Thomason Health System Background

There is a significant shift towards an integrated healthcare system that provides coordinated care while trying to eliminate the gaps in shared information and communication that affect patient safety and care. Effective integrated systems have comprehensive care and preventive services that increase the organization’s capacity to be patient-focused across the continuum of care. Leadership, teamwork, and communication are essential for a successful integrated healthcare system that can manage the delivery of seamless and well-coordinated care for patients. Responding to this trend is Thomason Health System (THS), a non-profit organization that has recently made the transition to a fully integrated healthcare system. THS is located in a suburb of Houston, Texas, and consists of one hospital, five clinics, one hospice facility, and 800 staff members (78 administrators, 132 doctors, 220 nurses, 160 technicians, 85 facilities, and 125 support staff). THS’s mission is to practice medicine and care as an integrated team of compassionate, multi-disciplinary physicians, nurses, and health professionals who are focused on the complete health needs of the patients. According to the American Medical Association (AMA), developing an accountable integrated healthcare organization will help an organization monitor patient needs and outcomes, use performance data and indicators for organizational and staff assessment, and implement new forms of reimbursement that result in improved quality while keeping costs checked. Under the leadership of CEO Maggie Tweedy, MD, THS will undergo a huge information technology infrastructure update with electronic medical records (EMR) system and policy. EMR will provide crucial information when treating individual patients throughout different points of care as well as provide data regarding the effectiveness of treatments and staff within the system. Both the Joint Commission (JC) and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) have stated that EMRs will also significantly contribute to the collection of empirical and longitudinal evidence without creating an undue burden on the organization. The Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act place new importance on the widespread adoption and meaningful use of EMRs. However, there have been instances of hesitation from the staff, and several staff members have vocalized their displeasure and lack of enthusiasm for EMRs. THS is committed to preserving the highest standards of care while the technology infrastructure is being updated, but understands the need for a cultural adoption. Unengaged staff will become dissatisfied and the lack of buy-in will interrupt communication, high-quality service, and workflow within the system. Before the roll out of EMRs, the board of directors has asked you to create an onboarding team charged with the cultural adoption of EMRs by THS

Thomason Health System Bios Maggie Tweedy, MD, is the chief executive officer (CEO) of THS and was previously its chief operating officer. Dr. Tweedy joined the management team in 1991 and served in various management capacities. In addition to leading the organization and delegating day to day operations to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) , Dr. Tweedy has been responsible for advancing the organization’s focus on quality coordinated care and patient safety, cultivating a talented multidisciplinary staff, advancing clinical and technological innovation, and maintaining financial and operational strength. A cardiologist and internist, Dr. Tweedy is eager to make THS a model for integrated health care systems. Marco Tortello, PhD, is the chief information officer and has worked at both private and nonprofit organizations. Tortello joined THS in 2011 and has focused on innovation and technologies that are patient-centered while increasing the organization’s efficiency through technology, modernization and business process improvements. He is the driving force behind THS’s acquisition of EMRs as he believes it will help minimize errors and inefficiencies. Tortello has his doctorate in information technology and a master’s in public management. Virginia Pavini, MD, is an anesthesiologist and the chief of staff. Dr. Pavini joined THS in 1995 and is responsible for setting the high standards for staffing as well as establishing performance evaluation procedures and professional development polices. Dr. Pavini is a strong leader and many staff members look to her as a mentor. Dr. Pavini believes the majority of the staff will eventually adopt EMRs but feels strongly that key staff members should be included in the process, training, and follow-up to help establish new cultural practices for EMRs. Gene Rosario, MD, is a primary care physician who has been with THS for 32 years. Dr. Rosario has held management positions in the past but prefers to work in the clinics. He is very against EMRs because they are very burdensome and feels doctors would lose autonomy. Dr. Rosario is also worried that costs incurred for EMRs will limit community and charity services. Christina Trevor, MD, is a pediatrician who recently graduated from medical school and joined THS. Having worked at other organizations and facilities with EMRs, she fully supports EMRs and was actually very surprised that THS did not already have them in place. She believes that EMRs streamline the process and allow doctors to spend more time with their patients. Dr. Trevor has been a vocal supporter and has communicated her own experience with many other staff members. Todd Birchman, MD, is a dermatologist who has privileges at the hospital but maintains a thriving private practice with several locations. He uses a very similar system to the one THS is planning to acquire. He has experienced the challenges © 2015 Laureate Education, Inc. Page 2 of 2 firsthand, but overall, Dr. Birchman is very satisfied with the switch. Many staff members have talked to Dr. Birchman about his experience when he is at the facility. Todd Ramos, RN, is a nursing administrator for the hospice facility. He is responsible for managing the nursing staff, scheduling shifts, training, managing medical records, maintaining proper inventory of supplies, and ensuring the highest quality of nursing care. Facing a nursing shortage, Ramos is worried that his staff will be stretched too thin with the necessary training for EMRs but believes the shift is beneficial in the long run. Frances Hays, RN, is a nursing administrator at the hospital who has been with THS for 18 years. She too is responsible for managing the nursing staff as well as the operations of the department. Hays’ other responsibilities include nurse orientation and helping to facilitate team building exercises for new and existing staff. Hays does not want to use EMRs because she feels it is time-consuming and will cause her staff to lose interpersonal and communication skills. John Lieberman, radiology technician, has been at THS for 17 years. He is a strong advocate for EMRs that will help increase productivity and care while decreasing errors for the radiology department. Lieberman has a very good relationship with the other technicians and labs. Jennifer Kline, monitor technician, assists the nursing department by monitoring cardiac rhythms. This position requires Kline to work with other teams and specialists within THS. She is excited for EMRs as she believes they will decrease mistakes and inefficiencies between departments. Kline has an exceptional reputation and an excellent rapport with patients.