



## Building a Culture of Innovation

In today's rapidly changing healthcare landscape, innovation isn't just about big breakthroughs; it's about fostering a culture that continuously seeks better ways to improve care, enhance efficiency and solve everyday challenges. At Covenant Health, we understand that a culture of innovation is the foundation for growth and excellence, benefiting both our staff and the communities we serve. One effective way to foster such a culture is by embracing the **70–20–10 principle** of innovation.

The 70–20–10 framework, [popularized by Google](#), provides a structured yet flexible approach to innovation. It encourages organizations to allocate resources and time across three categories: **70% on core innovations**, **20% on adjacent innovations**, and **10% on transformational or breakthrough innovations**. Here's how this principle helps balance efforts, ensuring that we continue to innovate in meaningful, sustainable ways:

- **Core Innovations (70%):** These are incremental improvements to our existing processes, technologies, and services. In healthcare, core innovations might include streamlining patient registration, improving communication across departments or upgrading electronic health records. These changes may seem small to the observer, but to others may save time, energy and create a better experience.
- **Adjacent Innovations (20%):** These involve expanding existing capabilities into new areas, such as adopting new telehealth tools or expanding services in community clinics. Adjacent innovations may not be as routine as core innovations but still build on the foundation of what we already do well.
- **Transformational Innovations (10%):** The final 10% focuses on groundbreaking ideas that can reshape the healthcare experience. This could involve adopting advanced AI for diagnostics or integrating cutting-edge robotics in surgery.

One common misconception is that great innovations must be revolutionary, but impactful innovations are often **simple ideas applied thoughtfully**. Here are three examples that illustrate how small changes can make a big difference:

1. **Standardized Patient Checklists:** This simple tool has helped healthcare systems significantly reduce errors. By standardizing processes—like pre-surgery checklists for infection control and post-discharge protocols—medical staff can provide safer and more reliable care. A simple checklist serves as a powerful reminder, minimizing human error and ensuring that important steps are never overlooked.
2. **Centralized Supply Stations:** Rather than having staff walk across units to retrieve commonly used items like gloves, wound care kits, or IV fluids, designated supply stations can be set up at convenient locations within each unit. Some hospitals have even introduced mobile supply carts that can be restocked and wheeled to different areas as needed, ensuring that teams have what they need without unnecessary steps.
3. **Patient Reminder Texts:** Missed appointments are costly, but by implementing automated reminder texts, healthcare providers can significantly reduce no-show

rates. These reminders are inexpensive to set up and allow patients to confirm, reschedule, or cancel easily, helping clinics run smoothly and maximizing patient care capacity.

Each of these innovations might seem straightforward, but they address real challenges and improve the healthcare experience. Small innovations like these can be applied broadly, creating efficiency and improving patient experience and outcomes.

Under Jim VanderSteege's leadership, we are building a culture of innovation. We have launched [Elevate](#)—a new website to share your great ideas. Embracing the 70–20–10 principle reminds us that every level of innovation, from incremental to transformational, contributes to building a stronger, more resilient organization. So, please join with our colleagues in [sharing your ideas today](#).

**-Jeremy Floyd**, Chief Communications Officer, Vice President of Marketing