

JHF's Jonas Salk Fellows redesign the health system

JEWISH HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION

If the U.S. healthcare system were triaged, it would be in critical condition. The country's massive investment in health care – about 18 percent of the overall gross domestic product, more than twice as much as any other affluent nation – has bought population health outcomes that rank among the worst in the industrialized world.

The time for tinkering at the margins is over. It's time to dramatically redesign the whole health system so that it's high-performing, cost-efficient, prevention-focused and accessible to all.

During the fall of 2016, the challenge of creating such a system was taken on by the 36 multidisciplinary graduate students who participated in the Jewish Healthcare Foundation's (JHF) Jonas Salk Fellowship. The Salk Fellows – hailing from eight schools and a dozen different disciplines – wiped the slate clean and developed master designs of a health system structured to achieve the best health outcomes at the most reasonable cost.

The Salk Fellows worked in teams to re-design health systems focused on a particular age group (adolescents, adults, or seniors). With guidance from JHF staff as well as local and national experts in the field, the Fellows addressed the service delivery, workforce, payment, improvement and safety, and

policy components necessary to reboot the U.S. health system.

Jonas Salk Fellow Guruprasad Raghavan, a biomedical engineering student at Carnegie Mellon University, was part of a team that focused on seniors. His team developed the Senior Wellness & Aging Network (SWAN), a new and more holistic model of care.

With SWAN, seniors have a "wellness partner" – a trusted community member, embedded within the primary care team who conducts a needs assessment, provides on-site education and helps patients navigate an online portal. That portal features resources ranging from in-home services to transportation, to medical and nutritional information, to social and recreational opportunities.

"We want to change the myth of what 'health care' means," Raghavan said. "Health is not just disease management – it's being physically and mentally well, and socially engaged."

Salk Fellow Brian McWilliams, a health care administration student at the University of Alabama, was part of a team that crafted an adult-focused system that blends technology, big data and personal touch. His team's system features a centralized electronic health record, used by all providers, that would be used to improve care continuity, support clinical decision making and proactively address patient issues at the individual and population health level. Guided by a health coach,

patients would connect with a team including medical professionals, a behavioral specialist, a pharmacist and a social worker – either through telemedicine visits or at centralized regional health centers.

"We want to fill gaps in the system without creating duplicative services," McWilliams said. "We want to put patients at the center. We want to dismantle siloes and create one-stop shops for accessing care."

Janel Johnson, studying health care administration at Chatham University, helped to devise an adolescent-focused system. Her team's ideas include health education via games, more teen-friendly incentives for healthy behaviors (think Chipotle discounts for wellness visits rather than just deductible credits) and a peer support program overseen by health and social service providers.

"Having someone who is in an older grade and is a little more experienced, but is still an adolescent, can help kids understand the important role that they can play in their own health," Johnson said. "They have someone to look up to and learn from."

JHF will share the Fellows' blueprints for a higher-performing health system with its local and national partners, including the Pennsylvania Health Funders Collaborative (a network of 45 foundations from across the Commonwealth that advances health philanthropy and policy) and the Net-

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work for Regional Health Improvement (an alliance of 35 regional health improvement collaboratives from around the United States).

The Salk Fellowship is just one of JHF's efforts to provide students and young professionals with the skills, experiences and mentorship to reimagine health care. In addition to a summer internship program, JHF also runs annual fellowships related to enhancing patient safety and to helping health professionals provide patient and family-centered end-of-life care. Next year, JHF will re-establish its Quality Improvement meets Innovation Technology (QI²T) Fellowship. The QI²T Fellows will help the Foundation create a new Museum to the Future of Health Care – an online, evolving space for health care experts, technologists, futurists, policymakers, community leaders, students and other stakeholders to learn about cutting-edge health care innovations, spread best practices and collaborate on new breakthroughs.

Creativity and concerted action also are the hallmarks of JHF's new Healthcare Reform Network, which features two components: the Health Activist Network and the Women's Health Activist Movement Global (WHAM Global). The Health Activist Network is an online network for physicians and other health professionals who are passionate about health reform, patient safety and quality improvement. WHAM Global will empower women to lead efforts to advance health care systems that are transparent, respectful, accountable and equitable. Both the Health Activist Network and WHAM Global will interface with Tomorrow's HealthCare™ – the Foundation's virtual platform to facilitate learning, communication, collaboration and engagement – and will include in-person events and Champions programs.

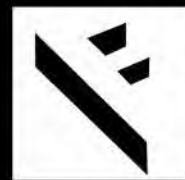
"We challenge our Fellows, interns and reform network participants to cast aside tradition and to look at health care through a new lens," said JHF President and CEO Karen Wolk Feinstein, PhD. "What if our system of care was designed by Uber or Google, instead of being steeped in century-old conventions? In order to create the health system in which you want to work and receive care, you first have to have a vision."

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