



Executive summary

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a unique historical challenge. For the past two years the world has seen millions of people die and hundreds of millions get sick from the virus. The pandemic had provided valuable lessons about what it takes to mobilize and organize to protect populations and at the same time to maintain essential societal and economic activities and minimize disruptions. It has also provided lessons about where we have failed.

The development in less than a year of multiple highly effective vaccines against COVID-19 is a real miracle of modern science. A key pillar in the fight to control the pandemic is mass vaccination. Vaccination at the same time is a massive logistical and political challenge. Over the past year we explored the ongoing vaccination process focusing on US healthcare systems and health care workers. We put particular emphasis on rural critical access hospitals. Based on the experience gained in this pandemic our goal was to create a tool - a playbook for future vaccination campaigns in the rural US hospitals.

Rural hospitals face a different set of challenges than urban and suburban hospitals. Their geographic locations, size, and functions can both insulate and enhance their vulnerability to pandemics. We examined the pandemic response in a rural hospital - Gunnison Valley Health in Gunnison, Colorado. Gunnison Valley Health did an excellent job in vaccinating its workforce, better than bigger, well-known US health systems. Gunnison's successful vaccination campaign served as the foundation for our playbook.

Vaccine hesitancy has been by far the most important challenge for the vaccination process in the United States and Gunnison Valley was above average successful in overcoming vaccine hesitancy challenges.

Our playbook focuses on five key pillars for planning future vaccination campaigns: communication, continuity, convenience, conversation, and the community.