Hospital Giants Vie for Patients in Effort to Fend Off New Rivals

Attorney Rob Fuller was quoted in the New York Times article, "Hospital Giants Vie for Patients in Effort to Fend Off New Rivals".

From the article:

In just the last few weeks, several of the nation's largest nonprofit hospital systems have announced plans to become even larger behemoths. Dignity Health and Catholic Health Initiatives said they planned to become a national chain of Catholic hospitals and clinics that spanned 28 states. Two Midwestern systems want to combine to become one of the country's largest nonprofits, and Ascension, which is already the nation's largest nonprofit health system, is said to be in talks to become even bigger, according to The Wall Street Journal. Ascension declined to comment.

But the frenzy of mergers and other alliances taking place also reveals a frantic attempt to court and capture patients as people have more choices about where to go for care. Patients are increasingly relying on walk-in clinics, urgent care centers or an app on their cellphone to check out a nasty rash or monitor their diabetes, and they are looking for places that are both less expensive and more convenient than a hospital emergency room or doctor's office.

The battle is over "the control of the patient," said Rob Fuller, a heath care lawyer at Nelson Hardiman and a former hospital administrator. As hospital executives see the continued decline of care being delivered within a hospital's four walls, he said they want to make sure they still have a say over where patients go after a hospital stay or to get treatment for a chronic condition.