Many of the changes and challenges facing modern day health care and its systems cannot be solved with strictly linear or analytical approaches. Health care professionals and leaders are required to exercise different kinds of thinking for better outcomes.

Design thinking can help you break free from traditional thinking to re-examine problems in new ways. This approach is based on a designer’s work process where you go through six phases to identify and create innovative solutions in order to meet your audience’s needs.

**EMPATHIZE**
Learn about your audience; try to understand why they think and act in certain ways.

**DEFINE**
Discover what your audience needs and what problem you are trying to solve for them.

**IMPLEMENT**
Put your solution into effect once it effectively solves your audience’s problem.

**IDEATE**
Brainstorm ideas for innovative solutions; discard obvious or traditional ideas and focus on valid solutions that appeal to your audience.

**TEST**
Gather feedback by asking how and why the solutions worked (or didn’t work); use insights to determine if you need to revisit other phases.

**CREATE**
Turn your ideas into tangible prototypes; continue to fine-tune the design until you reach the desired solution.