

# Uniting Leadership and Realizing Benefits of Health System Integration

Published: August 2020

## » PROJECT OVERVIEW



University of Florida Health Shands [UF Health] is an Academic Health Center in Gainesville, FL with several hospitals spread across North & Central Florida. In 2019, UF Health sought to strengthen an existing affiliation agreement with Central Florida Health [CFH], a 2-hospital system located approximately 60 miles south, near The Villages® retirement community, by acquiring the hospitals via a member substitution, effective January 2020.

Through this acquisition, UF Health planned to integrate CFH as a new division, capable of expanding the UF Health brand while furthering its mission to provide quality care to the residents of The Villages® – many of whom sought tertiary and quaternary care from UF Health. UF Health also recognized that strengthening a relationship with The Villages®, the fastest growing metropolitan area in the country, could serve as a strategic foothold in the increasingly competitive Florida healthcare landscape. For CFH, the acquisition promised community investment through the construction of a new hospital and access to UF Health’s academic, clinical, and research resources.



## » THE CHALLENGE

Although UF Health and CFH had been ‘affiliated’ since 2018, the systems remained distinct entities – each with their own boards, executive teams, operations, and cultures prior to the transaction. UF Health realized that a successful integration wouldn’t just require fusing and streamlining operations, but would need to be predicated on collaborative partnerships across leadership teams and cognizant efforts to assimilate cultures. To achieve this, UF Health engaged KCG to facilitate integration planning for the CFH assets.

## » THE SOLUTION

KCG collaborated with key stakeholders on initiatives designed to realize operational synergies and foster a united leadership team:

**ESTABLISH AN INTEGRATION VISION & PROCESS:** KCG aligned executive leaders across integrating systems to develop a vision and guiding principles for the integration and the future of UF Health. In addition, KCG established a formal, yet nimble, Integration Steering Committee to triage and respond to requests, as well as to manage the inevitable “noise” associated with a large-scale acquisition.

**CONDUCT FUNCTIONAL AREA INTEGRATION ASSESSMENT:** KCG collaborated with functional area leaders to document the current state of their areas (e.g. Physician Operations, Revenue Cycle, HR, etc.) at both organizations. Each functional area was evaluated on readiness to integrate with its counterparts, as well as on the potential long-term value that integrating the area would bring to UF Health. This assessment identified critical activities necessary to support the integration vision and served as an overarching prioritization methodology for each functional area’s integration plans.

**DEVELOP INTEGRATION OPPORTUNITY ROADMAP:** Throughout discussions with both leadership teams, KCG identified 98 tactical integration initiatives to improve clinical care, streamline operations, and deliver desired financial outcomes. These initiatives were prioritized for implementation in a strategic roadmap, which set the foundation for UF Health to realize integration benefits in the short-, medium-, and long-term. Finally, KCG stood up internal processes to enable the Integration Steering Committee to effectively review ongoing initiatives, unearth new ideas, and evaluate potential opportunities on an ongoing basis.

## » THE IMPACT

“Not only was KCG a collaborative partner in the integration process from an operational perspective, but more importantly, KCG helped facilitate and connect our separate leadership teams. KCG’s thought leadership and ability to develop relationships was foundational to our integration success and instrumental in creating a cohesive leadership team that rapidly responded to the COVID-19 pandemic during the integration process.”

– Ed Jimenez, Chief Executive Officer  
University of Florida Health Shands



KCG is a boutique healthcare consulting firm specializing in strategy and organizational transformation. We partner with hospital & health system leaders to devise innovative solutions to their toughest challenges converting issues into opportunities, inefficient processes into best practices, and marginal outcomes into sustainable results.