



Dr Brian Donley interview – ICHOM Newsletter

1. What is your background in healthcare?

Prior to his current role as Chief Executive Officer of Cleveland Clinic London, Dr. Brian Donley was Chief of Staff and Chief of Clinical Enterprise of the Cleveland Clinic. Prior to that, he served as President of the Community Hospitals of the Cleveland Clinic Health System and 18 Family Health Centers. Dr. Donley is also Professor of Surgery at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine.

Dr. Donley attended the University of Notre Dame for his undergraduate studies, graduating Phi Beta Kappa. He graduated with distinction from the University of Michigan Medical School and completed his residency in orthopaedic surgery at the University of Michigan. Dr. Donley completed a fellowship in orthopaedic foot and ankle surgery at the Campbell Clinic in Memphis, TN. He also attended Harvard Business School completing the Advanced Management Program.

He joined Cleveland Clinic's Orthopaedic & Rheumatologic Institute in 1996, serving in various roles over the years, including Vice Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedics, Director of the Foot and Ankle Center, Director of the Foot and Ankle Fellowship, and Director of Research and Education for Foot and Ankle Surgery. He has also been part of a team of orthopaedic consultants for several major sports teams.

Dr. Donley was a member of the development team for the third generation total ankle prosthesis and performed the first surgery in the world with this ankle implant at Cleveland Clinic in 2006. He holds three patents including a novel intraosseous minimally invasive implant fixation system for the distal extremities. He has published over 80 scientific articles and has made over 200 presentations regionally, nationally and internationally.

He is a member of many professional organisations, including the Royal College of Surgeons, and has served on numerous boards. He is presently Chairman of the American Hospital Association Health Systems Council.

2. What do you think are the big opportunities for healthcare?

Globally, there are two overarching opportunities to improve healthcare. The first opportunity is to scale the highest quality healthcare across larger populations. With additional digital tools, an abundance of information, and increased connectivity, we are now able to reach more people. We have the opportunity to improve the health of individuals and communities by continually measuring and improving clinical outcomes and patients' experiences. The second macro opportunity in healthcare is to enhance the delivery of empathy in our interactions. The core of healthcare is the expression of empathy from one person to another. We have an opportunity to encourage more empathy from one individual to another in need as part of our shared humanity.

3. What are the biggest challenges/risks?

The greatest opportunities do not come without hurdles. While we have an opportunity to scale high quality healthcare across large populations, we must continue to drive down the societal cost of healthcare to sustainable levels. Additionally, with the ability to reach more people through major digital transformations, our caregivers are experiencing increased burnout. Enhancing empathy in healthcare not only means allowing caregivers the space and opportunities to express empathy to their patients, but also reconnecting to the meaning and purpose in caregivers' work to improve their fulfillment in both personal and professional lives.

4. Tell us a little about your role and priorities at Cleveland Clinic London?

At Cleveland Clinic London, we are building a 184-bed hospital and medical office building in Central London. We are setting the foundation for the highest quality care to our future patients by creating high performing and engaged teams. As healthcare leaders, we must demonstrate and inspire hope, trust, stability and compassion to build successful teams. Our 200+ London caregivers live our six Cleveland Clinic values in building a new model of healthcare.

5. What difference does Cleveland Clinic make for its patients and professionals?

Cleveland Clinic was founded in 1921 when four doctors returned from the war and used the principles of teamwork, innovation and empathy to begin a new kind of group practice model. In nearly 100 years, these principles have guided our 70,000 caregivers to be their best and in turn, provide high quality care to our patients.

6. Why do you think Patient Reported Outcomes are so important to improving healthcare delivery?

The ultimate reason we work in healthcare is to care for our patients and for this reason, our outcomes should reflect our patients' goals and experiences so we can better serve them.

7. What is the best piece of LEADERSHIP advice you would offer a peer in another hospital setting who is considering implementing a value-based healthcare approach?

Concentrate equally on your caregivers as you do your patients. Your caregivers will do extraordinary things for your patients if you empower and trust them by delivering meaning and purpose to their work, opportunities to learn and grow, and recognition.