

Table 9.1. HSO/HS Environmental Planning Profile for the Early 21st Century

Demographics

- Aging of the population. More than 40 million people (13% of the population) were over 65 in 2012; this growing segment will crest at about 20% by mid-century.
- Increasingly diverse population (e.g., race, ethnicity, national origin, lifestyle, religious practice). By mid-century, 29% of the population will be Hispanic, 13% will be black, and 8% will be Asian. Non-Hispanic whites, who make up about 67% of today's population, will decline to about 47% by 2050.
- Growing population. From about 337 million today, the U.S. population will grow to about 357 million by 2025 and to 438 million by 2050. About 82% of this population growth will be caused by immigrants arriving between 2005 and 2050 and their descendants.
- Growing prevalence of chronic diseases in the population.

Health Policy, Legislation, and Regulation

- Funding for Medicare and Medicaid programs continues to be problematic.
- Partisan battles over implementing and modifying the Affordable Care Act continue.
- Partisan political conflict persists over stem cell research, same-sex marriage, climate change, access to healthcare, American military interventions, and so forth.
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act stipulations to ensure confidentiality of health information and guarantees of health insurance portability continue.
- Budgetary implications of Medicaid programs grow more severe for states.
- Cost shifting from employers to employees through increased deductibles, copays, and medical savings accounts intensifies.
- Impact of the Sarbanes–Oxley Act on corporate governance and fiduciary accountability is increasingly felt.

Scientific and Technological Developments

- Research and clinical applications of nanotechnology are extended.
- Developments in animal and human stem cell research continue.
- New drugs to ameliorate memory recall in patients with Alzheimer's disease emerge.
- Research and development of improved assistive technologies for people with physical and cognitive disabilities are extended.
- Intensive research efforts in structural and computational biology continue.
- Telemedicine and e-visits extend the traditional view of how medicine is practiced.

Economic Trends

- Increasing globalization of the economy, including the interdependency of equities markets, continues.
- The economic gap between those at the top of the economic scale and everyone else continues to widen.
- Growth in private capital funding of new businesses and technologies continues.
- Outsourcing and off-shoring of U.S. manufacturing and service industries continue and increasingly include healthcare companies.
- Privatization of traditionally public government functions, such as education, institutional corrections, and airline security, occurs.
- The nonprofit healthcare sector continues to have a negative outlook according to Moody's and other bond rating agencies.
- Decline in numbers and influence of organized labor continues.