

THE CHALLENGE

AN UNSUSTAINABLE HEALTH SYSTEM

The health of Americans today relies on a system designed for a different time—and it is failing us. The deep-rooted problems at the source of this failure will not be solved through a piecemeal approach and instead require leaders to think more systemically.

Yet, thinking through the complexities of the health system is fraught with difficulties. It is particularly challenging if each major stakeholder sees a different piece of the health puzzle from a distinct point of view. Propelled by their own perspective, leaders often launch incremental initiatives with insufficient funding that are rarely able to alter long-term trends.

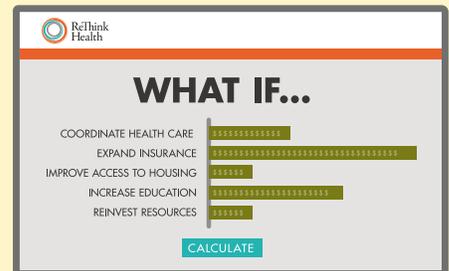
To realize lasting change, regional leaders from across sectors must work together to transform their common system. As a starting point, they need a practical way of seeing beyond their own viewpoints and exploring what they might accomplish through a sustainable, system-wide strategy.

THE OPPORTUNITY

AN EVIDENCE-BASED MODEL TO SUPPORT MULTI-SECTOR STRATEGY DESIGN

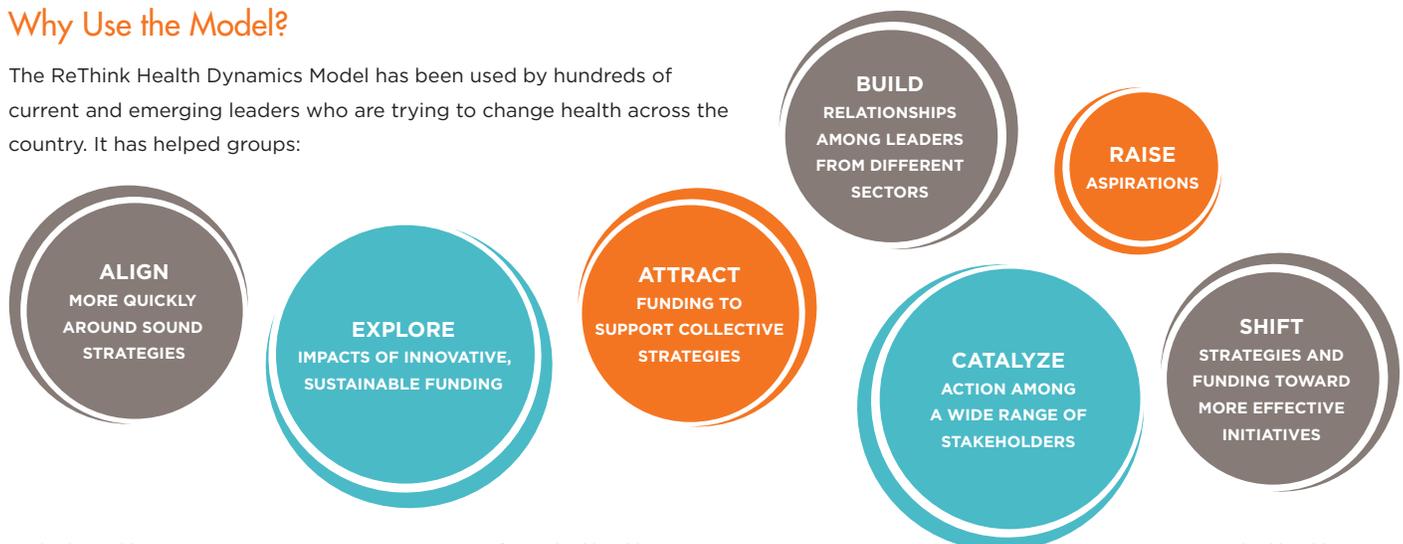
To help leaders explore transformative strategies, ReThink Health has developed an empirically-based, computer simulation model that provides a realistic representation of a regional health system. Designed by an award-winning team of MIT-trained system modelers, the ReThink Health Dynamics Model enables leaders from across sectors to ask their own “what if” questions and instantly see how various scenarios are likely to unfold. By demonstrating how the health system responds to interventions, the model helps leaders see which approaches could do the most to save lives, save money, improve quality, increase social equity, and boost productivity.

Leaders can explore a wide range of initiatives, often in unconsidered combinations or with innovative funding, and then track results across hundreds of measures. By bringing together decades of evidence into one analytical framework, the ReThink Health Dynamics Model gives leaders a wide-angle view of their health system and a shared platform for understanding what different investments could yield over time. The results are often eye-opening, revealing compelling options to improve health that may have never been seriously examined.



Why Use the Model?

The ReThink Health Dynamics Model has been used by hundreds of current and emerging leaders who are trying to change health across the country. It has helped groups:



How has the Model Influenced Decision-Making?

In November 2013, 70 leaders, representing a wide range of sectors and perspectives, convened in Atlanta with a goal of addressing worrisome health trends in their region. ReThink Health facilitated the Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement's (ARCHI's) exploration of a variety of pathways to redesigning its health system using a version of the ReThink Health Dynamics Model that had been customized with Atlanta data.

ARCHI participants devised a number of scenarios that they thought would provide the best outcomes in health, productivity, equity, and health care delivery. Participants quickly uncovered a remarkable degree of agreement on one strategy, which focused on encouraging healthy behaviors, increasing economic prospects, enhancing care coordination, and expanding health insurance coverage. This scenario now forms the basis of ARCHI's agenda, and teams of leaders from multiple sectors have been aligning their efforts with this new future direction.

“ ReThink Health modeling helped people discover surprisingly strong areas of consensus. It helped us sail through a step where we might otherwise have gotten stuck.”

KAREN MINYARD, PHD

Steering Committee Member, Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement

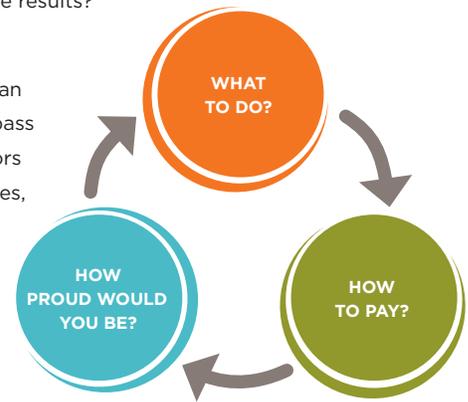
How Can You Use the Model?

One version of the ReThink Health Dynamics Model, based on national data, is publicly available online at <http://tiny.cc/RTHAnytown>. This tool can be scaled to reflect populations in almost any region of the country or, at additional cost, can be configured with local data to better represent a particular region. The model's data and structure are updated periodically to reflect new research and input from users. ReThink Health offers several levels of support for leaders, including training on how to use the model. For additional information, please contact: model@rethinkhealth.org.

How Does the Model Work?

Every interaction with the ReThink Health Dynamics Model centers around three questions: What are we going to do? How are we going to pay for it? and How proud would we be of the results?

WHAT TO DO? Users may select initiatives from a menu of more than two dozen options, which encompass efforts to enable healthier behaviors and expand economic opportunities, as well as efforts to enhance health care quality, capacity, and cost. Assumptions about the effectiveness, cost, and timing of each initiative are easily modified.



HOW TO PAY? The model offers many practical ways to finance health system transformation. For example, users may assemble a short-term innovation fund, change economic incentives for provider payment, reinvest savings over time, and more.

HOW PROUD WOULD YOU BE? After selecting the initiative and funding options, the model quickly calculates how that scenario is likely to unfold over the next 25 years. Users may examine results across a gallery of more than 200 metrics of population health, costs, care, equity, workforce productivity, and return-on-investment for the region. Faced with those results, users can immediately adjust their strategy and compare scenarios in search of an approach that meets their goals. While outputs are not predictive, they allow users to see what new investments could accomplish, weigh tradeoffs, and consider the stakes of inaction.

SELECTED INITIATIVE OPTIONS

The model includes dozens of initiatives. The following chart presents a sampling of these initiatives.

REDUCE RISKS	Healthier Behaviors	Environmental Hazards	Pathways to Advantage (family; student)
IMPROVE CARE	Preventive/Chronic Care	Mental Illness Care	Self Care
INCREASE CAPACITY	PCP Efficiency	Recruit PCPs (general; FQHC)	Hospital Efficiency
REDUCE COST	Medical Home	Coordinate Care	End of Life Care
FUND INITIATIVES	Grants, Loans, and Taxes	Reinvest Savings	Shift Provider Payment

Explore scenarios to transform regional health: www.rethinkhealth.org/model