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A Hopeful Time in Healthcare: Data is the Foundation for our Future



Posted by **MAUREEN SULLIVAN, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF STRATEGIC SERVICES AND CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER, BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD ASSOCIATION**

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you think about data? You might envision rows of numbers, or pages of field notes. Some might imagine analysts hard at work behind computer screens, or IT professionals coding busily. I picture something else. I see a foundation for the future, and an exhilarating opportunity to transform healthcare as we know it.

Recently, I had the opportunity to join a group of entrepreneurs, doctors, researchers, business leaders and patient advocates at an **Inventing the Future of Health** event hosted by The Atlantic magazine in New York City, to discuss how we can work together to realize that transformation. It was a morning full of energizing conversations with top healthcare thinkers sharing ideas on how our industry can truly connect the dots with data.

It's clear to leaders from across the industry that data is at the core of our ability to drive innovation for the future. The shared challenge faced today is how to harness the wide array of available data in innovative ways that allow us to generate the insights needed to transform care delivery and build healthier communities.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies recently unveiled **Blue Cross Blue Shield AxisSM** (BCBS Axis), a data capability unmatched in scope and scale that draws from healthcare quality and cost data from all 36 **Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies**. Getting to this point was hard work, and it's going to take more to pull all the actionable insights from the data. But in my view, the fact that we have the information aggregated and available makes this one of the most exciting and hopeful times in healthcare.

We are at a pivot point where we have the tools to make changes that will fundamentally transform healthcare and ultimately, the health of our country. We're making the investments today that will make new capabilities possible tomorrow. We're thinking creatively about the new ways data can be integrated into healthcare to bring the power of data out of the cloud and into physician's offices, businesses and communities, where individuals can benefit first-hand.

I believe data is part of a quiet revolution that will forever change the healthcare system for the better, and I'm proud to see Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies leading the way – as only we can – because of the unparalleled depth of our data.

To see more from the AtlanticLIVE event, visit their [website](#).

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