

# Cassandra Barnard, MBA, LSSBB

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategic healthcare operations leader with 16+ years of experience optimizing performance across complex, multi-site systems. Expert in governance, accreditation readiness, workforce optimization, and enterprise operations. Proven record advising C-suite leaders, leading high-impact Lean Six Sigma projects, strengthening quality and safety programs, and designing governance structures that improve accountability, compliance, and operational efficiency. Recognized for elevating cross-functional alignment, driving system-wide results, and building sustainable processes that exceed organizational, regional, and national standards.

## CORE COMPETENCIES

Operational Leadership & Scalability | Governance & Executive Advisory Support | Accreditation & Regulatory Compliance (The Joint Commission, OIG, CARF) | Lean Six Sigma Black Belt | High Reliability Operations | Strategic Planning & Execution | Policy & SOP Development | Enterprise Reporting & Analytics | Cross-Functional Team Leadership | Workforce Planning & Recruitment Optimization | Service Line Expansion | Risk, Safety & Quality Oversight

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Ralph H. Johnson Veterans Health Care System, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Charleston SC**

*Executive Assistant (EA), Supervisory Health Systems Specialist (GS-13) | 2022 – Present*  
**Operations, Governance & Executive Leadership Support**

- Serve as executive partner to the Associate Director for Nursing & Patient Care Services, supporting operations across a \$570M health system and influencing over 1,690 clinical Nursing staff across 7 sites.
- Act as voting member and governance lead for the Nursing Executive Board (15 members) and liaison to the Chair—directing board operations, meeting workflows, compliance standards, action-item accountability, and approval routing for 4–10 nursing policies and clinical protocols monthly.
- Oversee and validate meeting minutes, documentation, and publication timelines to ensure full compliance with internal and regulatory time frames.

## Compliance, Investigations & Accreditation

- Lead fact-finding investigations, environmental scans, and regulatory reviews; oversee 2 Joint Commission audits and 4 corporate-level audits, ensuring corrective actions exceed national benchmarks (95%+ compliance).
- Ensure 90% of Environment of Care deficiencies are closed within 14 days by partnering with Facilities Management, Safety, and service lines to eliminate process barriers.

### **Policy, Governance & Organizational Structure**

- Rewrote 10+ committee and council charters and designed the structure for 2 new enterprise-wide committees, strengthening governance, decision-making, and accountability.
- Manage governance workflows for the Senior Executive Board, Resource Management Council, and three facility committees; sit as a voting member on two additional bodies.

### **Operational Performance & Workforce Optimization**

- Conduct weekly workforce strategy meetings with Nurse Recruitment to remove staffing barriers, achieving 90% proactive hiring actions and 90% certificate return rates within Time-to-Hire guidelines.
- Perform leadership rounding with a consistent 90% monthly completion rate to identify service gaps, staff needs, and operational improvements.
- Identify and evaluate expansion opportunities through workflow analysis and facility observations, supporting strategic growth and space optimization initiatives.

### **Culture, Engagement & Recognition**

- Designed and chaired the first facility-wide Employee Awards Program, implementing the “Employee of the Month” initiative to strengthen morale and engagement.

### **Lean Six Sigma & Strategic Improvement**

- Lead Lean Six Sigma Black Belt projects that reduce operational inefficiencies, standardize workflows, and improve financial and clinical performance; present results to C-suite and executive councils.

### ***Senior Executive Board (SEB) Compliance Manager (GS-11/12) | 2022 – 2023***

- Architected the full governance framework for the Senior Executive Leadership Board, implementing SOPs, SharePoint systems, communication structures, and decision-tracking tools to drive cross-functional alignment and sustainable executive oversight.
- Conducted system-wide investigations, risk analyses, and compliance reviews, preparing leadership for audits and ensuring corrective actions exceeded regional and national standards.

- Led Joint Commission readiness reviews, partnering with service chiefs to close gaps and strengthen accreditation preparedness.
- Developed governance and accountability training for executives and managers, elevating organizational decision-making and compliance culture.
- Served as High Reliability Officer and Lean Six Sigma Black Belt instructor, coaching leaders on safety culture and high-reliability principles.
- Directed strategic and operational special projects for the Director’s Office, ensuring milestone adherence, regulatory compliance, and stakeholder engagement.

***Graduate Healthcare Administrative Trainee (GS-9/11) | 2020 – 2022***

- Managed high-impact cross-service-line projects involving program evaluation, performance improvement, and operational redesign.
- Created a PROSCI change management initiative to modernize the Senior Executive Board governance structure and reporting model.
- Planned and executed the hospital’s Executive Leadership Strategic Planning Retreat—including venue negotiations, agenda design, executive communications, maps and logistics, action-item governance, and creation of the Strategic Planning Priorities Report, published internally and externally.
- Supported COVID-19 response operations and led employee engagement initiatives.

**VHA Office of Community Care – Revenue Operations, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Asheville, NC**

***Financial Administrative Assistant (GS-7) | 2008 – 2020***

- Managed e-Pharmacy operations, revenue recovery, third-party billing, cash posting, and payer contract administration.
- Led Lean Six Sigma and Kaizen projects that improved national claims processing and reduced waste.
- Conducted business intelligence reporting, managing databases for payer performance and revenue analytics.
- Chaired Employee Survey Committee and National Training programs to improve onboarding and engagement.
- Served as Union Steward for AFGE Local 446.

## **Asheville Podiatry Associates, PA – Asheville, NC**

### ***Office Manager | 2006 – 2009***

- Managed practice operations, financial reporting, AP/AR, payroll, scheduling, and compliance.
- Negotiated payer contracts, credentialing, and pricing strategies to increase revenue.
- Led Cerner PM implementation and conducted Six Sigma initiatives to reduce wait times and improve satisfaction.

## **EDUCATION, CERTIFICATIONS, AND AFFILIATIONS**

- VA VERC Lean Six Sigma Black Belt (2020)
- VA VERC Lean Six Sigma Green Belt (2013)
- PROSCI Change Management Practitioner (2021)
- Introduction to Healthcare Analytics (2019)
- LEAD Leadership Development Program Graduate (2011)
- ACHE Member (2020–Present)
- Contract Negotiation Skills & Best Practices
- 7 Habits for Highly Effective Managers & Speed of Trust Training