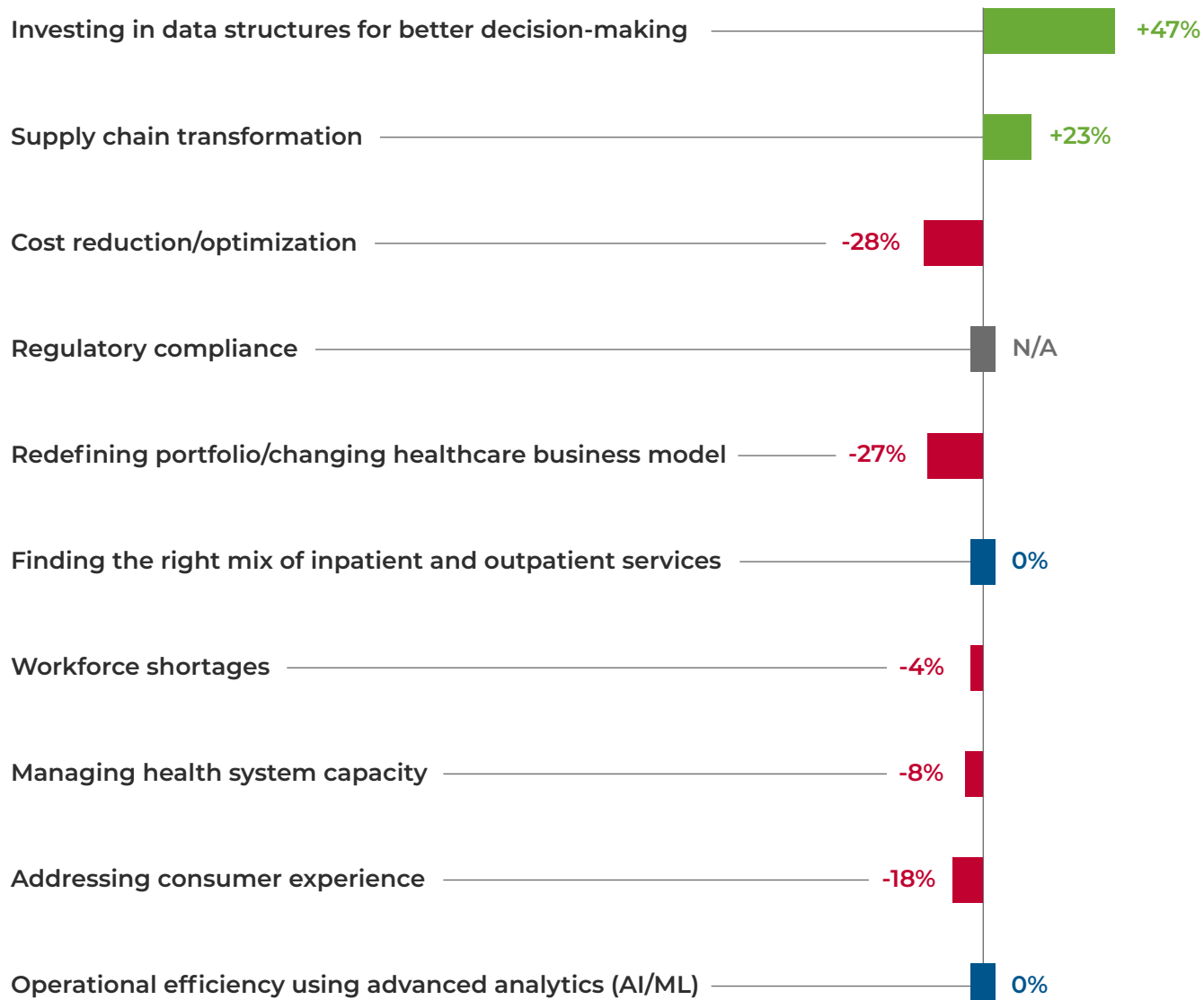
## Top 10 healthcare challenges

### Leaders grapple with interconnected challenges

Healthcare executives report a wide and even focus on challenges, indicating a clear view of the relationship between care, cost, performance, and growth. Data-informed decision-making takes the top spot as leaders aim to harness the power of analytics to resolve complexities across business, clinical, and people areas.

#### Current top challenges

Change from previous research





# Financial pressures and cost-saving measures Leaders take comprehensive approach to address financial pressures



To better understand industrywide revenue and cost challenges, healthcare leaders rank the key financial pressures their organizations face.

**Revenue pressures**

1. Pricing optimization
2. Revenue cycle management
3. Adding digital-enabled revenue
4. Pressure from competition

**Cost/expense pressures**

1. Supply chain and vendor costs
2. High cost of capital
3. Reducing internal operation costs
4. Rising labor costs

In response to widespread financial pressures, leaders are balancing a combination of core and transformational cost-saving measures to improve financial health and fund growth priorities.

## Top cost-saving measures this year



**Supply chain cost reductions**  
38%



**Increasing interoperability & system optimization**  
36%



**Redefining portfolio**  
35%



**Workforce cost reductions**  
31%



**Reconfiguring economic model**  
30%



## Top investments and growth priorities

# Technology, employees, and consumers key investment priorities

This year, investment areas and growth priorities go hand-in-hand as leaders aim to enhance the employee and consumer experience, modernize operations, and strategically deploy technology to inform growth initiatives.

### Where leaders are investing



- Investing in digital tools
- Improving care access
- Redefining portfolio/changing healthcare business model
- Revenue growth
- Improving employee productivity
- **Investing in AI/machine learning**
- Revenue cycle automation/optimization
- Improving consumer/customer experience

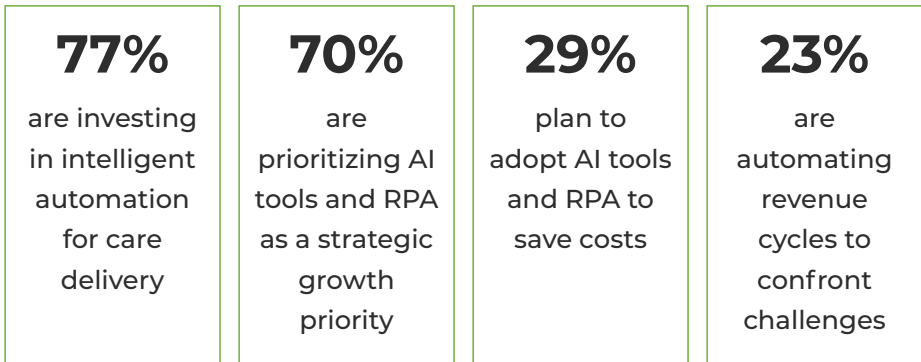
### How leaders rank growth priorities



- Consumer engagement and retention
- Strategic cost management
- Data management & analytical decision making
- Integrated care delivery models
- Redefine portfolio
- Staffing recruitment and retention
- **Adoption of AI tools**
- Mergers and acquisitions

## How leaders are implementing AI

Diagnostic and generative artificial intelligence (AI) emerges as a new trend expected to impact organizations in the next three to five years. Leaders cite several areas where they're implementing or plan to implement more traditional forms of AI and automation:



## 3 ways healthcare leaders are driving change

With widespread trends and challenges influencing healthcare, how will organizations adapt? Leaders identify three key actions they're implementing today.

01

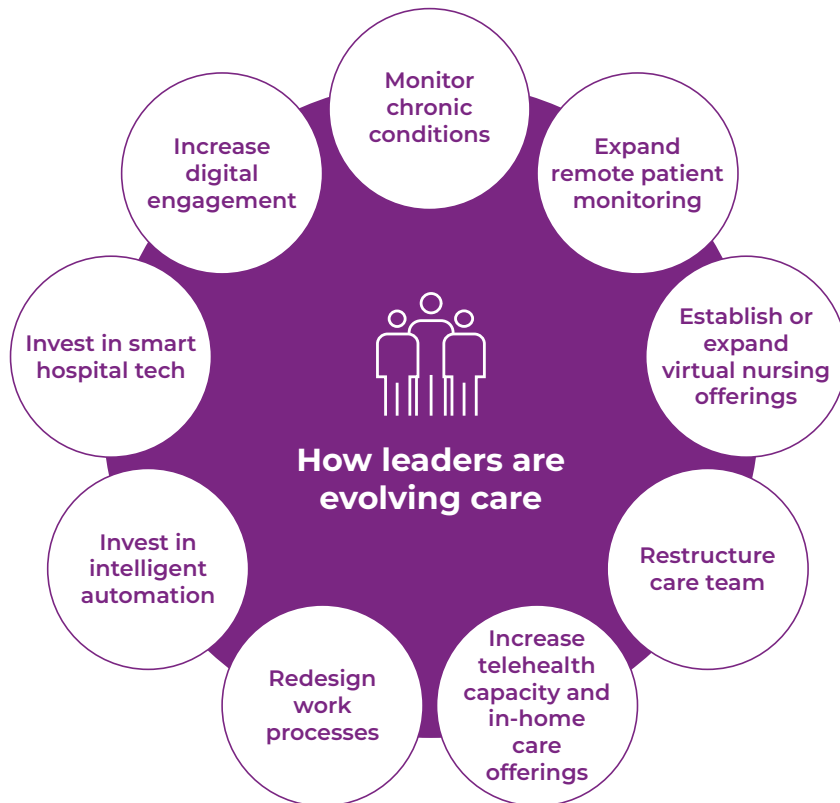
02

03

### Evolve care to become more consumer-centric

Consumer engagement and retention ranks as the top growth priority this year, with leaders championing strategies including care access transformation, virtual care delivery, and improving the consumer experience.

Re-thinking care to match [shifting consumer preferences](#) creates an opportunity for organizations to increase patient loyalty and drive network integrity.



## 3 ways healthcare leaders are driving change

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01

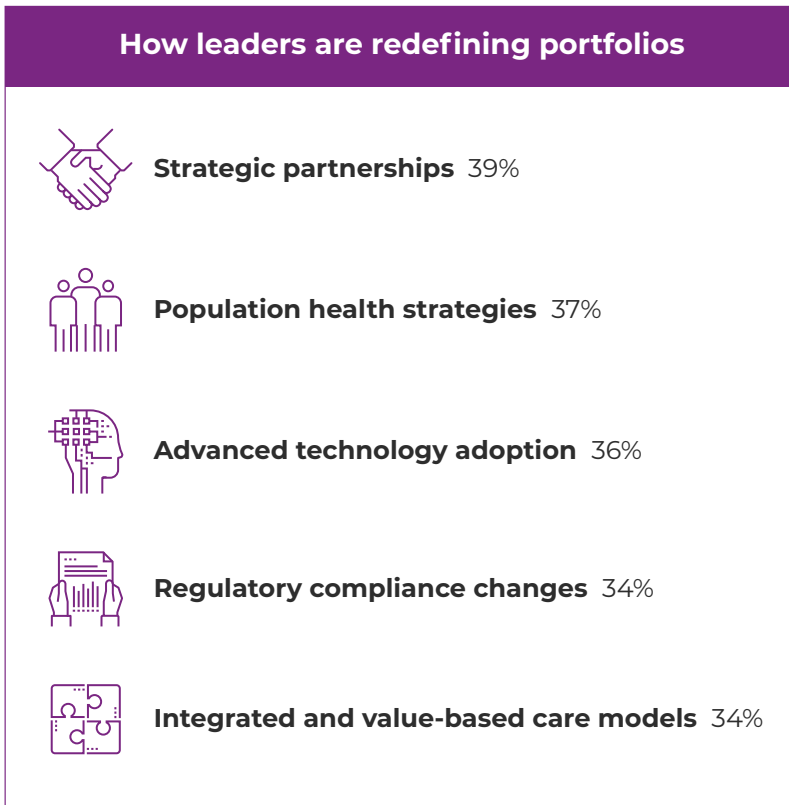
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### Re-evaluate portfolios to grow revenue

Redesigning portfolio remains a key strategic growth priority and cost-saving measure. A quarter of leaders also cite difficulties finding the right mix of inpatient and outpatient services.

As organizations evaluate their service mix and evolve their care delivery models, leaders identify care-focused initiatives, along with strategic partnerships and advanced technologies including generative AI, as core to optimizing and growing their portfolios.



## 3 ways healthcare leaders are driving change

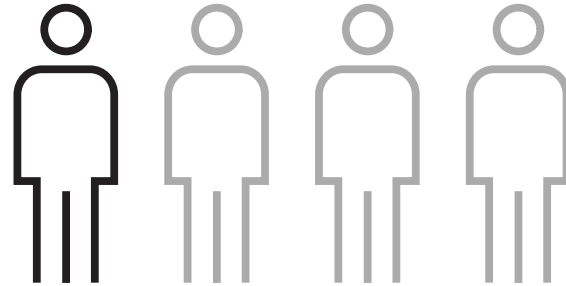
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### Redesign how work gets done

Work redesign emerges as a new trend this year, and culture-focused initiatives are a top priority.

Forward-thinking leaders are prioritizing staffing, recruiting, and retention initiatives while strategically investing in digital tools to relieve staff workload. By thinking critically about what work needs to be done, who does the work, and how work will be performed, organizations can innovate their [workforce strategy](#) to address talent challenges and position themselves for future success.



1 in 4

**Healthcare organizations are prioritizing culture-focused initiatives.**



### Talk to an expert

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