



Do you want to take your rural inpatient medicine team from good to GREAT?

This evidence-based program may be for you!

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The Veterans Health Administration (VA) is experiencing **crisis** levels of clinician exhaustion, burnout, turnover and delayed care.



Clinical leaders in rural VA settings report **higher rates of burnout** than their urban colleagues. Rural VA facilities are also experiencing **significant staffing shortages** due to recruitment and retention challenges.



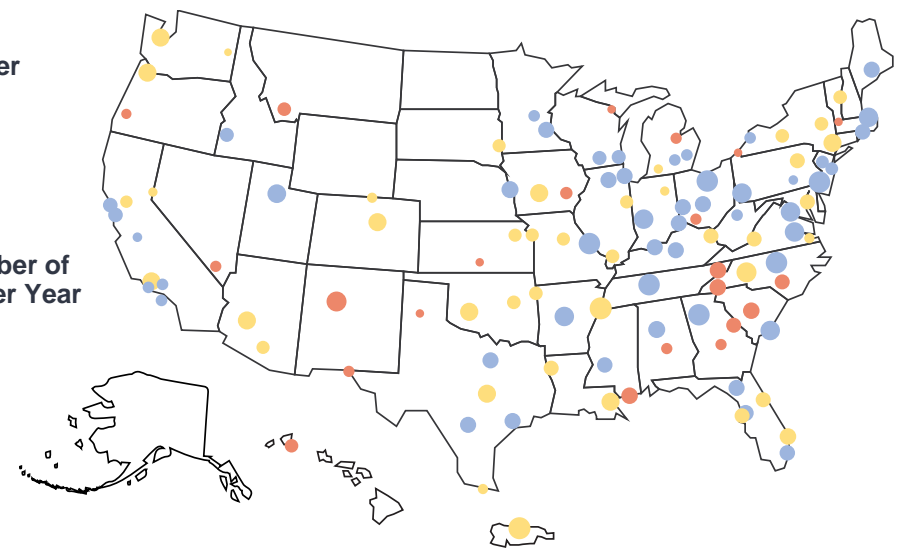
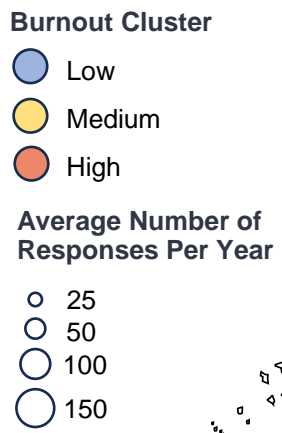
The VA has invested in system level efforts to improve employee well-being and engagement, such as the VA Reduce Employee Burnout and Optimize Organizational Thriving (REBOOT) initiative. While the REBOOT initiative has potential to positively impact employee well-being and engagement, implementation and **spread to rural hospitals will take time.**



There is an **urgent need to provide front-line clinical leaders in rural settings with evidence-based strategies to improve team cultures and work environments to address burnout, wellbeing, and retention.**



Geographic distribution of physician burnout across VA sites nationwide.



Rinne ST, et al. JGIM 2020;35:1382-1388





We're looking for inpatient clinical leaders including physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers, pharmacists and others who want to learn and apply skills to enhance teamwork, learning, and high reliability.



Participants will receive:

- ▶ The Relational Playbook for Healthcare Teams ([VA SharePointSite](#))
- ▶ Leadership skills to enhance relationships, communication, teamwork, and high reliability
- ▶ Implementation support
 - ▶ Learning collaborative, behavioral nudges, and leadership coaching



Participants will gain:

- ▶ Solutions to address burnout, turnover, and poor team relationships
- ▶ Skills to create a high-performing, resilient team
- ▶ Tools to hire and retain staff who fit your team culture

Over a 6-month period, inpatient hospital medicine clinical leaders will be asked to:

- ▶ Participate in pre-implementation assessments including a virtual or in-person visit by the AIM-HI team and two surveys.
- ▶ Participate in one, 50-minute virtual learning collaborative meeting each month to engage in learning and sharing of experiences and practices within your team and with other AIM-HI sites.
- ▶ Implement 1-3 Relational Playbook practices each month with your team.
- ▶ Opt in for personalized leadership coaching to enhance your professional development.
- ▶ Participate in post-implementation assessments including 2 surveys and a 30-minute interview.



The Acute Inpatient Medicine High Reliability,
Learning Environment and
Workforce Development Initiative (AIM-HI)

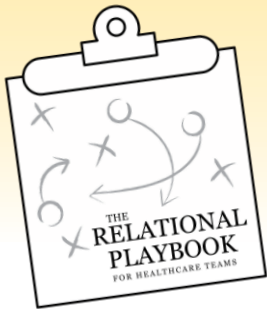
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Funding: AIM-HI is an Office of Rural Health, Enterprise-Wide Initiative that provides support for the AIM-HI team salaries and travel. No financial support is available to sites.

Partners: AIM-HI is supported by the VA Office of Specialty Care and Hospital Medicine Program Office.



The Relational Playbook is designed to provide clinical leaders in rural hospitals with evidence-based tools to change their team cultures through creating supportive learning environments.



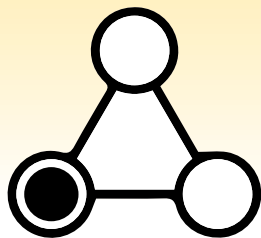
In supportive learning environments, teams are empowered to trial, adapt, and adopt innovations while using highly reliable work practices (e.g., debriefs). They seek positive moments and focus on relationships and communication.



In research conducted in VA cardiac catheterization laboratories, supportive learning environments were associated with higher employee engagement, retention, and safety climate.



Unfortunately, this research indicated supportive learning environments are uncommon because VA clinical leaders do not receive guidance, training, or support on how to create supportive learning environments.





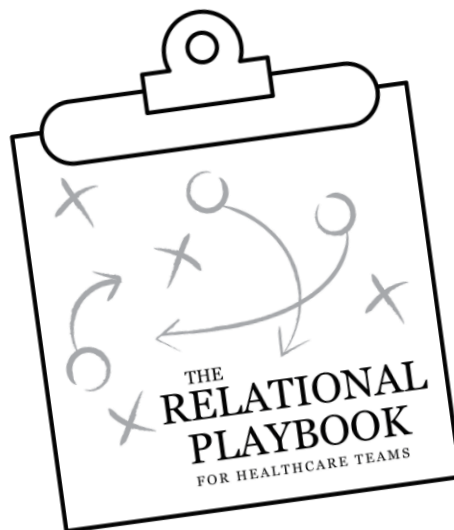
The Relational Playbook is a 5-chapter eBook (hosted on a VA [Sharepoint platform](#)) that contains leadership resources and 50 evidence-based leadership practices to help teams create supportive learning environments.



The Playbook is a locally focused program that provides practical, entry level tools designed to fit seamlessly into daily meetings or existing trainings, making it easy for busy clinical leaders to incorporate into their routines.

Playbook Chapters

- ▶ How to Create a Positive Culture
Practice: Three Good Things
- ▶ How to Build a Team
Practice: Walk in My Shoes
- ▶ How to Lead a Team
Practice: Stop, Start, Continue
- ▶ How to Create Joy in Work
Practice: Understanding What Matters
- ▶ How to Communicate Effectively and Use High Reliability Practices.
Practice: Daily Debrief Guide



- ▶ Teams who implement the Playbook interventions will **experience meaningful changes** including **enhanced employee well-being**, as measured by increased job satisfaction and lower turnover.





MONDAY

LEARN 30 minutes



Explore and learn new Relational Playbook content each week



E.g.: Listen to the Science of Happiness Podcast during your drive to work

Submit an Intention Setting Survey to focus your thoughts and plans for the week ahead

TUESDAY-THURSDAY

IMPLEMENT 5-60 minutes



Implement 1-3 interventions each week

Choose from 50 interventions



Birthday Celebrations



Feedback Language



Stop, Start, Continue

FRIDAY

REFLECT 10-15 minutes



Submit a Weekly Wrap-Up Survey to reflect and share on your week

The survey has three questions, including:

- ▶ What interventions did you implement this week?
- ▶ How much time did it take you?
- ▶ How are things going? Do you have any stories to share?



Repeat this cycle each week during the Playbook Program!
The content builds on itself to grow your knowledge and skill set.





AIM-HI Learning Collaborative

- ▶ The AIM-HI Team will host one, 50-minute virtual meeting each month with AIM-HI clinical leaders to block out time in your busy schedule to engage in learning and sharing of experiences and practices within your team and with other AIM-HI sites.



Behavioral Nudges

- ▶ Each Monday, AIM-HI clinical leaders will receive an email to remind them of the assigned Playbook chapter for the month. The participant will set an intention for how they will implement 1-3 of the Playbook practices into work that week.
- ▶ Every Friday, AIM-HI clinical leaders will receive a weekly wrap-up survey to prompt reflection, share the Playbook practices implemented that week, and share any stories.



Leadership Coaching

- ▶ AIM-HI clinical leaders can opt-in in for free, confidential on-line leadership coaching to help them maximize their individual performance as they create supportive learning environments for their teams.
- ▶ The coaching is provided by Dr. Gilmartin, AIM-HI project lead. Dr. Gilmartin is an Associate Leadership Coach with the VA National Center for Organization Development (NCOD).





★ AIM-HI Site Feedback

- ▶ Sites that have enrolled in AIM-HI have noticed positive changes within team dynamics and have been able to implement their own ideas into team meetings (i.e. 2 minute break to celebrate, Dad joke Wednesdays)

"Asking about things that went well this week really shifted our discussion and have us something to end the week on a positive note. It was really meaningful"

★ Playbook Feedback

- ▶ Sites that have enrolled in AIM-HI have reported that the Playbook was:
 - *"Thoughtfully designed and impactful"*
 - *Easy to use*
 - *Fit into existing workflows*
 - *Increased team positivity*

The chapters are very simple to follow. They're very short. They're easily accessible, so nothing that you're taking on is really, it's not a big project. It's really just easy to take in small bites.

"I really enjoy the discussion of the wins with the staff.. Asking what went well today can change the morale on the unit and hopefully can decrease the negativity that is surrounding our unit right now."

"I would say that we have a safer culture because of it...overall, teambuilding has been one of the biggest benefits that we've seen from Aim-HI."





★ Leadership & Learning Collaboratives

- ▶ Sites that have enrolled in AIM-HI noted that the monthly Leadership & Learning Collaboratives were beneficial for reviewing and teaching the topics of the Playbook and felt activities were well role-modeled

"I think they were beneficial. It was nice to hear what other sites were doing."

★ Leadership Coaching Feedback

- ▶ Participants described highly positive experiences with coaching sessions
- ▶ Participants described coaching sessions had clear expectations and sessions provided opportunity to brainstorm leadership solutions and improve leadership skills

"The coaching was probably one of the greatest things I have ever participated in."

"I loved that [leadership coach] really pushed me to come up with a topic every week, so no matter what I was doing, I had to stop and consider what my challenges were, whether they were related to the Playbook or related to leadership practice, and be prepared during our session with that topic."





Operations Team

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- ▶ Gilmartin HM, Hess E, Mueller C, Plomondon ME, Waldo SW, Battaglia C. A pilot study to assess the learning environment and use of reliability enhancing work practices in VHA cardiac catheterization laboratories. *Learning Health Systems*. 2020;March:1-6.
- ▶ Gilmartin HM, Hess E, Mueller C, et al. Learning environments, reliability enhancing work practices, employee engagement, and safety climate in VA cardiac catheterization laboratories. *Health Services Research*. 2022;57(2):385-391.
- ▶ Gilmartin, HM, Connelly, B, Hess, E, et al. Developing a relational playbook for cardiology teams to cultivate supportive learning environments, enhance clinician well-being, and veteran care. *Learn Health Sys*. 2023;e10383. doi:[10.1002/lrh2.10383](https://doi.org/10.1002/lrh2.10383)
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- ▶ **Website:** The Relational Playbook for Cardiology Teams.
https://www.seattledenvercoin.research.va.gov/relational_playbook/
- ▶ **Website:** Relational Coordination in the VA.
<https://www.seattledenvercoin.research.va.gov/education/rc/#:~:text=Relational%20Coordination%20is%20a%20mutually,relationships%20within%20and%20between%20teams.>
- ▶ **Podcast:** VA HSR&D Investigator Insights. Building Resiliency, Quality and Retention into VA Cardiac Catheterization Laboratories. (2022) <https://www.hsrdr.research.va.gov/news/podcasts/listen.cfm?ID=2097>

